The 'Ethnic Conflict' Factor in Democratic Consolidation

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R. Ebru İlter

Boğaziçi University

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VITA

R. Ebru İlter Akarçay

I was born in December 1973 in Ankara. I graduated from the Department of International Relations of the Middle East Technical University in July 1995 with a Bachelor of Science degree. I obtained a Master of Arts degree from the School of Social Sciences at Essex University on a British Chevening Scholarship. I have been working in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Yeditepe University as a research assistant from October 1996 until September 2000 and as a teaching assistant since then. My master's thesis titled as 'Conditions for Policy Change: The Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union as a Case Study' has been published as an 'Occasional Paper' by the Center for European Studies at Essex University.

ABSTRACT

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This study aims to explore the potential linkage between ethnic conflict and democratic consolidation through scrutinizing the experiences of two consolidated and two unstable democracies. Four different variables assist this endeavor. Such an analysis reveals that there are a number of conditions which facilitate democratic consolidation in spite of an ongoing conflict. It is a central argument that rather than the conflict management strategy adopted by political systems, other peculiar variables are critical in accounting for democratic consolidation. The level of violence, political party role, and popular stance in relation to the conflict surface as factors central to the determination of the extent to which democratic consolidation is possible under circumstances posed by the conflict. Unlike various accounts which stress the centrality of the conflict management strategy, this study underlines the fact that it is other supporting conditions that distinguish the performance of consolidated democracies from unstable democracies. While the identification of the combinations of conditions that enable democratic consolidation even under circumstances created by ethnic conflict is attempted, a final effort entails the analysis of the Turkish case with an emphasis on the extent to which the reigning conditions allow for democratic consolidation. Hence, the extent to which an integrated strategy of conflict management is accompanied by other supporting conditions in the case of Turkey is utilized as a benchmark in evaluating the prospects for democratic consolidation.

KISA ÖZET

Demokratik Pekişmede 'Etnik Çatışma' Faktörü

R. Ebru İlter

Bu çalışma iki pekişmiş ve iki istikrarsız demokratik sistemin deneyimlerini inceleyerek etnik çatışma ve demokratik pekişme arasındaki olası bağlantıyı araştırmayı amaçlar. Dört farklı değişken bu çabaya yardımcı olur. Böyle bir araştırma, süreklilik sergileyen bir çatışmaya rağmen demokratik pekişmeyi kolaylaştıran bazı koşullar olduğunu göstermektedir. Siyasal sistemlerin benimsedikleri çatışma yönetimi stratejisinden ziyade farklı bazı değişkenlerin demokratik pekişmede belirleyici olduğu merkezi iddiadır. Şiddetin düzeyi, siyasal partilerin rolü ve kamuoyunun çatışmaya ilişkin duruşu demokratik pekişmenin çatışmanın yarattığı şartlara rağmen ne oranda mümkün olduğunun belirlenmesinde önemli faktörler olarak ortaya çıkarlar. Çatışmanın yönetilmesine ilişkin stratejiyi merkeze yerleştiren pek çok analizden farklı olarak, bu çalışma pekişmiş demokrasilerin performansını istikrarsız demokrasilerinkinden ayıran faktörün diğer destekleyici koşullar olduğu gerçeğinin altını çizmektedir. Etnik çatışmanın yarattığı şartlara rağmen demokratik pekişmeyi mümkün kılan koşullar birleşiminin tanımlanmasına çalışılırken, mevcut şartların demokratik pekişmeye ne noktaya kadar el verdiği vurgusuyla beraber Türkiye örneğinin incelenmesi son çabayı oluşturur. Bu nedenle, Türkiye örneğinde destekleyici koşulların bütünleşmiş bir çatışma yönetimi stratejisine ne oranda eşlik ettikleri demokratik pekişme olasılıklarının değerlendirilmesinde bir ölçüt olarak kullanılmıştır.

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The choice of focusing on the potential linkage between two concepts that may coexist, interact, preclude each other or delimit each other, i.e. democratic progress and ethnic conflict, initially brings into view a couple of questions: In what way does exploring 'how democratic progress and ethnic conflict are related' matter? Is this question of any greater significance today than it was before? What contribution may such an analysis be expected to make to theorizing on either democracy or ethnic conflict?

Identifying the Central Question and the Objectives:

This study attempts to explore the potential linkage between ongoing ethnic conflict and prospects for democratic consolidation in democratic political systems. An examination of the experiences of various democratic political systems in confronting ethnic conflict reveals that the conflict poses a significant challenge to democratic progress. Hence, this study embarks on its efforts with the basic premise that whether at the stage of democratic transition or consolidation, the existence of ethnic conflict in a certain political system affects the prospects for democratic progress.

Indeed, there seems to be widespread agreement among the analysts on that ethnic conflict creates difficulties for democratic progress. In fact, Diamond, Linz, and Lipset present 'ethnicity' as "the most difficult cleavage for democracy to manage" and argue that "agreement on the legitimate boundaries and nature of the state- and on who its citizens are - is a prerequisite for the establishment of viable democratic institutions" (1995: 38 and 42). Furthermore, the 'stateness' variable has been displayed as being critical to the prospects for democratic consolidation, with

secessionism and irredentism posing particular difficulty (Linz and Stepan; 1997: 22). Arguing that a major reason for the failure of democratization in many countries of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union has been 'ethnic conflict', Horowitz states that "(e)thnicity poses obstacles at the threshold of democratization and obstacles after the threshold is crossed" as "(i)n a variety of ways, direct and indirect, ethnic conflict can be conducive to authoritarianism" (1993: 18-20). Equally striking are other attempts at accounting for how the existence of ethnic conflict leads to the disruption of democracy. Rabushka and Shepsle define a plural society by 'cultural diversity', 'politically organized cultural communities', and the 'salience of ethnicity', and argue that "(e)thnic conflict illustrates the difficulties that cultural pluralism poses for orderly, democratic government" as it leads to the "decline of democratic competition, a result of electoral machinations and political violence" (1972: 62, 6, and 92).

The central concern of this study revolves around two possibilities. On the one hand, whether a consolidated democratic political system and ethnic conflict preclude each other needs to be examined. In such an understanding, the operation of a consolidated democratic framework is expected to preclude the possibility of the eruption of ethnic conflict or of the conflict's resilience. Such a statement assumes that ethnic conflicts are not intractable and that they can actually be solved. Along similar lines, the existence of ethnic conflict in a certain political system may be anticipated to preclude the development of a sustainable democratic framework at least until a permanent settlement is reached. As a second possibility, a consolidated democratic political system and the unfolding ethnic conflict it experiences may delimit each other. Under such circumstances, it is essential to discuss whether the course one is likely to take may be determined by examining the

level of the other. This possibility suggests that consolidated democratic political systems confine the potential disruptive effects of ethnic conflict. Another natural premise is that the conditions created by ethnic conflict determine the extent to which democratic consolidation is possible. An evaluation of which of the stated possibilities best seems to characterize the interaction between the two concepts thus rests at the center of the current endeavor.

Democratic political frameworks may indeed be expected to respond to ethnic conflict in a variety of ways. In drawing up a list of the criteria according to which democracies are believed to differ, Schmitter and Karl refer to the degree of consensus, participation, access, responsiveness, majority rule, parliamentary sovereignty, party government, pluralism, federalism (territorial division of authority), presidentialism, and checks and balances (1993: 99). Indeed, varying degrees of engineering and crafting through the use of institutional mechanisms are central to the democratic process. Yet, the contextual factors may be considered as the strongest determinants of which institutional choices suit a political system most in dealing with the challenges encountered. Similarly, Valenzuela claims where the political community is sharply divided, the procedures have to "be molded to the specificities of national societies, yielding different types of democracies" (1992: 83). Indeed, democratic procedures have evolved "to fit the historical and cultural circumstances in each place" (Catt, 1999:13). Hence, it seems possible to claim that democracy does not seem to offer a grand blueprint the implementation of which brings about the successful management of ethnic conflict under all circumstances. The operation of democratic mechanisms does not unconditionally invalidate ethnic conflict as democracy proposes no single checklist to that end. The extent to which democracy may overcome the threat of ethnic conflict rather seems to depend

strongly on the nature of the conflict and the particular characteristics of the political system experiencing conflict. The scale and the intensity of the conflict as well as the resource constraints a system faces all seem to be the crucial contextual variables in determining how to progress in managing the conflict.

Nevertheless, a variety of political systems have managed to consolidate their democracies even under the circumstances created by ethnic conflict. It is hence the chief objective of this study to identify the *conditions* which enable democratic consolidation in spite of ongoing ethnic conflict. In this endeavor, assistance will be provided by a number of case studies and variables. An identification of the peculiar circumstances that assist conflict management in the political systems that have succeeded in consolidating their democracies and the factors that seem to have aggravated the conflict in the unstable democracies will be attempted. In democratic political systems battling against ethnic conflict, the survival of the system may be expected to gain greater urgency. Nonetheless, this statement is more valid for certain political systems than for others. It is in this manner that this study aims to emphasize the centrality of certain contextual variables. The contexts allowing for democratic consolidation despite the existence of conflict and the decay or breakdown suffered by other democratic political systems owing to the conflict may thus be treated as instructive in determining how each political system experiences a unique relationship between the existence of ethnic conflict and consolidation of democracy. Variations with regard to the nature of the conflict and the means adopted in coping with it seem to lead to diverse courses of democratic progress under conditions of ethnic conflict.

A variety of factors seem to account for the focus on the conditions that enable democratic consolidation in spite of ongoing ethnic conflict. It is essential to note

that the bulk of the existing accounts assign priority to conflict management initiatives. The possibilities for the management of ethnic conflict through democratic means have been subject to exploration. The common theme in these accounts is that whenever a political system resorts to democratic mechanisms in conflict management, democratic progress can proceed without major setbacks. That democracy provides the cure for ethnic conflict or that failure to grant democratic rights is the main cause of the conflict have all been asserted. This study embarks on its efforts with the assumption that there is more to successful conflict management than the drawing up of a strategy of conflict management with strong democratic components. Such a strategy may indeed not be the main distinguishing feature as various political systems resort to democratic mechanisms in conflict management, yet end up with divergent levels of democratic progress. Hence, this study aims to explore the 'other' conditions which account for why efforts at conflict management and democratic progress proceed smoothly in certain political systems whereas they encounter serious trouble in others.

This study also argues that the exploration of the potential linkage between ethnic conflict and democratic consolidation is currently more relevant than ever. Firstly, an increasing number of political systems are undertaking democratic transitions. Some of these systems have contested territories or have failed to achieve a consensus on the formulation of the national identity. There are periods in the course of a political system's democratic development when such contentions may find suitable ground to flourish on. Various studies indeed conclude that periods of democratic transition provide the most conducive ground for the eruption of conflicts. O'Donnell and Schmitter's 'cycle of mobilization' accompanying transitions denotes that liberalization allows for the mobilization of the opposition

as a result of which the 'resurrection of civil society' takes place" (Mainwaring, 1992: 318). Hence, an expansion in the scope of political activity is expected. Valenzuela claims that "(m)any groups take advantage of the new political circumstances to create (or recreate) and expand their organizations and articulate their grievances, some of which may have been suppressed by the authoritarian regime" and warns about the potential for confrontation among social groups accompanying the process (1992: 84-85). It is thus highly likely that ethnic demands and tensions will be displayed more forcefully during democratic transition than at another time. In fact, suggestions on different regime designs, models of power sharing, procedures of decision-making, channels of participation, and territorial arrangements are too often made in political systems simultaneously experiencing democratic transition and upsurge in ethnic tensions. Either as a proposed solution to the conflict or as a source of grievance felt by different groups, the institutional structure of the system may become subject to continuous deliberation. Indeed, the uncertain nature of the transitions and their end product may be perceived as the key factor accounting for why conflict is likely to characterize the transition periods, with a variety of actors struggling to make the final settlement more pliable to their own interests. In the final analysis, "the *transition* process refers to that fluid and uncertain period when new democratic structures are about to emerge, while some of the structures of the old regime still exist" (Morlino, 1998: 19). It is essential to underline how Euskadi Ta Azkatasuna (Basque Homeland and Liberty- ETA) violence or violence in Nigeria peaked during transition to democracy. Similarly, it was the controversy over how democratic mechanisms would be instituted and how different communities would be represented within them that led to the eruption of the Sinhalese-Sri Lankan Tamil conflict as the core contention. Hence, a growing

number of conflicts may be expected to flourish and to pose a significant challenge to systems attempting to attain democratic progress.

Secondly, transition to democracy is increasingly expected to deliver greater benefits. (1) The developments of the 1990s indeed resulted in a situation whereby there are declining numbers of alternative systems in comparison to which to judge democratic political systems' performance. Hence, performance in political systems experiencing transition to democracy is increasingly judged by the democratic ideal or the achievements of consolidated democracies. Dalton refers to what may turn into an inevitable trend when he stresses that "(w)ithout the contrast to communism, citizens may judge contemporary democracies against the democratic ideal" (1996: 277). This fact actually reinforces the controversy over which values are defined as being central to democracy. Bealey indeed points at how "(t)he values associated with democracy, therefore, are pedestrian rather than dramatic. What we regard as fair, just, good, and rational [...] arouse much passion and controversy, and are demonstratively capable of provoking undemocratic behavior. On the other hand, those values relating to relationships between people, such as tolerance and trust- what Dahrendorf calls 'public virtues'- are the values important for democracy" (1988:24). In fact, on their own, democratic political systems make no guaranteed commitment to the achievement of many values. Some analysts even argue that the minimalist understanding of democracy is all that we can realistically hope for. (2) Przeworski in turn puts the emphasis on the peaceful turnover of governments that democracy allows for as the central value in arguing that "the very prospect that governments may change can result in a peaceful regulation of conflicts. ... Yet the key prospect that governments would alternate may induce the conflicting political forces to comply with the rules rather than engage in violence... Bloodshed is

avoided by the mere fact that, a la Aristotle, the political forces expect to take turns. ... In the end, the miracle of democracy is that conflicting political forces obey the results of voting. People who have guns obey those without them. ...Conflicts are regulated, processed according to rules, and thus limited. This is not consensus, yet not mayhem either. Just limited conflict; conflict without killing. Ballots are 'paper stones', as Engels once observed" (1999: 45-46 and 49). Along similar lines, Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon confirm that "(i)n the modern world driven by endemic conflicting interests, democracy's value derives not from the promise of redistribution, but rather from the possibility it holds out of managing conflict peacefully" (1999: 4). As other analysts extend support to a contrary view in arguing that democracy involves the promotion of other goods and has to adjust its performance to that end, the debate between minimalist and maximalist conceptions of democracy is an ongoing one. (3) Indeed, democratic political systems' experience with ethnic conflict reinforces this debate over which values are central to democracy. Democratic political systems may fail to address the perceptions of unequal access to power, resources, and information as well as unfair treatment due to these imparities. Such perceptions indeed cause and aggravate ethnic conflicts. Furthermore, there is always the risk that "(t)he resulting overload of issues difficult to resolve and public disorder as demonstrations and possibly violent confrontations among groups that spill into the streets can foster doubts about the ability of the fledgling democratic process to address national problems and can rekindle sentiments in favor of renewed authoritarian rule" (Valenzuela, 1992: 85).

Finally, the exploration of the linkage between ethnic conflict and prospects for democratic consolidation obtains additional significance due to the peculiar circumstances reigning in the case of Turkey. In the bid to embark on accession

negotiations with the European Union (EU), a variety of reforms which may be regarded as conflict management initiatives are undertaken. Yet, the uncertainty associated with resumption of armed activity within Turkey under the 'war of defense' principle declared by the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK) which attempts to disband itself and to erect the Kurdistan People's Congress (KONGRA-GEL) instead is likely to alter the circumstances drastically. Furthermore, a significant qualification is presented by the fact that external constraints on Turkey's capacity to bring about intended outcomes exist in various forms. The vocal presence of Kurdish organizations in EU countries and the course Turkey's relations with the EU is likely to take provide one such constraint. The developments in northern Iraq are likely to become another major determinant of the prospects for conflict management within the Turkish political system. There is hence the need for effective domestic performance to confine the impact of such external influences.

The Determination of the Case Studies:

The study scrutinizes the experiences of four political systems which display different characteristics with regard to their democratic performance and their central concerns in conflict management. With respect to democratic performance, two consolidated democracies and two unstable democracies are examined. In the first category, democratic political systems are safe from an imminent threat of reversal or breakdown. Yet, while the Canadian case provides a setting which actually discusses separation in a context devoid of violence, the Spanish case presents a contrasting example with an emphasis on indissoluble unity in an environment of enduring violence. On the other hand, democratic sustainability is a more serious challenge for the other cases analyzed in this study. As far as the unstable democracies are

concerned, the centralized nature of the Sri Lankan state was fostered in a context of uninterrupted democratic rule in spite of democratic decay whereas the federal Nigerian system has witnessed intervals in democratic progress which have been directly or indirectly affected by the conflict. The analysis of these cases will then be utilized with the objective of identifying the conditions which enable democratic consolidation in spite of ethnic conflict. An effort will also be made at distinguishing between central and supporting conditions.

In democracies that can be classified as risk-prone and unstable, democratic decay and reversals are highly interlinked with the failure to manage ethnic tensions. Referring to the Sri Lankan democracy, Diamond stresses that "many of the electoral democracies that predate the third wave and that have declined from liberal to nonliberal status during it (...) have shown signs of deconsolidation" indicated by declining commitment to rules of constitutional game as "manifestations of this decline are elite illegal and unconstitutional behavior, political violence, human rights abuses, military autonomy, and constraints on freedom" (1999: 74). Similarly, widespread corruption, electoral rigging, violence during elections and throughout the political process have become the major characteristics of Nigerian democratic experience. The role of the prevailing conflicts in stimulating non-democratic behavior by a variety of actors thus acquires particular prominence. Both the Sri Lankan and Nigerian cases reveal that ethnic conflicts pose the risk of reinforcing the perception of politics as a zero-sum game which in turn presents a serious challenge to the democratic framework. While De Silva argues that "Sri Lanka also provides a superb example of how democracy can survive under almost impossible conditions" with the commitment of its people to democratic procedures going as far back as early 1930s (1993: 98-99), the tensions between the Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim

populations of Sri Lanka lead to increasing levels of radicalization and mutual exclusion. Current discussions on the nature of the constitution as regards the powers to be assigned to the northern and eastern regions and the fierce opposition any such proposals arouse reveal that the risk-prone nature of the Sri Lankan democracy is likely to endure. As far as the Nigerian case is concerned, inter-communal violence and the organization of politics across ethnic lines have been central factors in accounting for the intervals in democratic progress. The recent restoration of democratic rule seems to sustain the vitality of the complex task of accommodating religious and ethnic tensions in a context where violence proves to be resilient.

The examination of the experiences of democratic political systems also highlights the intractable nature of ethnic conflict. One basic trouble that ethnic conflict poses for democratic political systems is 'uncertainty' far beyond the concept of 'bounded uncertainty' over who gets elected and the policies pursued. A quick analysis reveals that consolidation of democracy does not necessarily preclude the problems attached to that uncertainty. The cases of Spain and Canada provide typical examples. Despite the ongoing violence and the recent radicalization of political actors from all camps in the case of Spain, the democratic political system seems to be safe from any challenge of interruption. Still, the recent intensification of regionalist demands signals that current controversies are not likely to be resolved immediately. The rejection by the current Spanish government of suggestions for the modification of the autonomous communities system stands as a central factor. Bringing about the complete renunciation of violence also remains to be an urgent task. Similarly, the lingering prospect for another referendum on separation in the case of Quebec does not threaten the consolidated nature of Canadian democracy. However, the resentment felt by other Canadian provinces against what is perceived

as the continuous inflation in Quebec's demands signals greater uncertainty. The rulings by Canada's Supreme Court that the requirements of legal validity necessitated that a future vote on separation should contain a clear majority to a clear question might even be considered as an attempt to confine the uncertainty caused by this open-ended prospect for separation. Hence, constant demands for the revision of rules as well as the boundaries of the system introduce a marked degree of uncertainty into politics in consolidated democracies. Under such circumstances, conflict management rather than resolution surfaces as a more realistic benchmark for democratic performance. Management here refers to the confinement and redressing of the costs associated with the conflict. Yet, even conflict management initiatives activate new demands and grievances to testify to the intractable nature of such conflicts.

Concepts and Definitions:

It needs to be specified that the focus in this analysis is on conflicts between different groups or between the groups and the state. More specifically, the groups whose relations will be examined define themselves through what Gurr terms 'the ethnic criteria', i.e. common descent, shared historical experiences, and valued cultural traits (1996: 52). Solidarity is likely to characterize the relations between members of such groups particularly in the pursuit of political objectives. Thus, these groups are either national peoples who "are territorially concentrated cultural groups, usually with a history of separate political existence, who seek political independence from or greater autonomy within the states that govern them" or minority peoples who "are culturally distinct groups in plural societies who seek equal rights, opportunities, and access to power within existing political communities" (Gurr, 1996: 52-53). Such a categorization is critical in accounting for

the differences between the demands of Sri Lankan Tamils and those of Indian Tamils or Muslims; of Basque, Catalan, Galician nationalists and those of other regionalists; and of the Quebeckers as opposed to those of other provinces and the aboriginal population. It is essential to underline the fact that demands for enhanced rights and for autonomy or independence intermingle in the case of Nigeria with radical and separatist movements increasingly gaining ground among the main ethnic groups as well as the minority groups. Byman also incorporates sectarian conflict into his definition of ethnic conflict "as long as the religious groups in question operate essentially as a community" (2002: 6) to which the Nigerian case provides the clearest example. It is indeed in the pursuit of such demands for independence, autonomy, equal rights and access to power as well as resources that the groups engage in a conflict with each other or with the state. Perceptions of injustices on the basis of common characteristics setting the group apart from the rest are indeed quite common in the current political landscape. Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon draw attention to how "(o)ne wonders if there are any countries in the modern world that do not contain significant perceptions of inherited injustice, reinforced by linguistic identities and cultural affiliations" (1999:17).

Considering the fact that this study focuses on the conditions that enable democratic consolidation, the analysis of what that particular phase in democratic progress entails is of utmost significance. Above all, democratic consolidation is thought to denote an element of certainty as issues are settled through the predictability provided by the rules and institutions of the political system. In Morlino's opinion, "(i)nstitutionalization is the closest concept to consolidation" (1998: 23). Similarly, O'Donnell claims that "democratic actors must go on creating a fabric of institutions which can carry out the mediation of the interests, identities,

and conflicts mobilized in a given period" and argues that this "is the crucial thread which leads to a consolidated democracy; without it any degree of democratization achieved is precarious and potentially explosive" (1992: 22). It hence seems plausible to state that the predictability provided by a network of rules and institutions that can mediate the conflicts forms an essential component of the definition of democratic consolidation.

Yet, it is particularly critical for this study that there is more to democratic consolidation than the fulfillment of structural and institutional requirements. Shifts in attitudes and behavior by a variety of actors constitute an integral component of the term. In addition to their emphasis on constitutional requirements, Linz and Stepan stress that "(b)ehaviorally, a democratic regime in a territory is consolidated when no significant national, social, economic, political, or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime or turning to violence or foreign intervention to secede from the state" and "(a)ttitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life in a society such as theirs and when the support for antisystem alternatives is quite small or more or less isolated from the pro-democratic forces" (1996: 6). Along similar lines, Encarnacion claims that "it is questionable whether democracy has been truly consolidated where multiple gaps between democratic rules and political behavior can be observed" (2000: 485 and 495). Parallelism is sought between the prevalent rules and the behavior as well as attitude of a variety of actors within the system. Di Palma indeed argues in relation to democratic rules that "(t)he more, therefore, the game goes on, and the more actors practice it, the more costly it seems not to play

it" (Di Palma, 1990: 113). Hence, an expansive definition of the term will be employed to transcend an exclusive emphasis on institutional preconditions.

Markoff argues that democracy has evolved in such a way as to strengthen the "inevitable gaps between the mythic constitution of democratic societies and their everyday realities" (1996: 128). Hence, various qualifications accompany the analysis of democratic performance to emphasize that the current democratic practice stands distant from the normative meaning of what the term 'democracy' entails. Indeed, it is only if the substantive conditions accompany the procedural requirements that quality improvements may become attainable for democratic political systems. (4) Schedler claims that "the concept of a 'consolidated democracy' should describe a democratic regime that relevant observers expect to last well into the future- and nothing else" (1998: 103). Hence, his emphasis is solely on safety from democratic breakdown. Yet, Schedler also adds that "the association of democratic consolidation with improvements in the quality of democracy or with democratic deepening represents the most popular 'positive' notion of democratic consolidation" (1998: 104). (5) Hence, in the minimalist sense of the term, democratic consolidation basically denotes sustained democratic survival and remoteness from an imminent threat of breakdown. Yet, considering the fact that consolidated democracies manage to institute a number of substantive conditions, they are taken to be the closest to meriting the designation 'high intensity / quality'. Hence, this study will treat democratic consolidation to denote not only sustained survival but also improved democratic quality. In fact, demands for improved quality and performance are central to the political process across democratic political systems. Schmitter underlines that "the consolidation of democracy should be understood as representing the beginning, not the end, of politics" as the remaining

tasks are various, ranging from the need to diminish existing social inequalities to civic equality, tolerance and deliberation across the society (1995: 567).

This study regards low quality / intensity democracies as major alternatives to democratic consolidation in political systems experiencing ethnic conflict. Low quality / intensity democracies display significant defects in terms of the fostering of substantive aspects of democracy. Diamond, Linz, and Lipset define low-intensity democracy as "a system that may have fair, competitive, and open elections; authentic power for elected officials; freedom of expression and of the press (more or less); and at least some independent organizations and media, but that nevertheless lacks accountability, responsiveness, and institutional balance and effectiveness between elections" (1995: 8). Indeed, by hampering stability through lingering uncertainty, intense ethnic conflict may become a chief stimulant of various forms of low quality / intensity democracy. Thus, electoral democracies, facade democracies or semi-democracies may well be the outcome.

This study considers 'electoral democracy' to denote " 'the faith that merely holding elections will channel political action into peaceful contests among elites and accord public legitimacy to the winners' - no matter how they are conducted or what else constrains those who win them" (Schmitter and Karl, 1993: 42). Schedler brands electoral democracy as "one that manages to hold (more or less) inclusive, clean, and competitive elections but fails to uphold the political and civil freedoms essential for liberal democracy" (1998: 93). In fact, the constraints imposed prior to the electoral process and after it surface as major drawbacks. In the final analysis, "free elections with unfree opinion express nothing" (Sartori, 1987: 102).

Markoff defines democratic facade as "the existence of an institution associated with democracy (...) in an overall context that could easily empty it of its

power" and adds that it is basically related to the lack of "an effective reality based on the formal rules" as the rules are breached through limitations on the power of the elected political personnel, restrictions on the free operation of opposition parties or fraud and intimidation in the electoral process (1996: 102 and 103). The superficial image of the operation of procedural democratic mechanisms hence obscures the lack of quality improvements.

Diamond, Linz and Lipset classify "as semidemocratic those countries in which the effective power of elected officials is so limited or political party competition so restricted, or the freedom and fairness of elections so compromised that electoral outcomes, although competitive, do not produce true popular sovereignty and accountability, or in which civil and political liberties are so uncertain that some political orientations and interests are unable to organize and express themselves peacefully, without fear" (1995: 7-8). Quality is once more compromised with the apparently smooth functioning of democratic mechanisms.

A number of related questions hence surface. Is it plausible, for instance, to argue that there is a greater likelihood of a democratic system battling with high ethnic tensions to embark on the process with a low intensity democratic framework? Can it be claimed that certain conditions need to be established for quality improvements and democratic consolidation? It is essential to note that democracies everywhere and at any instance take time and effort to consolidate. The operation of democratic procedures and mechanisms is in time expected to modify the attitude, behavior, perception, and mentality of the individuals, groups and other actors. The structural aspects of a democratic framework may thus gradually be complemented by substantive conditions and it is indeed such substantive conditions that enhance the quality of democracy. Under the circumstances of intense ethnic

conflict, the formal aspects are easier to maintain than the qualitative conditions. Rather than an 'all or nothing approach' which perceives democracy as a 'package' (Catt, 1999: 118), the institutionalization of formal mechanisms of democracy needs to be regarded as the initial step. Hence, a low intensity democratic framework operating under the circumstances of conflict may be valued due to its potential role in preventing the total preclusion of democracy.

The Independent Variables:

The definition of the term 'democratic consolidation' that this study utilizes in turn contributes to the identification of the independent variables around which the current endeavor will be structured. Since democratic consolidation is taken to denote not only institutionalization but also a specific set of attitudinal and behavioral traits by a variety of actors, the institutional component of the definition is likely to be encompassed by an integrated strategy of conflict management. As far as the attitudinal and behavioral component is concerned, the analysis of the role of political parties, the public and contributions to domestic peace will be assigned centrality. Hence, an attempt is undertaken to account for democratic performance under conditions of ethnic conflict, i.e. the dependent variable, in reference to:

- whether an integrated strategy of conflict management is formulated and implemented,

- the extent to which the violence potential within the political system disrupts domestic peace,

- whether the political parties contribute to conflict management particularly through the implementation of initiatives to that end,

- the extent to which public involvement contributes to conflict management through extending support to the initiatives.

As far as the choice of the independent variables is concerned, the institutional and structural features as well as the role of a variety of actors are focused on. Smith indeed warns that ethnicity is so closely tied to the expression of attitudes, perceptions and feelings that, while not causing serious flaws, completely structural approaches will seem distant from the matters they intend to account for (Smith, 2002: 28). In fact, failure to attend to the affective dimensions of ethnicity has drawn intense criticism (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996: 9). The choice of variables that this study undertakes may receive similar criticisms. Yet, it needs to be noted that this study considers primordial identity concerns to be located at the center when accounting for the *origins* of nationalisms and regionalisms that fall within the scope of the current analysis. Hence, the study acknowledges the vitality of primordial ties of language, religion, ethnicity or region in identity formation as well as in the *initiation* of the pursuit of related interests. In that sense, the primordialist assumption that primordial ties pre-date the complex political constructs and form the basis on which they are built (Smith, 2002: 34) makes such ties an essential component of the analysis of ethnicity. Across political systems, references are indeed made to past heroic ages, betrayals, special place of the nation in world history, identification of a mission for a 'chosen people' and distorted histories concerning society/ethnic origins in constituting myths that form the base of nationalism (Taylor and Flint, 2000: 199). Without references to a Tamil identity centering on Tamil language, Hinduism and Dravidian origins, no Tamil nationalism could have been fostered. Equally significant for the emergence of Quebec nationalist movement has been the evolution of religious differences and linguistic divergence. While the combination of Islam, Hausa language and northern regionalism has constituted the dominant identity in the case of Nigeria, a previous

pattern of autonomy as well as perceptions of entitlement to historic rights have shaped the contesting identities in Spain. Yet, a variety of other factors also demand scrutiny. While they have been the most different in terms of objective criteria and the most heavily discriminated against by denial of citizenship and the franchise, Indian Tamils have not become the active defiant of the Sri Lankan state. Similarly, objective conditions would have made Galician nationalism the most vocal one in Spain had there not been other factors radicalizing nationalist movements across other regions.

It is nevertheless essential to underline that the focus of this study is rather on the conflict-producing nature of ethnicity. In fact, how the consolidation and pursuit of related interests *evolves* is accorded prominence in exploring the high conflict potential attributed to ethnic differences. Exacerbating the differences based on primordial ties have been the invocation of identities by the political elites, parties, and societal organizations, even through resort to violence. It is the politically organized cultural and ethnic communities professing to the preservation and promotion of a defined identity that seem to make the conflicts intractable and the groups less compromising. It is not the identities themselves that stimulate non-democratic behavior by political parties, political elite, civil society organizations or organizations that resort to the use of force. In other words, it is the invocation of the formulated identities rather than the identities themselves which determine the course a conflict is likely to take. The intractable nature of conflicts or the grave proportions that they assume are not caused by the extent of the difference between group identities. It is not how wide inherent differences between identities are that makes them irreconcilable and turns them into barriers to democratic development and stability. Rather, the politically motivated actions by ethnic groups, the responses to

such actions and the unresolved constitutional challenge following their juxtaposition make for conditions that enable or complicate prospects for democratic consolidation. Hence, a distinction may be drawn in arguing that primordial ties are critical in explaining what lies beneath the clashing identities as well as their consolidation in opposition to each other. Yet, why ethnic conflict proves to be a major challenge to democratic stability and progress is better accounted for by an emphasis on the pursuit of the promotion of identities and the response of other actors to such efforts. After all, fuelling such conflicts have been a variety of factors: centralization and 'Castilianization' in the case of Spain; refusal to grant Quebec a 'distinct society' status as well as Trudeau's policies in Canada; university admissions policy, exclusion from state service, Indian involvement, linguistic policies and failure to implement elite pacts in the case of Sri Lanka; and developments succeeding the secessionist war, annulment of opposition victories, and political power concentration in the north in the Nigerian case.

Regardless of how much one may wish to come up with general comments on the potential linkage between democracy and ethnic conflict, the extent to which democratic consolidation is enabled or withheld by the presence of the conflict is highly dependent on a number of contextual circumstances. It is therefore possible to claim that the challenges faced and the responses given by political systems differ in line with their contextual characteristics. In conformity with the two main components of the definition of democratic consolidation, this study will mainly underline four contextual variables in accounting for the course of democratic progress in a political system battling against ethnic conflict. An attempt at listing the particular points to be emphasized in relation to each variable will be made. Then, the potential impact of performance in each of these variables on prospects for

democratic consolidation will be explored within the context of case studies. Whether any of the four variables is more significant and influential than the others will also be scrutinized.

Violence potential and domestic peace: The likelihood of ethnic tensions degenerating into violence and disorder is remarkable. Wilkinson indeed claims that "(a)t present 99 per cent of significant armed conflicts in the world are intrastate conflicts, the majority with an underlying ethnic or religious conflict at their root" (2000: 46). Hence, ethnic and religious groups are likely to provide a ready pool of mass support in the pursuit of political goals through violent means. It is essential to state here with respect to the procedural aspects of a democratic framework that their mere operation can not rule out resort to violence by the discontented. The expectation that the vote may altogether eliminate the use of violence seems not to be confirmed by the practice, as violence unfolds along the operation of democratic mechanisms even in consolidated democracies. What may rather set democratic frameworks apart is their potential for the restriction of the scope and intensity of violence. As long as other channels for the expression of grievances are functional, moderate political actors are able to acquire significant support in competing with the radical proponents of violence.

In Wilkinson's opinion, "(t)he key factors which determine whether a terrorist campaign expands into a wider insurgency are (a) its capacity to win wider popular support among a substantial segment of the population; (b) a degree of repressive reaction by the government and its security forces leading to an increase in popular support for an insurgency; (c) the availability of leaders capable of inspiring and sustaining a wider insurgency; and (d) access to sufficient weapons to initiate a wider insurgency" (2000: 17). In fact, a number of factors relating to the nature of

violent conflict are critical with regard to the extent to which failure to sustain domestic peace blocks democratic consolidation. Whether the conflict is confined to a part of the system such as a regional contention or is spread across the whole system seems to matter. It is also highly critical whether domestic peace is disrupted due to a conflict between the state and certain groups or between a variety of groups invoking their peculiar identities. The specific targets that the perpetuators of violence choose and the means that they resort to surface as other significant variables in determining the course of the conflict. Bealey in fact argues that "(w)hat endangers democracy is not the propagation of radical ends (or, for that matter, reactionary ends) but the pursuit of any ends by methods which break the law or the constitutional rules and conventions" (1988: 26).

The political party role: The attitude displayed by the existing parties in relation to the ongoing conflict and the characteristics of the party system will form another significant variable in the current analysis. Political parties acquire particular significance in relation to the fact that "in nations lacking institutionalized party systems democratic politics is more erratic, establishing legitimacy is more difficult, and governing is more complicated" (Encarnacion, 2000: 482). Political parties may also be expected to serve as vehicles in integrating the discontented. In stressing the significance of the vote, Przeworski indeed underlines that "(i)f elections are a peaceful substitute for rebellion, it is because they inform everyone who would mutiny and against what" (1999:49). Whether a non-violent political party with a clear political agenda is capable of representing those with grievances and is granted equal access to political channels forms the crux of the potential implication of the party system for the course of the conflict. It is essential to elaborate on whether the lack of such organized representation creates problems for the political system by

encouraging support for extremist options. In addition to the organization and performance of the regionalist or nationalist parties representing those with grievances, the role assumed by nationwide parties also form a significant component of this variable.

Furthermore, the approaches of political personalities and actors matter especially with regard to the possibilities for accommodation and compromise. What priorities and sequencing they intend to pursue -such as between democratic rights, order, and stability- can exert an impact on the course of the conflict. As if wishing to draw attention at the way in which the human factor and the intentions of all the actors occupy a central stage, Bealey argues that "(t)he real guarantee that minorities are not persecuted is not democracy, but those involved in it, the politicians and the electorate" (1988: 4-5). Whether the political elite develops programmatic, charismatic, or clientelist linkages to the electorate stands as a critical variable. The related risks are multiple. Kitschelt indeed warns that "ethnocultural parties of different stripes (religious, ethnic, racial, regional, or linguistic) tend to favor and consolidate clientelist linkages" just as strong ethnocultural parties resorting to such linkages "tend to drive out parties based on other divides" (2000: 865 and 868). Lipset particularly points at the fact that "(p)arties in new electoral democracies will be inherently unstable unless they become linked to deep-rooted sources of cleavage, as parties in the older, institutionalized Western democracies have been" (2000: 49). There are indeed benefits accruing to all political parties perpetuating the manipulation of the already existing cleavages which promise a ready pool of support. Yet, when the cleavages invoked pertain to the ethnic and cultural divide, political parties may themselves become a part of the problem.

Taking into account the fact that the democratic political systems are always vulnerable to crises, decay or reversals, the political elite are presented with an additional task. Valenzuela stresses that "it is the very perception that democracy is safe and secure that can trigger its breakdown" and adds that new democracies "may in fact be vulnerable to the very perception of their solidity by democratic elites that take the existence of democratic institutions for granted, even in situations of crisis, and therefore do not reach the necessary accommodations to prevent their demise" (Encarnacion, 2000: 491). Hence, the convergence of the political elite around broadly shared understandings is essential to ensuring the survival of democracy under conditions of conflict.

The role of public involvement: Whether the public expresses support for the authorities in their efforts at combating the conflict and the urgency with which they perceive the conflict as demanding to be addressed is central to any analysis. In line with the typology of political support initially employed by Easton, there may surface three different targets of discontent: the political personnel, the working institutions and procedures of the political system, and the nation and the political system supporting it (Dalton, 1996: 263-266). (6) Dalton points at the vitality of this distinction in terms of the consequences when he states that political implications increase with the shifting of dissatisfaction to the level of the regime or political community as "(w)eakening ties to the political community in a democratic system might foretell eventual revolution, civil war, or the loss of democracy" (Dalton, 1996: 263-264). A central question then becomes whether a perception among the public of ineptitude in dealing with the conflict can lead to shifts among these forms of erosion of support.

Another significant question revolves around whether the democratic political systems under scrutiny have been able to store a degree of public confidence and support prior to the deterioration of the conflict. Dalton indeed warns that "a democratic political system requires a reservoir of diffuse support independent of immediate policy outputs (specific support) if it is to weather periods of public disaffection and dissatisfaction" and lists 'a strong emotional attachment to the nation' and 'support for basic structure of society and the political system' as capable of building this support (1996: 264 and 275-277).

Whether organized public reaction to the conflict is developed and displayed surfaces as another critical factor with respect to the course the conflict is likely to take. Mass support for initiatives in conflict management and popular rejection of violence may surface as the key to sustainable peace. Organized opposition to the use of violent means may make the pursuit of such methods more costly. Wilkinson indeed refers to the educative solution "in which the combination of educational effort by democratic political parties, the mass media, trade unions, churches, schools, colleges and other major social institutions succeeds in persuading the terrorists, or a sufficient proportion of their supporters, that terrorism is both undesirable and counterproductive to the realisation of their political ideals" (2000: 224).

In stressing that state action should be coupled with the 'flexibility and the critical accountability' of civil society, Young argues that "(b)oth civil society and the state should be strengthened and made more democratic" (1999: 141 and 160). For Young, civil society is expected to serve a dual function as "organizations and activities relatively autonomous from the state can limit state power, and make its exercise more accountable and democratic" at the same time that "(b)y allowing opportunities

for relatively excluded or marginalized people to find each other, meet together, pursue private and civic activities, civil society makes possible the development of voice and idiom for the expression of their experience, interests and needs in public spheres" (1999:145 and 149). Yet, there is also the possibility that civil society organizations may reinforce ethnic and communal tensions by advocating sectional interests. In such cases, polarization may characterize the relations between various civic organizations.

Suggestions abound as to how the performance of democracies may be enhanced and how democratic political systems may be reshaped to become better equipped for the resolution of conflicts. Central to almost all of these proposals is the objective of bringing the public into the center stage. Hence, those arguing for improved democratic quality put the emphasis on an enhanced role for the people, the marginalization of whom they believe constitutes the most striking deviation from the original conceptualization of democracy. (7) Multiplying the channels for public participation and truly empowering the public constitute the crux of various schemes. Pointing at the fact that "(t)he main movements to increase democracy have an element of localism with decisions taken to smaller groups of people with a common identity and close to the issue", Catt stresses that "(a)ll want greater public involvement but demand time and interest from the people and so depend upon a politically motivated population" (1999: 144 and 151-152). (8) Dalton's defense of a 'new style of citizen politics' on grounds that "(e)xpanding participation is not a problem but an opportunity for the advanced industrial democracies to come closer to matching their democratic ideals" (1996: 283), Barber's advocacy of 'strong democracy' which "rests on the idea of a self-governing community of citizens who are united less by homogeneous interests than by civic education and who are made

capable of common purpose and mutual action by virtue of their civic attitudes and participatory institutions rather than their altruism or their good nature" (1984: 117), and Pettit's support for 'contestatory democracy' which enables the people to trigger a review and grants them the power "of contesting public decisions on the grounds that they do not answer adequately to certain avowable, perceived interests" (1999: 179-180) provide other typical examples. The main question then boils down to whether the schemes for improved participation provide room for delimiting the effects of the conflict by putting in the driver's seat those whose lives are most directly affected by it.

An integrated strategy of conflict management: The capabilities that a political system can mobilize for conflict management and the system's standing with respect to the different components of 'power' ranging from economic and social to the political also function as key determinants. Whether the political system is in possession of the resources essential to the management of the conflict and is capable of making use of the resources at its disposal is a critical question. An integrated strategy of conflict management with political, social, economic, military and cultural pillars hence acquires significance in this respect.

The fact that political and socio-economic equality and justice are not always delivered by democratic political systems indeed leaves room for the emergence of anti-system actors. It might hence be argued that had democratic political systems ensured to deliver equality, justice, and fairness under all circumstances, they could have contributed more extensively to the management of the conflict. Democracy's 'spread from the political to the social sphere' (Catt, 1999: 152) may indeed be expected to alleviate the prospects for conflict management. That is indeed the reason why conflict management strategies adopted by a variety of democratic

political systems incorporate substantial socio-economic components. Effectively, such moves in pursuit of greater equality and fairness may serve not only as signs of political will to come up with an acceptable solution but also locate the initiative in the hands of the authorities by enhancing popular support for the democratic system. In fact, confinement of the effects of the conflict across the political system can be affected in the case of greater success at the attainment of values which are highly endorsed by the public. Another significant advantage created by a democratic strategy of conflict management with a strong emphasis on equality, fairness and justice is that it provides the ground for revealing the true intentions of parties to the conflict. As there may be actors who inflate their demands even under conditions where their initial demands are met, whether democracy is regarded as a banner for certain peculiar causes surfaces as a central question.

Resistance to the drawing up of initiatives may flourish in certain democratic political systems. It is essential to draw attention at the way in which democracy, like every other existing system, seeks self-preservation. With specifically the goal of self-preservation in mind, democracies may resort to solutions which may not in themselves reflect democratic ideals. Furthermore, with the intention of preventing the erosion of democratic mechanisms operating in a defined political system, democracies may actually prioritize stability and sustainability. Hence, there is the possibility that in periods of high tension where the survival of the system in existence is imperiled, democracies may feel compelled to implement policies which may actually hamper democratic practices. Indeed, even the consolidated democracies have threat perceptions of their own. Hence, the ban on the political wing of ETA, Herri Batasuna (HB), in the case of Spain and Canadian authorities' desire to halt the open-ended prospect for another referendum were the consequences

of such threat perceptions. Moreover, a variety of actors may oppose and block the implementation of conflict management initiatives due to the fear of losing their privileged position under the functioning system.

Furthermore, despite the resort to what seem to be democratic mechanisms, the outcomes of the implementation process may not necessarily be democratic either. Hence, unexpected and unintended consequences occasionally follow the implementation of the strategy of conflict management. Majority rule, for example, may dictate policies that receive the support of a majority of the population but whether these pay ultimate attention to the rights of the minorities is an altogether different matter. Bealey indeed is rather skeptical of the likelihood of the majority generating democratic solutions when he states that "(m)ajorities may, and sometimes do, act in a completely undemocratic manner. ... Under democratic decision-making, minorities will be guaranteed their say, but they will not get their way. ...All the democratic rights that Dahl calls public contestation cannot prevent even large minorities from being continually frustrated. This will be the result of the majority exercising its democratic rights" (1988: 4). Similarly, a negotiated separation may also be democratically achieved, yet may bring about certain non-democratic outcomes such as the creation of new minorities who experience problems in newly constituted units. Finally, failure to foster support for the conflict management initiatives may also produce unexpected and unintended outcomes.

The following case studies will assist the identification of the conditions which may potentially be defined as being conducive to democratic consolidation in spite of ongoing ethnic conflict. The contrasts to be drawn between the consolidated and unstable democracies are expected to elaborate on what set of factors are likely to minimize the disruptive impact of ethnic conflict on democratic consolidation.

Focusing on the four variables, it is possible to argue theoretically that the worst case scenario envisages a picture where violence is endemic and spread across the political system, the system is not capable of developing or implementing an integrated strategy of conflict management, political parties and elites fail to represent the grievances and provide support for the initiatives, and the societal actors fail to assist conflict management. Such a combination presents a case where democratic consolidation would be an implausible option. Here, then, discussions of preclusion or delimitation may be more relevant. On the other hand, the ideal scenario would be one where violence is altogether ruled out, an integrated strategy of conflict management has been formulated and implemented, political parties voice the grievances and provide support for the management of the conflict, and a vigilant civil society extends support to conflict management efforts. It is possible to argue that in practice most of the cases fall somewhere between these two scenarios. In such contexts, then, talking about the extent of the delimitation effect proves to be more realistic.

The following chapters undertake the examination of Spanish, Canadian, Sri Lankan and Nigerian experiences with ethnic conflict by evaluating each political system's performance in the variables identified. The extent to which democratic progress has been affected by the ongoing conflict and the conditions created by it will hence be evaluated. Based on the experiences of the four political systems, an attempt will be made to highlight certain regularities with regard to how an integrated strategy of conflict management, violence potential, political party role, and public involvement affect prospects for democratic consolidation under circumstances of ethnic conflict. Finally, the relevance of these regularities to the case of Turkey will be evaluated.

NOTES:

(1) In exploring how expectations of democracy are high, Przeworski refers to some survey results: "The first connotation of 'democracy' among most survey respondents in Latin America and Eastern Europe is 'social and economic equality': in Chile, 59 percent of respondents expected that democracy would attenuate social inequalities, while in Eastern Europe the proportion associating democracy with social equality range from 61 percent in Czechoslovakia to 88 percent in Bulgaria" (1999: 40-41). Similarly, Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon analyse why transitions to democracy are accompanied by high expectations: "People find democracy appealing partly because its universalist ethic holds out the possibility of undoing, or at least mitigating, many of the evils they see around them. Nowhere has this been more obvious in recent years than in the fights against communism and apartheid, where people demanded meaningful rights of democratic participation as engines for transforming their societies away from appalling cumulative effects of arbitrary power. That democracy gains popular legitimacy from the promise it holds out in this regard cannot be surprising" (1999: 18).

(2) Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon provide an outline of the minimalist understanding of democracy in stating that "if democracy is to be defended it must be on minimalist grounds, detached from the classical expectation that it can rationally represent a general will, not to mention the widespread impulse to argue that it produces ancillary benefits such as egalitarian redistribution" (1999: 3-4).

(3) In voicing the contrary view, Das Gupta and Maskin point at some recent empirical findings in suggesting that "democracy is more consonant with other social goods than critics of democracy are inclined to believe" (1999:72).

(4) The procedural and substantive aspects of democracy have been clearly distinguished. What Dahl identifies as procedural conditions entail control over policy decisions by elected officials who are elected through frequent and fairly conducted elections in a context devoid of violence; all adults having the right to vote and to stand as candidates; and the citizens having the right to express themselves in political matters without the danger of severe punishment, to search for alternative sources of information and to form relatively independent organizations and associations (Schmitter and Karl, 1993: 45). Schmitter and Karl add to this list that the elected officials shall not be facing opposition from unelected officials and that the polity has to be self-governing (1993: 45). Reisinger emphasizes that "(u)nless democratic political procedures are accompanied by democratic conditions within the country, the democratic regime may be rejected or toppled" and enumerates popular empowerment, liberty and equality as well as their accommodation, the protection of the rights of individuals, and peaceful conflict resolution as the democratic conditions that need to accompany the procedures (1997: 38-43).

(5) In Schedler's opinion, "preoccupation with regime survival describes the 'classical' meaning of democratic consolidation" as it gradually began to convey additional meanings of preventing democratic erosion, completing democracy, deepening democracy and organizing democracy (1998: 95 and 94).

(6) Dalton defines support for the level of political community as implying " a basic attachment to the nation and political system beyond the present institutions of government" and argues that "(a) sense of being 'English' or ('Scottish') exemplifies these attachments" (1996: 263).

(7) The radical conception of democracy follows a similar pattern. Lummis claims that "(r)adical democracy means democracy in its essential form, democracy at its roots, quite precisely the thing itself" and qualifies that democracy means that people are the source of all political power (1996: 25). Hence, the term entails "a critique of centralized power of every sort- charismatic, bureaucratic, class, military, corporate, party, union, technocratic" (Lummis, 1996: 25).

(8) To exemplify such suggestions, Catt argues that "subsidiarity can be seen as fitting with arguments of the new left which call for wider political participation, arguing that if it keeps decisions local and near the people then the people will feel they are part of the decisions" (1999: 139). Catt also draws attention at Blair's 'stakeholder society' in stating that "stakeholder politics must be a politics of power-sharing, negotiation and mutual education based on participation and a devolution of decisions to a local level" (1999: 140-141).

The Spanish Case: Decentralization and Democratic Consolidation under Conditions of Ethnic Conflict

Spanish experience is considered to be valuable with respect to the analysis undertaken in this study as an example of democracy being consolidated despite the failure to put a definite end to the major threat facing it, i.e. ethnic conflict. While there seems to be widespread agreement on that the Spanish democracy was consolidated by 1982, it is essential to note that this date did not witness the complete cessation of violence or a final settlement agreed on by all the parties. Yet the fact that progress was recorded on variables that this study perceives to be central except for the failure to exterminate violence is worth analyzing. The central question in mind then becomes whether favorable progress in all the variables except for domestic peace makes democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict possible.

The Setting:

The conflict in Spain has been unfolding under a number of peculiar circumstances which constitute the setting for the conflict:

<u>Existence of a previous pattern of historical rights and autonomy:</u>

The major qualification to be introduced to the analysis of the Spanish case is that in the regions where regionalist sentiments are high, some are regarded as 'historic nationalities' whereas others seem to have acquired a claim to autonomy only with the 1978 Constitution. Thus, the nations which had autonomous status prior to the civil war and the regions that acquired autonomy only recently and owing mainly to geographic criteria have all been gathered under the system of 'State of Autonomies'.

From the fifteenth century on and through the seventeenth century "a monarchist confederation of the institutionally distinct states of Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Navarre and Castile (with the Basque provinces a separate territory under the crown of Castile)" was constituted whereas the unified state system introduced by the Bourbons in the eighteenth century brought a settlement whereby "(t)he separate legal and constitutional systems of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia were abolished, so that only particularist structures remaining were those of the Basque provinces and Navarre" (Payne, 2000: 95). Significant mechanisms of decentralized rule have indeed always been preserved in the making of the state. Coverdale dates his analysis back to the initial formation of the Spanish state from late fifteenth century onwards and argues that Ferdinand of Aragon "considered Spain a pluralistic monarchy and respected local rights, laws, privileges, and customs..." (1979: 25). Yet, the trend towards greater centralization around the Castilian core acquired momentum from the seventeenth century on. It is essential to note that "growing demands for men and money with which to bolster Spain's flagging position in Europe led to an attempt by the Crown to bring Catalonia and other autonomous territories into line with Castile as regards taxes and military service and generally to tighten up and unify the administration of royal possessions along Castilian patterns" (Coverdale, 1979:25).

In the Basque region, Catalonia, and Galicia, the dominant argument is that the peculiar nature of the ties between these people and the Spanish state has already been negotiated and settled during the prior centuries. Thus, the nationalists claim that the discussion on autonomy in late 1970s, however deficient, was nothing more than the restoration of what was stripped off from their nations. To cite an example, Basque nationalists continuously referred to Basque fueros, i.e. legal privileges and exemptions, as the determinants of the terms of their association with the Spanish

state. In his focus on the discourse legitimizing Basque peculiarity, Beramendi stresses how the emphasis was on that the Basques' "integration into the Crown of Castile had been the result of a pact with the Castilian monarchs as equals, with Basque self-government as a key aspect of this pact" (2000: 82-83). (1) For analysts, that the Basque provinces were able to retain their local customs, institutions and language throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries could in turn be accounted for by the fact that "(t)here was no Basque revolt against the Spanish Crown during the ancien regime" and "(t)hough linked by geographic proximity and a common language, the four Basque provinces had no common institutions nor sense of common identity" (Coverdale, 1979:32).

Catalan resentment following the demise of Catalonia's status as a major constituent of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy, the relocation of trade routes from 1898 on and the related loss suffered by the region, and the halting of historical rights account for why Catalonia has voiced discontent in relation to its association with the Spanish state. With the centralizing policies of the chief minister appointed to rule over Catalonia underway from 1621 on, rising tensions between Castile and the region led to the Revolt of the Harvesters in 1640 which makes some analysts conclude that "the Catalans led what can be considered one of the first nationalist revolutions" (Guibernau, 1995: 252). As the culmination of a process of confrontation, Catalan institutions which have acquired formal recognition in 1653 completely disappeared in 1716. The support extended by some Catalans to the Austrian pretender to the Spanish crown against the Bourbons also meant that the Catalans were on the losing side with the incurring cost of the loss of autonomous status. It is thus possible to argue that since the Catalans were the major challengers

to centralization prior to the Carlist wars of the 19th century, they were the ones to confront the most devastating consequences.

The Carlist wars posed the liberals who advocated a centralized and unitary system of administration presided over by a liberal Spanish state against the conservative forces who incorporated the Basques and other regionalists aiming to guard whatever privileges they have acquired until then. (2) While at the end of the first Carlist war in 1840 "Basque fueros were largely preserved as an exception to the central legal administrative structure of Spain", they were abolished at the end of the second Carlist war in 1876, except for 'separate conciertos for taxes' spared for Basque provinces and Navarre (Payne, 2000:97). The Basques thus seemed to be faring further in sustaining their autonomous administrative and tax systems with economic accords that gave the responsibility for the levying and collection of taxes to the provinces in return for an amount of remittances for the center. Yet, the liberal constitution of 1876 was in general a blow to the fueros. Still, the autonomous arrangements were periodically abolished, reclaimed and granted. A statute of Basque autonomy was indeed approved in October 1936, succeeding a broad autonomy scheme granted to the Catalans in 1932. The former was subjected to annulment only in 1937. Franco's decree put an end to Catalan autonomous government in 1938.

As regards the Catalan search for autonomy, the administrative arrangement reached in 1913 during the First Republic which lasted until 1923 under the Mancomunitat enabled the four Catalan provinces to act as a single unit in local administrative issues. This process was halted by the Primo de Rivera dictatorship in 1923. With the acquisition of an autonomous status in 1932, a Catalan regional government titled as the Generalitat and composed of a parliament, an executive

council, and a president elected by the parliament was established during the Second Republic. Furthermore, Catalan became the co-official language with Castilian within the boundaries of Catalonia.

The Civil War that basically posed the centralizing Francoist nationalists against the republicans who upheld a more favorable approach to the demands for autonomy hampered the cause of all the parties that allied with the republican forces. The repression accompanying the Franco era targeted the autonomous institutions, legal structure, language, culture, and symbols of all provinces except for those that directly allied with the nationalists during the civil war: Alava and Navarre. Even the economic accords that were agreed upon following the Carlist wars were exterminated except for the two provinces. Eradication of all expressions of difference seemed to stand as the chief objective of the Francoist era whereas repression was relatively relaxed mainly in the cultural realm during 1950s and 1960s.

When analyzing the most recent Spanish pattern of autonomy, we are indeed dealing with regions and nations who reclaim the rights they used to enjoy as well as regions who acquired such rights without a large scale campaign. It is hence possible to argue that autonomy discussions in the 1970s were not of unprecedented nature for some of the nations. A historical experience with such rights and the perception that these should be granted owing to nothing more than historical realities formed the crux of the position taken by these 'historic nations'.

The centrality of the role accorded to the Castilian identity and institutions:

The major grievance underlying the particular nationalisms in Spain seems to be rooted in the perception that despite the existence of different identities, the Castilian one has forcefully imposed itself over the others. Historical arguments for

the previous pattern of rights and autonomy indeed reveal the conviction that the compact of unity was broken by the assertion of dominance of the Castilian identity. Coverdale offers four explanations for why Castile has become the basic point of attraction in the centralization task in arguing that "(w)ithin this Spanish empire, Castile exercised special influence because of her territory and population and because during the formative period of the empire, Castile enjoyed an economic boom, whereas Catalonia was still recovering from the revolutionary upheaval of the previous century. Castile's advantage was further heightened by the shift in the axis of commerce from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and by her monopoly on trade with the Americas. Finally, the kings of the sixteenth century tended to focus their attention on Castile since they encountered fewer legal barriers to their activities there than in Catalonia and the rest of the former kingdom of Aragon" (1979:25).

The need to rule Castile and Aragon jointly from 1479 on brought the necessity of harmonizing the practices in a number of highly divergent territories and across traditions. In progress, state-building efforts seemed to place Castile at the fulcrum. Concluding that Castilian ethnicity "was the foundational pre-national identity of Spain", Beramendi argues that "the state had managed to extend and consolidate a wide range of unifying elements most of which were based on the ethnicity and institutions of Castile: the establishment of a lingua franca (Castilian) for public and intellectual uses; religious uniformity, whereby the Catholic counter-reformation as defined by the Council of Trent became a fundamental identity pillar; and the extension of Castilian public law and political institutions to most areas of the kingdom" (2000: 81-82 and 80).

The outcome of the civil war also seemed to shape the relations between the Castilian center and the other identities. Indeed, the lack of willingness on the part of

the Francoist leadership to embrace distinct languages, identities, and cultures makes this an era when 'Castilianization' acquired added momentum. Giner in fact argues that "(w)ith the advent of Francoism, however, we encounter for the first time a government and a state both willing and able to carry out the task of 'national' homogenization" (1994: 87).

'Castilianization' was then perceived as the major menace by nationalisms within Spain. Yet, complete consensus was not the case. Beramendi stresses that in Galicia, "ethnicity was a negative social marker, due to the pronounced Castilianization of the Church and the Galician upper classes since the sixteenth century" (2000: 83). In the Basque provinces, on the other hand, industrialists and entrepreneurs were considered to be in betrayal of the nationalist cause by allying with the Spanish state in return for economic benefits. Similarly, Beramendi partly attributes the weakening of Catalan identity to the "opening up of colonial trade for Catalan products and certain state protectionist policies on behalf of the proto-industry in the region, which reshaped the interests and loyalties of the dominant or most economically advanced groups within Catalan society" (2000: 82).

Thus the major question was whether "the pre-liberal idea of the Spanish political community, based on the dynastic principle and loyalty to the Catholic faith, relying on the preservation of 'unity in diversity' among the variegated kingdoms, territories, legal codes and privileges existing in the various territorial units which had merged into the Spanish monarchy since the end of the 15th century" (Nunez, 2000: 124) was being replaced by a Castilian-centered Spanish state. The emerging nationalisms within Spain then seemed to have started questioning whether the initial unity based on voluntary association, equality, and consensus among the constituting parts was being transformed into something to be defended against. Even in the

context of current debates on the educational reforms proposed by the Popular Party (PP) with a concern that "children in different parts of Spain have been learning a lot of very different things", criticisms "for encouraging elitism and being too Castilian and centralising" were waged by the nationalists (The Economist, August 5, 2000: 31). Yet, confronting the Castilian identity, language, laws and institutions proved to be more of an urgent task for some than for the others.

<u>The resilience of regionalism in Spain and nationalism:</u>

Despite the centrality accorded to the Castilian identity, other identities succeeded in surviving across Spain. Beramendi regards the year 1898 as a turning point in that with the loss of the Spanish Empire's last crucial colonies, the weakening of the Spanish state culminated in the transformation of regionalisms into nationalisms through the "conversion of two regional identities into alternative national identities (in Catalonia and the Basque Country), the consolidation of one nationalism (Galicia) and the proliferation of regionalist buds (Andalusia, the Canary Islands, Aragon, Valencia, etc.)" (2000: 89). Liberal victories following the Carlist wars, the consequences of the civil war, and the settlement of autonomy reached during the transition to democracy can, however, be enumerated as the major stepping stones in accounting for how alternative nationalisms proved to be resilient. In fact, regionalist movements seemed to have acquired momentum after each of these key developments. Beramendi for instance argues that the defeat in the Carlist wars "provided the opportunity for some traditionalists to change their national referent, which happened to a very small degree in Galicia, to a certain extent in Catalonia and to a large degree in the Basque Country, where the re-channeling of a large part of Basque traditionalism would play a key role in the emergence of Basque nationalism" (2000: 87). Furthermore, it seems possible to conclude that far from

achieving national homogenization, the Francoist era served to consolidate the same identities it aimed to eradicate by placing them on the defensive side. Finally, transition to democracy seems to have produced the very same effect of allowing for the forceful expression of identities.

It can also be argued that in addition to the nationalisms in Catalonia, Basque Country, and Galicia, regionalist sentiments have been given ground to flourish following particularly the settlement reached in the 1978 Constitution. The initiative taken with the Constitution seems to have aimed at enlarging the claimants to autonomy by granting the right to new regions with no experience of or previous claim to autonomous government. The design then intended to make the Basques, the Catalans and the Galicians not the sole beneficiaries of autonomy by leveling them with other regions. Hence, the Spanish choice in tackling the problem was opting for 'state of Autonomies' which in Estruch's opinion "has led in fact to an absolute trivialization of the problem of national diversity by smothering the claims of the historic nations as the result of the adoption of a model of decentalization with seventeen 'autonomous communities', all possessing their own institutions and symbols-...- which first had to be invented in most cases" (1991: 140). The period from 1981 up until 1983 was one in which autonomy statutes were approved and activated for all Spanish regions, except for the African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

Domestic peace and violence potential:

Violence which has been usually but by no means solely associated with ETA remains to be a major component of the conflict in Spain. With the way in which it has provoked reactions and parallel responses, violence occasionally served to block negotiations and initiatives by Spanish authorities. The analysis undertaken here will mainly focus on the Basque society due to the fact that violent attacks on the Spanish state were largely concentrated in the Basque region, with the other nationalist and regionalist movements opting for peaceful opposition. Payne argues that "Catalanism was always more collaborationist and less extreme in its demands, and after the frustrations of exaggerated ultra-Catalanism between 1934 and 1937 many Catalanists no longer have such interest in the extremes of political self-assertion" (1975: 250). (3)

The continuation of violence remains to be the major challenge to the Spanish task of maintaining a consolidated democracy under the conditions presented by ethnic conflict. Of all the variables that will be employed in this study in accounting for how some democracies dealing with ethnic conflict are able to consolidate while others are not, violence potential seems to be the one where Spain is rather located at a problematic end of the continuum.

Repression breeding violence?: The Franco era and channels for peaceful expression of dissent

Most accounts of violence in the Spanish context locate the discussion over the origins in the Francoist era. The major argument is that widespread repression and extreme control over societal mobilization have left violence as the sole channel for the expression of discontent. The repression to which the Basque society became a victim thus bolstered the image and standing of ETA as the defender of the Basque

nation. Yet, partisan preference makes a remarkable difference with respect to whom an individual attributes responsibility for terrorist violence. Gunther, Sani, and Shabad reveal how six different actors are attributed differing levels of responsibility across the political spectrum: micronationalist forces, extreme left, extreme right, the government, police, students and the youth, and the Franco regime (1988: 259). Franco regime has been cited among the major factors responsible for terrorism by significant numbers of individuals extending support to regional leftists, extreme leftists, communists and the Parti Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party-PNV) (Gunther, Sani, Shabad, 1988: 259).

Nevertheless, violence was not unilaterally perpetuated: other groups such as the GAL, GANE, BVE, AAA, and ATE some of which have been supported by the government in the fight against ETA have served the prolongation of the cycle of violence. (4) Ben-Ami in fact draws attention to the 'vicious circle of mounting terrorism and indiscriminate police retaliation' and 'the consequent radicalization of the population in the Basque country' (1991: 509). The legitimacy of the Spanish response has long been a major item on the Spanish political agenda.

Criticizing the PNV for adopting a conservative strategy, the founders of ETA distanced themselves from the relatively moderate Basque nationalists. ETA continued to defy the PNV and operated as a more vocal champion of the interests of the Basque society. Its protest against what it perceived to be the ineptitude of the PNV in its pursuit of the Basque cause continued unabated. ETA then seemed to be seizing the initiative in the 1960s and 1970s. The killing of Etxebarrieta and the Burgos trial have given it the opportunity to pose itself as a victim and claim support from the Basque society. (5) The assassination in 1973 of Carrero Blanco who was then Franco's prime minister and his potential successor has given the organization

the image of being capable enough of fighting against the Spanish enemy. Payne in fact calls this killing as "one of the most technically expert assassinations in modern history" (1975: 248). (6)

Llera forcefully argues that the assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, armed assaults, robberies, injuries inflicted, and the regime of revolutionary taxation targeting the policemen, military officers, mainly native Basque industrialists and politicians had only one goal: urging the Spanish government to negotiate (2000: 108). It thus seemed to target everything that symbolized the authority of the Spanish state in the Basque region. Inflicting a cost on the maintenance of authority over the Basque territories and compelling the Spanish state to negotiate on the relations between the Basque region and the central state at a time when the conditions seemed to be dictated by the Basque side emerged as the chief strategy. The ultimate aim of ETA as formulated by the Declaration of Principles issued in 1962 was "the independence of the French and Spanish Basque countries and their reunification in a democratic state that would guarantee religious freedom" (Ben-Ami, 1991: 505). The revolutionary tactics and the ultimate goal of an independent socialist state not only stretched beyond what the Spanish government planned to offer but also greatly exceeded the nationalist demands for 'historic rights'. All of this was more than what the Spanish authorities were willing to accede to, with their constant and tough emphasis on the 'indissoluble unity of Spain'.

The exacerbation of violence during democratic transition:

The Spanish experience with violence reveals that dealing with parties to a conflict which actually perpetuate violence may prove to be a problematic task. It becomes evident that caution is essential in the steps taken as any arrangements to appease some could always agitate the others. In other words, no matter how willing

political authorities may be in reaching a solution to the existing conflict through terminating violence, a unilinear progress may always be at risk. It could hence be argued that had there been no significant degree of violence accompanying the democratic transition process in Spain, many actors could have approached the reforms proposed by the government with greater receptivity. It is thus claimed that the continuation and the exacerbation of violence during the crafting process only served to strengthen the concerns over the indissoluble unity of Spain and the fears that concessions to the nationalists might soon lead to disintegration. Along similar lines, the attempts at reversing the autonomy arrangements in early 1980s were then linked to the aggravation of violence and the related reflection of an image of ineptitude for the Spanish state. Gunther, Sani, and Shabad reveal how "(v)iolence was particularly marked during the months between the constitutional referendum campaign and the 1979 parliamentary election", with the number of the dead jumping from 29 in 1977 and 88 in 1978 to 131 in 1979 (1988: 246). Llera also confirms that the highest levels of ETA violence "occurred during the period 1978-80, when the Spanish constitution and Basque autonomy statute were being negotiated and ratified, and the first elections to the regional parliament were being held" (2000: 108). Coverdale's analysis reveals that even when the draft for the amnesty was published following the attempts by the government to turn it into reality despite protests mainly from the military and sections of the public opinion, ETA responded with the killing of the president of the provincial council of Vizcaya and his bodyguards (1979: 91). ETA strategy seemed to be successful in displaying an image of weakness for the Spanish government who was perceived to be responding to the ongoing violence through the granting of concessions. The nationalist movements rather posed themselves to be on the winning side through the

seeming acquisition of rights as a consequence of the campaign waged against the Spanish state.

It was only through the rift within the nationalist camp created by these initiatives that ETA was partially weakened. ETA was not able to go through the process with a monolithic stance. It has at times fallen into disagreement and splits in the course of the debates on how it should respond to governmental initiatives. (7) The fear that agreeing to the statute may mean the negation of claims over Navarre and the French Basque country led many circles to conclude that approval might prove to be a departure from the long-term objectives. Others rather thought that the statute might be utilized as the first step in a plan to obtain the right to full self-determination for the Basque country. Yet, it was particularly significant that the HB branded the statute as 'illegal' and declared that "(t)he state of war against Spain continues" (Ben-Ami, 1991: 512).

The coup attempt in 1981 was a sign of discontent within the military in the context of the exacerbation of violence. Coverdale warns in his book in 1979 that "(t)he Constitution's concessions to Basque and Catalan regionalism, and the government's failure to restore order in the Basque country, seem, however, to have alienated the goodwill many officers had shown two years earlier and to have converted the neutrality of others into outright hostility toward liberalization" (1979: 109). Similarly, in his coverage of Spain in the book dated 1973, Medhurst draws attention to that "Spain's national military, bureaucratic and political elites had a traditional ideological commitment to the notion of a unitary state and resented the idea of special treatment for Basques and Catalans" (1973: 14). Along similar lines, Perez-Diaz points at how in time the Spanish armed forces came to withdraw their concerns over class struggle and moral breakdown as threatening the disintegration

of the country and now focused on one major source of potential disintegration: nationalist separatist movements (1993: 197). Hence, the growing reaction in the early 1980s was in no way unexpected.

Prime Minister Suarez who was the major actor in the crafting process was being criticized for failure to enforce the reforms and to overcome the military's increasing discontent, as a result of which he resigned in January 1981 amidst growing talk of military intervention. On February 23, 1981 came the coup, which was then halted by the armed forces as a sign of loyalty and obedience to the Crown with the efforts of King Juan Carlos. Perez-Diaz concludes that through the coup attempt, "the armed forces had sent an unequivocal message to the political class that they would exact a moral commitment from it to give priority to maintaining the unity and territorial integrity of Spain" and had ensured "the slowing down of the transfer of powers to the autonomous regions, the reduction of nationalist rhetoric with separatist overtones, and the imposition of a legislative framework which would safeguard the powers of the central government" (1993: 203). What seemed to be an exchange of messages between the armed forces and the political elite thus resulted in greater caution in the progress on dealing with the nationalist and regionalist challenges. The emphasis on the indissoluble unity of Spain was bolstered. Stressing that the relations between the central government and the Basque and Catalan autonomous governments deteriorated after the coup attempt, Clark indeed draws the conclusion that "between the 1982 electoral triumph of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) and 1985, no additional powers and resources were transferred to these governments" (1989: 16). Elsewhere, Clark also draws attention to the fact that in March 1981, "Madrid deployed regular Spanish army and navy

units to the Basque provinces, the first time that regular military force had been used in a counterinsurgency role" (1989: 25).

In April 1981, the Organic Law for the Harmonization of the Autonomy Process (LOAPA) was drawn up which was intended to provide a model for regional statutes in the following years. It was drafted and revealed by the Union of Democratic Center (UCD) and the PSOE to the exclusion of other political parties and representatives of the Basque or Catalan claims. Its preparation and presentation also took place totally out of the scope of the parliament and legislative processes. The law chiefly emphasized 'harmonization', with the objective of creating a greater symmetry between the rights enjoyed by each region. Diluting the Basque, Catalan, and Galician autonomy settlements as well as averting further transfers of power seemed to be the underlying aim. As regards the reactions towards the law, Clark examines how "Spanish leaders insisted that they were still committed to regional autonomy, and the LOAPA was nothing more than an effort to restore order and system to what had become a disorderly, even chaotic, process" in response to which the Basque and Catalan leaders referred to the betrayal of Madrid's own commitment to devolution and formed a joint 'anti-LOAPA front' (1989: 25-26). The Constitutional Court declared certain provisions of the LOAPA unconstitutional in 1983 as a result of an examination process initiated by the nationalist and communist parties. The Court judged that the LOAPA could not be binding over the statutes and was not a proper means for harmonization. The Court also stated that the authority to interpret the constitution also belonged to itself. Yet, Özçer still argues that the Court, through its verdict, interpreted the Constitution and statute in a centralist fashion (1999: 207).

The following period did by no means witness the smooth operation of the 'state of Autonomies': transfers of new powers to the regions were blocked through political channels, the legislation passed by the Congress of Deputies took precedence over those produced by the legislatures of the regions, scrutiny over the activities of the regional autonomous parliaments by the Constitutional Court was intense, and the center's control over the regions was enhanced through offices such as that of the civil governor and the government delegate. The autonomy process was then proceeding in a fashion of several steps forward and others back.

ETA's strategy in all of this was to put forward a number of conditions that it constantly adhered to since its birth. Even under the conditions of democratic transition that may have offered an opportunity for a relaxation of tensions, the organization reiterated these demands. That was done basically under what they termed the 'alternative KAS' (Koordinadora Abertzale Sozialista- Socialist Patriotic Coordinator) and included the recognition of Basque self-determination, the incorporation of Navarre into the independent Basque state, the complete legalization of all political parties, a withdrawal of the Spanish police and the Civil Guard from the Basque country, and a variety of social benefits to be granted to the Basque working class (Ben-Ami, 1991: 512). The up-dated KAS alternative declared in 1995 then called for the incorporation of these demands into the Autonomy Statute in return for which ETA would be renouncing violence.

No compromises with the terrorists: The PP rule

In evaluating the times prior to the PP rule, some analysts argue that "(u)ntil Mr Aznar came to national power in 1996, Socialist governments in Madrid, mindful of the years of repression under Franco, had tried to placate the PNV, lending local Socialist support to nationalist governments in the region and hoping thus to

maintain a united front against violence" (The Economist, February 24, 2001: 34).
Being itself placed in the frontline even before its coming into power at the center,
the PP was expected to signal a change of policy towards the region. The PP has
from 1995 on become the major target of the campaign of violence led by ETA.
Many party members holding local offices were subjects of ETA killings. In this
confrontation, PP and ETA seemed to be mutually hurt. The latest regional elections
of May 13, 2001 reveal that the PNV remains to be the strongest party in the Basque
region. The PP whose image has been bolstered in the Basque society mainly
because of the casualties it suffered has received the worst results since 1996. Its 19
seats in coalition with the regional split-off from the PP Unidad Alavesa (UA) in the
Basque Parliament was reciprocated by just 7 for the Euskal Herritarrok (Of the
Basque People- EH), ETA's renamed political wing, whose seats were halved in
comparison to the prior election.

It was the major condition put forward by the PP that in order to participate in
the political discussions over matters pertaining to the Basque region, ETA had to
renounce violence. Upon his reelection to office, Spanish Prime Minister Aznar has
appointed Oreja, himself of Basque origins and top in ETA's list of targets, as his
interior minister and has given him the task of dealing with ETA. The popularity of
Oreja then placed him in charge of PP's organization in the Basque region for the
May 13, 2001 regional elections in which the PP hoped to become the winners after
20 years of PNV hegemony. The basic calculation of the PP was that "(a) halt to the
flow of official funds and patronage from a regional government broadly sympathetic
to separatism could hurt ETA" (The Economist, February 24, 2001: 34).

The defeat of ETA has thus become the cornerstone of Aznar's policy in line
with which he consistently refused two possibilities: discussing the indissolubility of

Spain and negotiating with those who still resorted to force in the pursuit of objectives. Aznar cautiously disassociated terrorism and political discussions. Indeed, Prime Minister Aznar's tough opposition to violence was reflected throughout his speech on May, 9 in 1998: Aznar claimed that the sympathizers of HB should be imprisoned with the terrorists and condemned the PNV for engaging in a dialogue with HB under the circumstances of the intensification of terrorism by asking what the PNV had to negotiate with the murderers (Özçer, 1999: 350). By the end of 1997, with the High Court verdict that convicted all the leadership of the HB of cooperation with the armed band and sentenced them to 7 years in prison, ETA and the HB were left completely encircled. (8) The anti-terrorism accord between the PP and the PSOE in December 2000 actually singled out the constitution as the only means through which the nationalist demands could be expressed and called on the other nationalist parties to sever their relations with ETA and its political wing. Thus, the parties that were in favor of sustaining a dialogue with ETA and the EH seemed also to be encircled by the two major centrist political parties. While the PP was eager to negotiate and render concessions on such issues as the historic taxation rights mainly due to its reliance on the Catalan and Basque nationalists for support in the parliament, its stance on violence was tough and definite.

A change in ETA's strategy was evident in that it began to perceive negotiations as a means of tackling problems. The calls particularly from the other Basque political parties for dialogue seemed to have been welcomed by ETA despite its continuation to use force except for a brief period of ceasefire. A strategic calculation of not being isolated and a concern over not being deprived of legitimacy in the face of the willingness to negotiate by all the other actors might have played the major role in such a shift. Llera indeed terms the period after 1998 as one of

'pacification' owing to what he terms the political manifesto of the nationalist front (Declaracion de Estella or the Lizarra Declaration) and the announcement of ceasefire by ETA (2000: 112). It was only then acceptable to Aznar to undertake some conciliatory action: he "confirmed that direct talks had taken place - in Belgium- between his representatives and EH, with the Catholic Church as an intermediary,... Mr Aznar has also told some ETA people living abroad that they are free to come back to Spain without risk of prosecution. ...he is also gradually transferring ETA prisoners in Spanish jails outside the Basque country to prisons in their home area" (The Economist, June 19, 1999: 34). That, however, was not to last long given that ETA ended the cease-fire that lasted for fourteen months in December 1999. ETA accused the government of chasing it even under conditions of ceasefire and dealing with it only superficially with no intention of negotiating a definite peace. (9)

Ajuria Enea Pact and the Lizarra Declaration: Can violence be ruled out?:

Attempts at terminating violence have gained momentum from late 1980s on. Initiatives at constituting a block against terrorism came from different political actors, with the debate on the inclusion of ETA being the most controversial issue. On the whole, all the initiatives seemed to have pleased some and annoyed others, with none obtaining consensus among all the major actors. Yet, the fact that each signaled a step forward in the direction of pressurizing the perpetuators of violence and obtaining public endorsement makes the negotiating process and its actual outcomes (i.e. pacts and declarations) all the more significant.

The Ajuria Enea Pact (also termed the Agreement on the Normalization and Pacification of Euskadi) basically stressed confronting terrorism through the unity of democratic political parties. It thus involved the voicing of perseverance in

opposition to terrorism as a method. The support extended by the Basque nationalists such as the PNV and the Eusko Alkartasuna (EA) to the government made the pact all the more significant. The pact in fact seemed to be an anti-terrorism accord endorsed also by the bulk of Basque and Catalan nationalists. Two parties particularly deserve to be credited for the endeavor: the PNV and the PSOE coalition government that ruled in the Basque region initiated the process of dialogue. While the PNV started negotiating with the Basque political parties, the PSOE took the responsibility for conducting similar talks with the nation-wide parties. HB's refusal to join the negotiations gave this pact the image of a united front against ETA violence. Özçer argues that the pact did by no means aim at a comprehensive solution to the Basque problem but rather wished to obtain a consensus against violence as the lowest common denominator and excluded any discussion on political matters. (1999: 242-243). Terrorism was presented as the major challenge to democracy. (10) The major message to extreme nationalists was that any aim including that of independence could be pursued provided that this pursuit was devoid of resort to violence and was located within the context of the existing institutions. The isolation of those who resorted to violence then seemed possible. The PNV, Euzkadiko Ezkerra (EE), and EA were in fact situated at the opposite corners with the HB and ETA. Nevertheless, the matters that were carefully left out of the scope of discussions in order not to breach the consensus against violence in the late 1980s were then a decade later presented as the common ground on which the Basque nationalists stood with the Lizarra Declaration.

The PNV's efforts at creating an atmosphere of dialogue in the Basque region that will also incorporate the HB have intensified in late 1990s. PNV's secret talks with the HB and ETA culminated in a peace plan that was not warmly received by

the centrist parties. Discussions over issues such as the right to self-determination or territorial arrangements were rejected by the PP and the PSOE. The concern among the centrist parties was that certain critical issues might be re-opened for discussion and demands for a potential revision of the autonomy statute might be dictated by the consensus among the nationalist groups. Yet, the significance of the process lied in the fact that it "has for the first time drawn Herri Batasuna, ..., into talks with other local parties and trade unions" in an effort where the "Basque Nationalists, along with all local political groups as well as the ex-communist United Left in Madrid, have called for 'open discussions' on the Basque country's future to follow an ETA ceasefire" (The Economist, September 19, 1998: 40). It was in September 12, 1998 that the PNV, EA, and the HB joined by 19 civil society organizations and the centrist political party named the United Left (IU) signed a declaration which basically stated that violence should be ended through the initiation of a process of dialogue comprehensive enough to include ETA. The main items on the agenda pertained to political sovereignty and territorial issues, the discussion of which had to be accompanied by a ceasefire endorsed by ETA. Referring the outcome of the dialogue process to the opinion of the Basque nation was set as the final step.

The October 25 regional elections of 1998 then came at a critical juncture: the results were to determine not only those who were to rule the Basque region but also the extent of support for the ETA ceasefire, the formation of a nationalist block, and the stance of the central government. Indeed, the nationalists called on the voters to cast their ballots with a view to revealing their support for the latest nationalist deal. Many argue that EH's relative rise in comparison to the 1994 elections through obtaining 18 percent of the vote and 14 out of the 75 seats in fact sent a clear message: the voters "approved of the decision to renounce violence and seek an

independent state through politics" (The Economist, October 31, 1998: 31). The fact that the PP recorded an even more impressive rise than the EH through obtaining 16 seats was blurred by what seemed to be a nationalist victory: the PNV came out of the elections as the first party with 21 seats and the EA with an additional 6. The desire of the Basque nationalist parties to control the regional parliament without feeling the need to obtain the support of the centrists brought the potential risk that the nationalists could now have a freer hand in pressing for an agenda focusing on the re-negotiation of the agreed terms of autonomy. In fact, the cooperation instituted among the nationalists with the declaration was then sustained in the context of the formation of the Basque Assembly of Municipalities.

Many have regarded the Lizarra Declaration as the erosion of the Ajuria Enea Pact after a decade. While the PNV portrayed the Lizarra Declaration as the broadening of the goals stated in the Ajuria Enea Pact, for the PP it was nothing more than the shattering of the consensus achieved through that pact. In Özçer's opinion, the declaration in fact signaled the emergence of a nationalist front endorsing the task of achieving independence for the Basque country through democratic means (1999: 362). Özçer also argues that Basque nationalism was now able to overcome the division that was inflicted on it through the Ajuria Enea Pact which seemed to differentiate between the democrats who condemned terrorism and those embracing terrorism (1999: 363).

That ETA has been responsible for over 760 killings has made the matter even more sensitive as popular emotions were highly mobilized over the issue. Dealing with ETA was never easy in that additional sense too. The fact that the previous three ceasefires by ETA proved inconclusive seemed to pose a confidence problem for the central government. The calls by Aznar for a definite and an

unconditional end to use of force by ETA should thus be placed in that context. In his suspicious stance, Aznar was extended support by the Socialists who in their centralist emphasis similarly evaluated the risks facing Spain in the case of the emergence of a concerted Basque nationalist front. It was such common concerns which led the PP and the PSOE to sign an anti-terrorism agreement.

Still, the recent intense opposition to violence displayed by the public and the PNV's insistence in the latest regional elections that it would refrain from forging a formal coalition with the EH unless the latter renounced violence seem to signal that those for violence may progressively be alienated, not only by the public but also by the other legitimate political actors. There are indeed calls directed at the perpetuators of violence to uphold "the tactic of transforming men of violence into electable politicians" (The Economist, October 10, 1998: 35).

Taking violence to be a major component of the conflict, the way the context can compensate for failure to deal with it brings into picture the significance of other variables: public opinion and the party system. Taking the existence of violence for granted in the Spanish context, whether the public is indifferent towards, supportive of or firmly against those who perpetuate violence seems to make the difference as regards the prospects of democratic consolidation in an environment of violent conflict. Similarly, the attitude of the legitimate political actors towards violence may also exacerbate or alleviate the democratic prospects. The coming parts of the analysis on Spain then focus on whether the country is endowed with such favorable conditions in its fight against ethnic tensions fed by considerable violence potential. What, in other words, might then account for democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict aggravated by the continuation of violence?

The Party System:

<u>The nationalist-centrist tension as a source of partisan conflict:</u>

Different regional party systems with peculiar characteristics flourished in Spanish politics. In addition to the centrist parties functioning in the regions through local branches, regional parties became significant actors in regional and even in national politics. Gunther, Sani, and Shabad argue that Spain "differs considerably from most other European societies, however, in the extent to which center-periphery cleavages are sources of political conflict- at the national level, between the culturally and linguistically distinct minorities and the Castilian majority, and even within the peripheral regions themselves" (1988: 241). The regional question thus became a significant source of contention not only between the parties of the center and regions but also among the regionalist political forces themselves. In accounting for the strengthening of the regionalist forces, Nunez argues that the "UCD had agglomerated a good number of local elites from the late Francoist period, for whom a conversion to regionalism became the best way to reorient their political activity and to retain their influence after 1982" as "the regionalist option has become a typical catch-all label which may be adopted by any local politician in a pinch" (2000: 130 and 131). Yet, all of this does not necessarily mean that the center-periphery issues were so dominant as to obscure the significance of socioeconomic, religious or ideological issues. The latter in fact have formed the major cleavages across bulk of the regions.

At the national level, the greatest strength of the Spanish case in its fight against ethnic conflict seems to be the convergence of almost all the parties around the autonomy design. Although disagreements existed as to the extent of autonomy to be granted, even the most ardent opponents began to perceive it as an essential

component of the democratization process. The then Socialist leader Benegas was quoted to have stated that "Socialists are the authentic autonomists...because we are the only ones to have defended and will continue to defend the statute of Guernica, both against centralism of the UCD and against independentist tendencies..." (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 252). While the UCD scrutinized the prospects for autonomy through cautious steps, the Alianza Popular (AP) seemed to be the staunchest opponent of a scheme of autonomy out of the fear that it might lead to the disintegration of Spain. What Nunez terms "the deficit of legitimacy of Spanish nationalist discourse, due to its appropriation of and identification with the Francoist legacy, which pushed almost all political parties of the democratic spectrum towards decentralizing proposals" (2000: 125) might indeed account for this convergence around decentralization. The PP perceived by many observers as having inherited AP's legacy and having provided an attraction point for the previous members of the UCD was located at the center of debates over autonomy since 1996. An image of moderation in the face of debates over decentralization initially characterized the PP's approach to the issue despite the party's reputation as a conservative political force. Thus, although the PP was confronted with the complex task of restoring the reputation of the Spanish right following the end of Francoist era, it has successfully gained a progressive image of its own, shedding off the concerns that the PP might in fact fill the void left by the UCD and AP. (11) It is hence plausible to conclude that extremist opinions were the ones more likely to distance themselves from proposals for autonomy. The Basque nationalists, the far right and the far left particularly refrained from endorsing the new constitution. Still, as Gibbons explicitly reveals, the emergence of an alliance of democratic and regionalist movements across Catalonia, Basque region, Galicia, and Andalusia "meant that the transition to

democracy after Franco generated a solemn commitment by democratic forces to a degree of regional autonomy" (1999: 15).

Another significant factor that strengthens the Spanish stance against ethnic conflict is the almost complete convergence of the political parties around a rejection of violence as a method in achieving political goals. The HB and the EH set apart, the PNV receives the most intense criticism for failure to isolate ETA. The PNV rather seems to have opted for keeping the channels of dialogue open with those who resort to violence and placing upon them the condition of renunciation of violence in return for a greater role in the regional politics, such as participation in a regional coalition government. The socialists and the communist have also united in their opposition to ETA's choice of violent resistance to the Spanish state following democratic transition although "(i)t took the Spanish left some effort to start condemning ETA terrorism because of its gratitude for that organization's record in the war of attrition against what proved to be only circumstantially the common enemy: Franco" (Ben-Ami, 1991: 513). At the regional level, for instance, to protest against HB's rejection to condemn ETA violence, there have been times when the PNV, PSOE, PP and EA came together to propose a common candidate against potential HB successes or to remove HB members from local offices.

A final source of convergence among the political parties in Spain revolves around support for the deepening of integration in the context of the EU. Arguing that "European integration has transformed the old nationalities question in Spain" by providing resources and allies in the fight against centralizing tendencies within Spain, Keating underlines that Convergencia i Unio (Convergence and Union- CiU) leader Pujol advocates a 'Europe of the Regions', the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) extends support to a 'Europe of the Peoples', radical Basque

nationalism rejects the current shape of EU with support for people's Europe devoid of states whereas the PNV perceives the EU as a means of furthering its vision of a different future for the Basque region (2000: 39, 33, 34, and 36). Similarly, the Galician Fraga, in his new regionalist theory, "does not deny Spain the condition of one single nation, but advocates a more prominent role for the subnational units within the future borderless European union, as well as reinforcing regional identity" (Nunez, 2000: 135). The CiU and the PNV actually negotiated with the PP government in 1996 on enhanced influence on relations with the EU through greater representation.

The Basque region ranks first in terms of the strength of the nationalist political forces. In accounting for why the coalitions were essential to politics in the Basque region, Payne draws attention at how the "(p)arty structure and political opinion in the Basque provinces were highly fragmented" (2000: 101). In addition to the deep divide between the radical and moderate brands of Basque nationalism, even the PNV was not able to preserve its unity when a radical split resulted in the formation of the EA in 1986. Drawing attention at the charismatic leadership by Garaikoetxea of the EA, Grugel argues that "the split was the result of personal antagonism and conflicts on the one hand, and dissatisfaction with the lack of democracy inside the PNV" (1990: 108). Hence, in the nationalist camp, the EA "has presented itself as a modernizing party, untainted by contact with the Madrid-based parties, and more genuinely nationalistic than the PNV" (Grugel, 1990: 108). Despite these difficulties, however, the PNV succeeded in staying as the dominant actor on the Basque political scene. Only once has it gained fewer seats in the autonomous parliament than the other parties and that was to the Socialists' regional branch in the Basque region, PSOE-PSE (Socialist Workers' Party- Socialist Party of Euskadi). In

accounting for the party's central position, Ben-Ami signals at a peculiar nature of the party as he sets the PNV apart from the rest of Spanish political parties in that it "was much more than just an electoral machine. It was the integrative expression of the Basque soul, the guardian and revealer of Basque culture and tradition" (Ben-Ami, 1999: 497).

Yet Llera refers to the existence of a consensus among scholars on terming the Basque party system as one of 'polarized pluralism' based on a list of factors such as "an average of seven significant parliamentary parties, the two largest of which only received 47.5 percent of valid votes cast in the [1998] regional election; an index of parliamentary fragmentation of 0.79; important ideological tensions; and an anti-system party openly supporting violence during the last 20 years and receiving 17.7 percent of the vote" (2000: 114). Polarization indeed permeates the system with the left-right, centrist-nationalist, and violent-nonviolent dichotomies placing the existing parties at clear distances from each other. In addition to the strong presence of the centrist parties in the region as well as the sharp divergence between the parties alienating those who perpetuate violence and preserving links with them, ideological differences were a main source of division among the Basque nationalist actors. The EE, for instance, was located to the left of the PNV due to its Marxist inspiration and has earned "the reputation as somewhat of a think-tank of nationalism" with the support it received from the Basque intellectual elite (Grugel, 1990: 108). The direction of the nationalist vote is thus difficult to determine with the PNV, the EE, the EA, and the EH all standing as potential destinations for the Basque nationalists' vote. This fact stands as one major factor accounting for the high level of fragmentation of the Basque party system. It is hence particularly significant that obtaining an absolute majority has been out of reach for all the parties.

Coalitions thus have proved to be the key to rule in many instances. This has actually bolstered the relevance of each political party in the Basque party system with the support of each being taken into consideration in the calculations over the making of coalitions.

As far as the extent of polarization in the Basque party system is concerned, Llera argues that "there has been a certain convergence towards the middle of the two continua, especially with movement towards the political center on the part of the PNV, PSE and PP, in addition to the fusion between PSE and EE (PSE-EE) and the solid alliance of reconciliated PNV-EA" with "the effect of further isolating the extremes (HB and UA)" (2000: 117). Yet the most striking aspect of the Basque party system is reflected in the existence of an extremist party renamed as the EH. The HB, as it was then called, was a gathering of far left and extreme nationalist forces. The best standing for the HB in regional elections was in 1990, where it was able to obtain 18.4 percent of the votes. Where the HB came closest to that percentage was in 1998 amidst the discussions of the ceasefire with a 17.7 percentage of the vote. Particularly crucial was the fact that the HB which has consistently rejected to take up the seats it won has improved its relations with the PNV and has cooperated in the latter's effort to rule the Basque region during the ceasefire period. Previously, Lancaster draws attention at how "(s)everal highly publicized events have centered on these deputies' refusal to take the parliamentary oath because it includes a swearing of allegiance to the Spanish constitution" (1996: 306). That refusal was in fact moderated due to the opportunity provided by the ceasefire declaration. Yet, the recent ban on the HB and the trouble in the relations between the PNV and PP upon the ban stand as factors likely to aggravate polarization.

As regards the nationalist political actors in Catalonia, the Lliga (the Catalan Regionalist League) which has been the first Catalan nationalist party and ERC have been the major coalitions through which the demands were traditionally channeled. Yet while the PNV has been able to capitalize on its historically central position, the traditional strongholds of Catalan politics prior to the Francoist period could not escape the traumas of that period and the erosion of popular support. In the elections for the Catalan parliament held between the years 1980 and 1999, the ERC vote ranged between 9.5 and 4.14 percent. The coalition of CiU has dominated Catalan politics since the first regional elections in 1980. The votes it obtained in the elections to the Catalan parliament stand above 40 percent since 1984. Jordi Pujol who ruled Catalonia for around twenty years has headed the coalition of conservative (CDC) and Christian Democratic nationalists under the banner of the CiU.

In accounting for why the level of polarization was lower in the Catalonian context, Gunther, Sani, and Shabad argue that "(w)hat is striking about Catalunya, therefore, when compared with Euskadi, was the extensive degree of penetration achieved by statewide parties, particularly those of the left, despite widely held regional attachments and micronationalist views" (1988: 346-347). A highly significant recent development in Catalan politics pointing at the same direction is that in 1999 regional elections, the Socialist Party obtained a greater share of the votes than the CiU under the leadership of Maragall who used to be the mayor of Barcelona and who became reputable especially with the Olympic Games in Barcelona. Many observers link this change to a moral decay characterizing the long rule of Pujol in which "(f)riends and relations seem to have done rather well" and consider it to be a significant development as Maragall is perceived as a political figure "who wants to make Catalonia less inward-looking, less prickly about its

identity and more open to the rest of Spain" (The Economist, October 9, 1999: 42).
Indeed, while trailing behind the CiU in Catalan autonomous elections, the PSOE
occasionally ranked above the CiU as far as the general election results for Catalonia
are concerned. Hence, the Socialists and the CiU have been the main contenders. The
PP, on the other hand, seems to be in trouble as far as its performance in Catalonia is
concerned. Some commentators argue that this was "because many non-Catalan
voters who had previously voted for it were put off by Mr Aznar being too cosy - as
they saw it- with Mr Pujol's nationalists" (The Economist, November 6, 1999: 39).

As regards the potential support for nationalist options, Galicia seems to rank
the lowest among the three historic regions. One major difference displayed by the
Galician case was that among the historic nations, only in Galicia were the center
parties able to dominate in the autonomous parliament, with the Galician nationalist
parties obtaining 13 percent of votes and just 4 out of 71 seats during the transition to
democracy. That certainly stood in marked contrast to the Basque region where the
PNV obtained 25 out of 60 seats and came out as the winner of every Basque
election since then and Catalonia where the Catalan nationalist CiU obtained the
highest number of seats with 43 out of 135 and became a dominant force of the
Catalan politics since then. In the imminent regional elections of 1981, parties that
extended support to Galician nationalist claims jointly could not exceed
approximately 12 percent of votes. Polarization with respect to the center-periphery
cleavage seems to be relatively milder. For Gunther, Sani, and Shabad the Galician
case seems to be the most puzzling due to the fact that the objective conditions would
imply that it is the region where nationalist sentiments should be highest: usage of
the regional language was quite widespread, Galicians were the most discriminated
against by the other Spaniards, and Galicia was among the poorest regions of Spain

(1988: 313). In assessing the relative lack of politicization of the Galician masses around nationalist objectives, the authors point at a number of different potential explanations in claiming that: "(o)ne may, to a certain extent, attribute differences in the politicization of the center-periphery cleavage to varying historical traditions of regional self-government. ... Because Galicia has been an integral part of the Castilian state for centuries, such historical memories are absent in Galicia.... In contrast with Euskadi and Catalunya, Galicia has historically been a region of emigration by the more dynamic segments of the working and lower-middle classes. This, together with the integration of the regional socioeconomic and political elites into the dominant Castilian culture, served to deprive Galicia of both a well-organized leadership and a mass base for nationalist movements. Further impeding mass mobilization are the geographical dispersion of the largely agricultural population into small, not easily accessible villages, the poorly developed communications and transportation infrastructures, and the low level of education in the rural sector of society" (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 329-330). Elsewhere, they add that the task of the nationalist forces in Galicia is all the more complicated due to the "traditional passivity of its population, which historically has worked to the advantage of conservative political forces" (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 315). This may also account for how the center-right parties and the statewide parties have traditionally been strong in Galicia with, for instance, the UCD obtaining the widest support during the transition to democracy: 53.9 percent and 48.3 percent in 1977 and 1979 general elections respectively. Despite the rejection of the statute of autonomy by the then leftist regionalist parties such as Unidade Galega (UG) and Bloque Nacional Popular Gallego (BNPG), it was the centrist right UCD that was endowed with the task of presiding over the Galician side in negotiations with

Madrid through popular vote. Gunther, Sani, and Shabad in fact argue that "in Galicia, the moderate or conservative ideological tendencies of many Gallego voters evidently precluded them from supporting the leftist BNPG and even the center-left Unidade Galega" (1988: 366). Keating refers to conservative and clientelistic nature of the Galician political culture with a tradition of relying on connections with Madrid governments in accounting for the absence of a bourgeois regionalist/nationalist party despite the attempt at such a party in the 1980s in the form of Coalicion Galega (2000: 38). In fact, a highly influential figure in Galician politics is Manuel Fraga who was a minister in the Franco period, then headed the AP and was a founder of the PP. Currently in his fourth term as the premier of Galicia, "he argues for wide devolution, with the centre running only foreign affairs, defence and justice" (The Economist, October 27, 2001: 40).

In other parts of Spain, regionalist parties also functioned with differing degrees of support and strength. As regards the period of transition to democracy, Perez-Diaz draws attention at how "(i)n the other regions an abstention level of 40 percent was normal when the enabling statutes were passed, and no party whose main identity was nationalist or regionalist obtained more than about 10 percent of the vote" (1993: 206). Nunez argues that "Andalusian regionalism went through a period of relative strength (1977-89) as a leftist tendency, and the Canary Islands' radical left nationalism, with its origins going as far back as the 1960s, gained some electoral support" (2000: 125). Nunez also examines the Aragonese Party (PAR) in its pursuit of equality of status with Catalonia, Valencian Union (UV) upholding an anti-Catalanist emphasis, and the Regionalist Party of Cantabria demanding autonomy from Castile all of which rely "on the mobilizing appeal of the complaints against the privileges afforded by the central state to the historical nationalities, along with a

demand for funds from the Madrid government in order to further improve their regions" (2000: 129). (12) Regional parties in regions such as Valencia, La Rioja, Cantabria obtained below or slightly above 10 percent in the regional elections. Setting Navarre, Andalucia, and the Canary Islands apart from the other regions with respect to the speed with which regionalist forces came to acquire public support, Gunther, Sani, and Shabad offer an explanation in arguing that "(t)he considerable increase in autonomist sentiments in Andalucia and elsewhere may have been a response to the arguments made by certain regional elites that continuing support for Spanish parties would reduce Andalucia and others to the status of second-class regions, compared with the more economically and politically advantaged soon-to-be autonomous communities of Euskadi and Catalunya" (1988: 384). It thus seems possible to argue that although support for these regionalist parties is not likely to assume the proportions of those for the ones in historical regions, they are likely to continue pressing for autonomy and other regionalist demands.

Coalition and blackmail potential of regional parties:

The most important aspect of the coexistence of regional and statewide party systems seems to be that both groups of parties are significant actors at every level of Spanish politics. While the statewide parties are crucial contenders across all the Spanish regions, certain regional parties occasionally become located at the center of politics in Madrid.

Despite the fact that they do not acquire as widespread and cross-regional support as the centrist parties in the Spanish general elections, the seats acquired by the regionalist parties in the Spanish parliament seem to have given them immense opportunities. In the most recent general elections of 2000, the CiU obtained 15 seats whereas the PNV acquired 7. The Andalusian, Canary Islands, Galician, Aragonese,

Basque and Catalan parties in combination with the Greens obtained 12 out of 350 seats as against 183 for the PP. In comparison to the 1996 elections, the CiU lost one seat whereas PNV gained 2. Thus, in total, while the regional parties previously held 29 seats, they came to occupy 33 seats in 2000. The centrist parties ruling in Madrid may thus need the support of the nationalist parties in order to acquire the majority to rule. Catalan nationalists have backed the PP government when the latter failed to obtain the majority to rule on its own. Similarly, the PNV also extended support to Aznar government at times. Following its election victory in 1996, the PP sought to sign an agreement with the PNV to secure its support as it did with the Canary Coalition and the CiU. While in need of support during its first period of rule from 1996 until 2000, the March 2000 general elections created the conditions under which the PP acquired an outright majority that enabled it to act on its own. Yet, Aznar repeatedly stressed that the pursuit of agreements and compromises with other legitimate political forces in compliance with the attitude adopted during the first period of PP rule would in no way be halted in this second term.

The other side of the coin reveals that the regional parties are also in need of cooperation with the parties of the center and other regionalists. Considering the fact that they are usually situated in the position of ruling in a particular region, they need to be on good terms with the central government for a flow of resources and for further improving the autonomy status. Similarly, in order to obtain the majority in the regional parliament they seek to form coalitions or to establish cooperative relations with the other political parties. In certain regions such as in Aragon, the regionalist parties needed the support of the centrist parties and even made coalitions with them in order to govern. Even the PNV which was more entrenched in the politics of its region required the support of Socialists to rule in the mid-1980s. It

thus had to form coalitions with parties as varied as the PSE, EE, EA, UA, IU, and even the PP at different levels of regional politics. The PNV-PSE coalition in regional government is usually praised for having introduced a significant degree of moderation and accommodation into Basque politics. Thus the search for consensus, coalitions and pacts has always been an inevitable aspect of Basque politics.

What accounts for the significant role played by the centrist parties at the regional level seems to be their effective organization at the local level. The centrist parties operate through provincial branches in the regions and thus are under pressure from these branches over the issues pertaining to the regions. Despite the fact that the candidates for the centrist parties face threats, intimidation, and even accusations of betrayal particularly in the Basque region, effective organization of the nationalist parties at the regional level has been a top priority. The PP was clearly the major target of intimidation. Yet, the PP always reserved places for the regional politicians at the top of the party's administration, and hence chose to integrate the regional political figures into the nationwide politics. In his second term, for instance, Aznar embarked on the task with a Galician whose previous task was to wage his re-election campaign running the prime minister's office, a Catalan foreign minister who previously served as the minister of industry and government spokesman, and a Catalan minister of science and technology.

The CiU merits greater emphasis as it has become the most important regional party exerting an impact on Spanish politics. During the period of democratic transition, Suarez's party was in need of CiU's cooperation for a majority in the Spanish parliament. Furthermore, from 1993 until 1996 elections, the CiU helped the minority government of the Socialists to survive. Its decision to withdraw support from the Gonzalez government upon the scandals surrounding the Socialists'

name was to determine the date of the 1996 general elections. From then on and until the 2000 elections, the CiU extended support to the PP minority government and enabled it to remain in power. Through this key position, it not only acquired the opportunity to locate itself at the center of Spanish politics but also obtained the chance to bolster Catalan autonomy through negotiating new concessions in return for the support it extended to the central government.

Regional parties: Agents of Political Moderation?

The PNV was the regional party that seemed to be the least challenged in its respective region. Despite the deep fragmentation in Basque politics and the split it had to go through, the PNV managed to obtain the highest percentage of votes in every regional election since 1980. Reservations were shared by the other political parties as to the real motives of the PNV. Routine condemnations of ETA actions by the PNV, their criticism of the government methods employed in the Basque region as contributing to the spiral of violence, their eagerness to reject government schemes in favor of alternatives of their own, the support they extended to the transfer of ETA prisoners to jails in the Basque region, their support for the principle of self-determination and their final act of talking to the HB / EH seemed to have served to the questioning of their genuine objectives. The fact that "(t)he political mission of the PNV remained that of achieving the widest possible degree of self-government, and of defining Euskadi's links with 'Spain' as an association between two sovereign peoples" (Ben-Ami, 1991: 498) has made the party one professing ambiguous objectives in the eyes of many. The leader of the PNV, Arzallus, was quoted to have stated that he would trade the Spanish settlement for the Irish one basically because "...that agreement reserved the authority to decide on the future of that country for the Ulster citizens" and added that "we, as a nation, also have the

right to self-determination. What matters is the recognition of this right by the central government" (Özçer, 1999: 359-360). Such issues proved to be the fragile points of any potential agreement reached by the mainstream Basque nationalists and the central government. In fact, skepticism also seemed to revolve around the issue of whether the PNV was extracting benefits from the existence of ETA and the HB. By posing itself as the main alternative to the radicalism of ETA, the PNV was believed to have endorsed an image of moderation. It was thus suspected that the prolongation of violence rather helped the PNV in displaying itself as the sole legitimate interlocutor of the Basque cause. Some observers even predict a deeper disagreement within the PNV as Ibarretxe who currently heads the Basque government of the PNV and Arzalluz who leads the party differ on their attitudes towards ETA with the former taking a tougher stance against it as "(t)aking a leaf out of the book of the peace-seeking Northern Irish republican nationalist, John Hume, who has helped to draw the Irish Republican Army and its political arm, Sinn Fein, into mainstream politics, Mr. Arzalluz has spent the past few years trying to do the same with ETA and its political wing, Herri Batasuna" (The Economist, June 10, 2000: 37). Arzalluz who headed the party for almost thirty years was indeed at the center of the criticisms directed at the PNV as "many Spaniards view him as a devious and sanctimonious humbug who refuses to call evil by its name and who can not dispel a visceral hatred, imbued in him since the Franco era, of what he calls 'the Spanish state' (The Economist, September 9, 2000: 44). The PP government in fact bluntly questions the real motives of the PNV which led to the periodic resurgence of tensions between the Basque and Madrid governments. Currently, the relations are strained once more with the PNV calling for a new type of association with Madrid and a Basque referendum on that design. The PNV declares its willingness to seek legislative

approval for a referendum on whether the Basque region should become a free state associated with Spain in 2003. Furthermore, the PNV reaction following the ban on the HB was further protested by the PP. As PNV leader Arzalluz was quoted to have stated that "(e)verything to do with the banning [of Batasuna] is aimed at taking away the vote from so many thousands of people who have a legitimate political choice. They can count on our moral support", to Aznar "it confirmed his conviction that Mr Arzallus and his party are hand-in-glove with ETA's gunmen" (The Economist, February 8, 2003: 39). Current controversy revolves around the fact that the PNV government refused Supreme Court's call to dissolve HB's seven-member group in the regional assembly. The concern that the PNV may radicalize its discourse only to attract the votes of those who have traditionally voted for ETA's political wing is quite apparent. Indeed, the PNV benefits from the ban on HB by obtaining a higher number of council seats and mayoral offices. The Spanish government plans to undertake a legal battle against the Basque government and the regional parliament on these issues. A law suit has indeed been filed to the Spanish Supreme Court by the Spanish government against the PNV plan for a new form of association with Madrid. Another case was brought by the government against the President of the Basque parliament on charges of the latter's refusal to ban a parliamentary faction of the HB.

Yet, it remains to be a main argument of this study that although the PNV is usually criticized for having a rather ambivalent attitude towards the issue of radicalism, the fact that it distanced itself from the radical nationalist parties deserves notice. It basically took great care in presenting itself as adopting a completely different approach from the extremist nationalist options. The PNV has engaged in many actions that might in fact bolster this claim. While, for instance, the HB and EE

called on the voters to vote no during the constitutional referendum, the PNV took the different course of opting for abstention. To cite another example, when ETA called off the ceasefire, Ibarretxe actually halted cooperation with the then HB in Basque parliament and local councils. Following the Blanco murder, the PNV was the leading one among the Basque parties which cooperated with the mainstream parties in attempts at denying support to, and even overthrowing, the HB mayors. While explicitly keeping its distance from extreme Basque nationalism, the PNV never completely halted dialogue with the parties representing that tradition. The Ardanza Plan proposed by the PNV for multi-party talks among parties represented in the Basque parliament aiming at the drawing up of a resolution which would be presented to the Madrid government as the will of the Basque people, the periodic attempts by the party for convergence around anti-terrorism pacts, or the Lizarra Declaration were all the products of insistence on keeping the channels for dialogue open despite the deterioration of relations during periods of intense violence.

Confronting radicalism and extremism did not prove to be such an urgent task for the parties elsewhere. An extremist-moderate split was not an evident aspect of Catalan politics despite the central role assumed by the nationalist parties. Payne indeed argues that "(t)he politics and policies of radical Catalanism thus ended in complete defeat by 1939" and adds that the support obtained by the radical Basque HB was in fact "ten times the support provided for the revolutionary Catalanist splinters of FAC, PSAN or Terra Lliure in Catalonia" (2000: 99 and 104). The fact that the CiU has at different times been endowed with the responsibility to participate in the task of 'governing' Spain from the centre actually seems to have resulted in greater moderation and eagerness to play by the existing rules of the game. Those who claimed to represent the Catalan cause rather confined their expression of

objectives to matters relating to autonomy and the preservation of language and culture. Their chief objective was to secure the distinct status of Catalonia as a historic 'nation'. The CiU opposed any potential federalization of the Spanish state which would entail the allocation of the same rights to every region, whether historical or not.

It is the chief argument of this study that there surface two critical factors in the Spanish context: the effective organization of the nationwide parties across the regions and the existence of regional parties with no commitment to violent means or extremism. Firstly, the parties at the national level have so far seen a stake in organizing across the whole country through presenting serious alternatives for the expression of the demands of a variety of people. The regional leaders and the candidates of these nationwide parties were cautious to act in greater receptivity to the regionalist grievances. The centrist parties did not even refrain from running under a common label with the regional parties in order to reveal their concern for the demands of the region and to be able to compete with the regionalists by posing an image of peculiarity. Thus a degree of organizational autonomy from the center seemed to be the cornerstone of their strategy in the competition with the regionalist parties for votes. The centrist parties have thus always been major contenders in every specific region. Building affinity with the regionalist grievances has earned the centrist parties significant support across the different regions. Commenting on the election results of late 1970s and early 1980s in Catalonia and Galicia, for instance, Gunther, Sani, and Shabad argue that "(t)he failure of nationalist parties in these two regions to mobilize such potential support more effectively and thus to protect their political space can, in part, be explained by the success of the Communists and Socialist parties in assuming regional identities and identifying with Catalan and

Gallego communal sentiments and nationalist goals" (1988: 366). A striking example is presented by Catalonia where the fact that the Socialists are always a major contender to the CiU has made the latter extensively dependent on PP support to exert control over the Catalan legislative recently.

The PNV's attitude as a mainstream party, though considered to be ambivalent and ambiguous at times, gains all the more vitality considering for instance ETA's and EH's lingering opposition to the autonomy statutes. Furthermore, with the immense level of support it has received from the Basque population, the PNV stands as a legitimate partner for the central government to negotiate with and to reach a compromise. Despite the claim that the PNV utilized its juxtaposition as the moderate alternative to the radicals, this does not seem to alter the fact that the PNV is a legitimate actor who has consistently been ready to sit on the negotiation table in representing the Basque concerns.

The Role of Public Opinion:

It is the central argument of this study's coverage of Spain that the public in Spain acted as a redress to the effect of ongoing violence on the country's democratic prospects. Active public engagement with the issue mainly served to counterbalance the thorny atmosphere fostered by the failure to terminate violence. Public support for the idea of autonomy and the Spanish project on it as well as increasingly vocal public condemnation of violence have jointly acted as barriers against the potentially devastating effects of violence. Similarly, the citizens' allegiance to 'Spain' reveals that despite the fact that support for political authority and the regime might in earlier decades have been lacking in Spain, support for political community seems to be strong and even growing.

The origins and reservoir of support for nationalist demands in Spain:

The particular nationalisms in Spain derive their support from differing forces with each resting on a distinct social base of support. Similarly, the genesis of these nationalisms revolved around different circumstances. The emphasis in each particular nationalism rests on different factors and, hence, culminates in different objectives.

Of all the nationalist movements in Spain, the Basque one which has historically centered on peasant support and a deep commitment to Catholicism has been identified as the most traditionalist and resistant to change. In analyzing deep support for Carlism in the Basque provinces and Navarre, for instance, Payne argues that "(t)hough Carlism was generally a popular cause-...- with supporters all over Spain, nowhere else was this support so mobilized and extensive, all the more mobilized thanks to the self-governing particularist institutions of these four provinces" (2000: 97). The clash with modernity through rapid industrialization and

the inflow of immigrant workers were cited as the major challenges to Basque traditionalism. Beramendi in fact argues that "(t)he reactions against the ongoing transformation of Basque society are evident in the Catholic-traditionalist, racist, anti-industrial and anti-liberal ideology expressed in the work of Sabino Arana" (2000: 90), the founder of modern Basque nationalism.

In accounting for the relatively confrontational nature of Basque nationalism, Payne argues that "Basque big business and the socio-economic elite were more intensely interconnected with and dependent on the central Spanish economy and its government than was the case in Catalonia" (2000: 103). The divisions between the Basques favoring greater integration with Spain and those rejecting it ran deep, translating into failure to agree on the steps to be taken. In examining the democratic transition process, Coverdale argues that "(t)here was no Basque Tarradellas, no single leader with enough popular support to represent the Basques as he represented the Catalans" (1979: 86). A monolithic stance could thus not be presented by the Basque nationalists. Of the provinces claimed by the Basque nationalists, Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya have rather been the strongholds of the nationalist cause whereas Alava and, all the more so, Navarre have traditionally been more reserved in their support. Furthermore, Basque nationalism is also regarded as being more exclusive of outsiders, especially of the immigrants of whom the workers from different parts of Spain constitute the bulk. Catalan nationalism, for instance, has been more successful in integrating the immigrants to the expression of its demands and has generally been branded as more inclusive while considered to be assimilationist at times.

Catalan nationalism was, on the other hand, considered to be a largely middle class nationalism that placed distinctive culture and language at the center of its conceptualization. Payne argues that the 'the range and diversity of Catalan

nationalist political mobilization' "coalesced primarily around moderate leadership, and was of course facilitated by salient aspects of society and culture, such as the greater size of the Catalan middle classes, and their lesser economic dependence on big business and large banks than was the case in the Basque Country" (2000: 103). Thus, while historical and institutional distinctiveness was the major discourse of the Basque nationalists, Catalan nationalism placed the emphasis on the distinctiveness of language and culture. (13) That certainly may account for why, for instance, the two nationalisms diverged in the support they extended to the autonomy scheme. In discourse, while the former aims to acquire as much freedom as it claimed to have enjoyed in history, the latter focuses mainly on the preservation of its culture and language from any external influences. Payne stresses that "Catalan society was more sophisticated and secularized compared with that of the Basques, so that the profound religious and cultural changes of the 1960s had proportionately less impact" (2000: 102). A huge number of analysts in fact search for the origins of Catalan nationalism in economic developments. Beramendi, for instance, states that "(t)he loss of colonies deprived [the Catalans] of a considerable portion of their markets, causing them to lose faith in the Spanish nation embodied in the state and the political system" and thus "they decided to channel the defence of their interests and aspirations through a different legitimizing referent (the Catalan nation) and its political movement (the nationalism of the Lliga)" (2000: 90). Thus, while the Catalan nationalism is mostly portrayed as being far and free from the traumas of modernization and change suffered by its Basque counterpart, inefficiency of the Spanish administration in the face of loss of its economic links is accepted to be the watershed as regards the origins of Catalan nationalism.

Galician nationalism is also presented to be more modernist in its outlook. That was despite the agricultural and underdeveloped state of the region as one of the poorest regions of Spain. Beramendi thinks that the major paradox presented by the Galician case is that "the region with the most extensive, homogeneous ethnicity in the entire Spanish state developed the weakest nationalism, and did so considerably later than the other two" (2000: 86). Based on a narrow middle class, the Galician nationalism has been less vocal when compared to the other two. Beramendi in fact argues that "(a)lthough it has still not acquired the same strength, Galician nationalism has grown rapidly during recent years, mainly as a result of the region's socieconomic problems, and the insufficient interest shown by the major state-level parties in tackling these problems" (2000: 93). It is even argued that the PP "leaders in Madrid are reported to want to overhaul the Galicia branch of the party when Mr Fraga retires, and are not keen on Mr Fraga's plans for Mr Cuina to replace him" (BBC News, January 17, 2003: 1). That intention indeed seems to display marked contrast to how Spanish parties attach priority to effective organization at the regional level. Considering the fact that the sinking of a tanker off Galicia in November 2002 has set in an economic and ecological crisis in the region, the PP seems to be in even greater trouble as far as its presence in the region is concerned. Political apathy has traditionally been strong in Galicia. On that matter and as regards the results in the referendum on the constitution, Coverdale insists that "(e)xtremely low participation rates in Galicia reflected not a protest against the new Constitution but the peculiar economic, social, and political conditions that have led a large proportion of the region's inhabitants to abstain in every election during the 20th century" (1979: 119).

Yet, the common point that could be traced across all these 'historic' nationalisms was their rejection of sharing the same rights with other regions through symmetric allocation of rights. Despite their differing constituencies of support, distinct social bases, and divergent points of reference, all argue that they are different from the rest of Spain and thus their conditions for co-existence shall be handled separately from those of others.

<u>Public opinion on democratic transition and conflict management:</u>

During transition to democracy, the autonomy option received widespread support across Spain. As opposed to the options of outright independence, limited autonomy, and extensive autonomy, the centralism option received varying support across regions: 17 percent in the Basque region, 49 percent in Navarre, 53 percent in Aragon, 21 percent in Catalonia, 33 percent in Galicia, 29 percent in Madrid, 69 percent in Old Castile, 52 percent in New Castile, 35 percent in Astruias, 40 percent in Leon, 42 percent in Extremadura, 26 percent in Valencia, 32 percent in Andalucia, 51 percent in Murcia, 16 percent in Canary Islands, and 32 percent in Balearic Islands (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 248). The data displays that out of the sixteen provinces, centralism commanded over half the support of those interviewed only in four. Furthermore, according to the findings of the same survey, approximately a quarter of the respondents voiced a concern that autonomy would destroy the unity of Spain whereas 20 percent stated that they were undecided over the issue (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 250).

Despite the fact that there is widespread support for autonomy across Spain, it is noted that the attitude displayed by the Basque and Catalan nationalisms throughout the transition process revealed a stark contrast. In the referendum on the Constitution in which 67.7 percent went to the polls across Spain, 87.8 percent cast

their vote in favor of the constitution whereas 7.9 percent voted for the 'no' option. Yet, attitudes towards the constitution and the statutes of autonomy were rather less cooperative in the Basque region as opposed to the level of support across Spain for the two.

The Basque nationalists were in general dissatisfied with the settlement succeeding the 1978 Constitution, some because they saw no potential in it for a future separation and others because they perceived it as falling short of the historic fueros and hence feared that it could mean taking a step backwards. As a matter of fact, opposition to the system that was to be installed was the attitude of Basque nationalists. Negotiations with the then Spanish Prime Minister Suarez who was in charge of this crafting process were stalled over issues such as the maintenance of public order and justice as well as the financing of the autonomous government. The PNV called on to its supporters to abstain or to use blank votes. This aimed to reveal that the nationalists were not in outright opposition to the Constitution but rather were dissatisfied with parts of it, the limits placed on the Basque autonomy being the major ones. Thus, the major strategy was acquiring what the Spanish government was then willing to render and yet sustaining opposition to the existing structure in order not to settle for a final deal. The abstention rate of 46.5 percent in the Basque country seemed to indicate that the call for protest by the PNV received considerable backing. Similarly, the October 25, 1979 referendum on the Basque autonomy in which the 57 percent of the eligible voters participated resulted in 94.6 percent of 'yes' votes. To present a more contemporary picture, Llera indeed refers to a 1998 survey in which the "respondents were asked to express their current vote towards the 1978 Constitution": 46 percent of the respondents were affirmative whereas 15 percent were rather negative and only among the HB supporters the negative option

obtained the majority with a 63 percent support (2000: 106). The findings lead Llera to conclude that "(a)lthough some moderation of stands has taken place, as well as a pragmatic adjustment towards loyalty to the constitution, it is clear that in addition to outright rejection among radicals, the bulk of nationalists have maintained strategic reservations regarding ratification of the constitutional document" (2000: 106).

As regards the Catalan approach to transition to democracy and decentralization, Payne indeed argues that "(a)s in the 19th century, Catalans put their shoulders to the wheel and strongly supported the democratic transition, applauding the new constitution and the new system of autonomy" (2000: 100). In Tarradellas, the Spanish government found a reliable partner in Catalonia with whom to negotiate the conditions of transition. Bargaining for concessions has proved to be the strategic choice by the Catalan representatives. In fact, a bargain was set in which "the government agreed in principle to the restoration of the Generalitat, and Tarradellas recognized the monarchy and agreed to work within the existing legal framework" (Coverdale, 1979: 85). With that bargain, Suarez was able to prevent any potential Catalan opposition along the Basque lines and Tarradellas was hoping to retrieve as many rights as the Catalans enjoyed under the Generalitat. The restoration of autonomy and total amnesty were the major demands presented by the Catalan side. In the October 25, 1979 referendum, 59.5 percent of eligible votes participated with a 87.9 'yes' vote for the Catalan statute of autonomy. What seemed to be the traditional Galician political apathy also brought a high rate of abstention in the December 1980 vote on autonomy. Almost three-fourths of voters did not participate, with a 'yes' vote of 73 percent.

The public in the other regions also endorsed the plan for autonomy with increasing enthusiasm through the referenda. That endorsement can mainly be

attributed to economic reasons, owing to the hope of backward regions that autonomy could bring economic benefits.

Perceptions by the public of the autonomous communities system at work also matters in evaluating the extent of popular agreement on a framework for solution. The central question then comes down to whether the effective functioning of the system enhances public support for the scheme. Llera in fact underlines the change in Basque attitudes by employing data from surveys of 1987, 1993, and 1998 where those who are fully satisfied constitute 28 percent, 31 percent, and 43 percent respectively whereas level of dissatisfaction remains constant at 25 percent for 1987 and 1993, only to fall down to 25 percent in 1998 (2000: 106). In his analysis of Galician attitudes towards autonomy, Losada refers to the findings of the ERA Project which he thinks reveals "growing acceptance of the levels of self-government: from 19 percent in 1984 to 31 percent in 1992" and "a moderate degree of satisfaction with the performance of the regional government" (2000: 145). Thus, the operation of the autonomy system since early 1980s seems to have fostered a greater endorsement of the existing institutions and a greater identification with them across different regions of Spain.

Public and Violence: What Do the Rallies Convey?

Greater popular convergence on the rejection of violence seems to have made the public the major factor in preventing a further deterioration of violence. Thus, while the military was the major actor in voicing the concerns over the aggravation of violence and the threats directed at Spanish unity in early 1980s, the public has gradually become the chief actor in articulating these concerns.

One actor that was harshly criticized for not condemning violence was the Basque Church. Drawing attention to the fact that "the Basque Church was

consistently, even after Franco's death, reluctant to condemn ETA, to which it always referred as 'a movement of national liberation' ", Ben-Ami stresses that "(i)t was this strong alliance between nationalism and religion in the Basque country that prevented the Basque Church from playing the same kind of progressive role played by the Spanish Church in facilitating the transition to democracy in the late 1970s" (1991: 505). Many priests were then subjected to criticism for having endowed violence with the attribute of sanctity.

Llera regards the 1988 pact as a turning point in that "following the inter-party consensus on this issue established in 1988, the citizenry has been mobilized in its opposition to violence" (2000: 118). In pooling the figures from his studies as well as those of Linz and the Euskobarometro, Llera evaluates how the perceptions of ETA activists by the Basque people have changed over the years: those who regarded them as patriots has declined from 13 percent in 1978 to 8 percent in 1996 accompanied by a similar drop in those who considered them to be idealists from 35 percent in 1978 to 16 percent in 1996 (2000: 111). On the contrary, those who perceived the ETA activists as crazy or terrorist has climbed up from 11 percent in 1978 to 32 percent in 1996, a significant jump from 14 percent in 1993. Similarly, ETA members were regarded as criminals and killers by 7 percent of the respondents in 1978 as opposed to 21 percent in 1996 (Llera, 2000: 111).

All the more significant is the organized nature of opposition to violence by the public across Spain. The year 1997 and ETA's killing of Miguel Angel Blanco seems to have been a watershed in this respect. (14) In demonstrations of June 1997 following Blanco's killing, Aznar was leading over 1 million protesters in Madrid as millions gathered for the same cause across Spain. From the event of Blanco on, every ETA action has aroused greater protest as a result of which rallies were

organized after every killing with a clear emphasis on a number of themes. The protestors shouted 'basta', meaning enough, and carried figures of 'clean hand' in their hands to voice their demand for the cessation of violence. 'Basques yes, ETA no' was another theme of the demonstrations, signaling that Spain at large had no problem with the Basques as long as ETA was isolated. On the whole, this attitude by the Spanish people seems to convey the message that anyone shunning away from condemning the killings will be under greater public scrutiny.

The Economist indeed sets the Spanish public reaction against violence apart from other similar cases in arguing that "Spaniards, by and large, keep their sympathy for the victims of terrorism, not its perpetuators. And they do so nationwide. When IRA bombers or snipers killed in Northern Ireland, few Londoners cared unless the carnage was huge. Parisians barely notice separatist terrorism when it takes place in Corsica. In contrast, ETA's killings have aroused angry demonstrations across Spain" (The Economist, August 12, 2000: 25).

Allegiance and Identification:

The support that Basque nationalist parties give to the self-determination principle reveals that rather than negotiating with the Spanish government, they are willing to reach a settlement where the Basque people will have the right to make the final decision. The nationalists thus argue that a vote will be the reflection of the Basque free will and will then have to be respected by Spanish authorities. Despite the eagerness of the Basque nationalist parties to recognize the self-determination principle as a key to determining the course of the Basque country especially since the 1998 Declaration, the opinion of the people inhabiting the Basque region and the extent to which Basque nationalist parties can garner support for their cause in the region remains to be a serious test. Thus, of all the regions in Spain, the Basque

region is the one where the issue of a separate existence from Spain is the most explosive.

How one defines himself/ herself may function as one indicator of allegiance. Whether one perceives the Spanish identity as an all-encompassing one or one designating ethnic connotations may be quite telling in that respect. In examining the national identification figures for the Basques, Catalans, and Galicians, Gunther, Sani, and Shabad reveal that it was in the Basque region that the people who considered themselves to be exclusively Basque were at highest numbers of all the options, with slightly over 30 percent support (1988: 244). In Galicia and Catalonia, those who identified themselves as equally Spanish and Galician or Catalan were in the majority with 40 and 30 percent respectively (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 1988: 244). Euskobarometro results for 1998 indicate that among the native Basque respondents, 24.8 percent categorized themselves to be equally Basque and Spanish, 27.9 percent considered themselves to be more Basque than Spanish, and 36 percent expressed themselves to be exclusively Basque (Llera, 2000: 103). Llera also argues that "subjective criteria increased at the expense of primordial factors in defining Basque nationality, after 20 years" and bases his analysis on a 1998 survey in which 82 percent of those interviewed cited 'the will to be Basque' as the major defining criteria (2000: 103-104). A more recent survey conducted by Demoscopia reveals that 41 percent of the respondents expressed themselves to be equally Basque and Spanish whereas 17 percent considered themselves more Basque than Spanish and 23 percent as purely Basque. (The Economist, May 12, 2001: 36).

The demand for independence may be considered as another indicator of the level of allegiance an individual might feel for the Spanish state. Llera refers to Euskobarometro results for 1998 in which the 25 percent of Basque respondents said

they would support independence from Spain, whereas 37 percent supported regional autonomy and 25 percent opted for federalism (2000: 105). Coverdale in fact stresses that "(e)xcept for a small group of Basques, regional nationalists in Spain have not historically called into question the existence of a larger Spanish unity" (1979: 35). Thus, the target of discontent seems not to be the political community but rather the system and its operation. In Navarre, the desire to remain a part of Spain seems to be much higher despite the Basque nationalist insistence on Navarre's status as integral part of the Basque country. The examination of a survey conducted by Gunther, Sani, and Shabad reveals that support for independence from Spain rated above 10 percent only in Catalonia (11 percent) and the Basque region (23 percent), whereas in Galicia and Navarre the same option received 9 percent support (1988: 248).

Despite the failure of the PP to come out as the winner of the latest regional elections, the fact that for the first time since 1978 there was a serious possibility of the PNV being ousted by a potential centrist alliance between the PP and the PSOE may be considered as a signal that things may be changing in the Basque region. Similarly, the fact that in March 12, 2000 general elections, the PP was able to obtain 183 out of 350 seats meant that its policies aimed at rejecting separation appealed to many voters across Spain. The results of 2000 general elections in the Basque country also signaled that the PP would be the main challenger to the PNV's dominance in the region, with the former obtaining 28 percent of the votes cast as opposed to the 30 percent obtained by the latter. Furthermore, PP's position in the same elections in the Basque region was also bolstered by its victories in Vitoria, Bilbao, and San Sebastian which are the capitals of the three Basque provinces. That the people living in the Basque region have bolstered the centrist PP which has a firm stance against terrorism and separatism means that the calls for an end to violence

and the strengthening of unity have appealed to an increasing number of people in the Basque region. Similarly, the decline in the support for EH also seems to be pointing at the same direction of a rejection of violence and a reaffirmation of the unity of Spain within the framework of which the problems may be negotiated.

It is hence possible to argue that public convergence around support for autonomy and political community as well as vocal public condemnation of violence served to alleviate the threat posed against the system by ongoing violence.

Initiatives in Conflict Management:

<u>Addressing the national question: The autonomous communities system</u>

The gathering of the leaders of the main Spanish political parties under the leadership of Suarez in Moncloa Palace in 1977 initiated the launching of political and economic reforms in post-Franco Spain. Relaxation of restrictions on the political parties and a commitment to the integration of regional languages and cultures into school curriculum were among the major political decisions.

The UCD and the PSOE were the major actors in the drawing up of the constitution and their control over the lower as well as the upper chamber of the legislature gave them a huge room for maneuver. Yet, the process was still attending to a variety of opinions. The Basques and the Catalans were represented in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs that drafted the constitution. It was basically the AP and the Basque representatives who were opposing the proposed autonomy scheme, the former aiming to curb and the latter to further autonomy for the regions. This pattern was reflected in the final vote in both the Congress and the Senate with 325 affirmative votes out of 350 in the former and 226 affirmative votes out of the 239 in the latter, the no votes and abstentions coming mainly from the Basque and AP representatives.

The 1978 scheme was in no way the outcome of a new effort. Beramendi in fact states that the design proposed by the 1931 constitution was "the direct precedent for the 'State of Autonomous Communities' defined in the 1978 constitution" (2000: 93). Similarly, referring to the fact that "(a)t the time of the Second Republic a formula called the Estado Integral had been devised to depict a state which lay somewhere between federal and unitary extremes and drew from both

federal and unitary theories of the state", Gibbons concluded that this model actually guided the 1978 settlement (1999: 17).

The crux of the matter as regards the future of the regions within Spain lies in Article 2 of the constitution which refers to the indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation, yet guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions. Coverdale argues that the wording in Article 2 "was a compromise between centralists who objected to the use of the word 'nationalities' to describe the outlying regions and regionalists who disliked the article's stress on the indivisibility of Spain" (1979: 128). Hence, advocating a formula that goes beyond the autonomous communities system is ruled out by the present constitution. The 1978 constitution allows neither for a federal state structure nor for separation. What this design rather produced was decentralization through the creation of 17 political and administrative units termed as autonomous communities. Article 143 specifies that "bordering provinces with common historical, cultural, and economic characteristics, the island territories, and the provinces with a historical regional unity may accede to self-government and constitute themselves into autonomous communities". A progressive transfer of authority is envisaged, with the state reserving many authorities exclusively for itself in Article 149 which may then gradually be transferred under its discretion. In fact, defining the competences of the autonomous communities in Article 148, the constitution specifies that after five years and with a reform of the statutes, these competences may be expanded. Along similar lines, Article 150 states that "The State may transfer or delegate to the Autonomous Communities by an organic law those faculties on matters within the competence of the State, which because of their own nature are susceptible to transference or delegation". Yet, substantial central control is retained. Article 149 states that "The law of the State

shall in every case be supplementary to the law of the Autonomous Communities" whereas Article 150 underlines that "The State may dictate laws which establish the principles necessary to harmonize the normative provisions of the Autonomous Communities even in the case of matters attributed to their competence when the general interest so demands" with this determination being undertaken by the absolute majority in each chamber of the Parliament.

One basic and controversial aspect of the scheme was that it treated the historical regions in a different manner by granting them immediate full autonomy whereas the other regions were required first to complete a five-year restricted autonomy period. Thus the regions that enjoyed autonomy statutes prior to 1936 under the Second Republic were set apart from the rest as 'historical nationalities' and were considered to be entitled to a faster track towards autonomy under the provisions of Article 151. The other regions, on the other hand, were qualified to follow the procedure proposed by Article 143 which called for a more gradual transfer of powers. (15) It was the main claim of the nationalist movements in these other regions that they should also be granted the status of 'historic nationalities' and this pursuit later became the cornerstone of their strategy. The 1992 deal between the PSOE and the then main opposition PP conferred new powers on these regions, yet also defined the highest limit of their autonomous status. Thus, a step was taken for the bridging of the gap between two different tracks to autonomous status. A similar pact was concluded in 1997 which granted new powers to autonomous communities. This was far from settling the whole issue, with the historic regions demanding greater rights in return by referring to their special status. The granting of greater rights to communities located under the slower track led to the inflation of demands by the historic nationalities just as the regions classified under article 143 protested

the relatively expansive rights granted to the historical nationalities. Colomer argues that this game which is termed 'comparative grievance' "has produced more regional competition and much higher levels of decentralization of the Spanish state than was expected before the constitutional compromise was implemented" (1999: 47). (16)

In line with the recognition of autonomous status, regional parliaments were established in all the autonomous communities. A president who usually proved to be the leader of the majority party or the ruling coalition became the chief executive working with regional ministers (i.e. a regional government) appointed by himself. These regional governments possess different designations such as Xunta in Galicia, the Generalitat in Catalonia or Junta in Andalusia. A High Court of Justice was formed in each autonomous community. The central government, on the other hand, closely monitors the operation of autonomous institutions. A government delegate was appointed to coordinate the activities of the central and autonomous governments. Furthermore, the office of the civil governor was set up in the provinces by the central government to control the developments in the 50 provincial units which were formed by the 1978 settlement, considering the fact that conflict between the regional government and the provinces was widespread. This gains all the more significance considering the fact that some autonomous communities are composed of a single-province whereas others are made up of the gathering of a number of provinces. The Constitutional Court is the highest organ authorized to hear the cases of conflicts of competence between the central and the autonomous governments. It is thus the verdicts of this court that finalize the controversies over the center- autonomous community relations. The central government also reserves with Article 155 the right that "If an Autonomous Community does not fulfill the obligations imposed upon it by the Constitution or other laws, or should act in a

manner seriously prejudicing the general interest of Spain, the Government, after lodging a complaint with the President of the Autonomous Community and failing to receive satisfaction therefore, may, following approval granted by an absolute majority of the Senate, adopt the means necessary in order to oblige the latter forcibly to meet said obligations, or in order to protect the above-mentioned general interest".

The details of the constitutional provisions on autonomy were settled through autonomy statutes drawn up for each region by the end of 1982. The Generalitat was restored in Catalonia whereas the Basque Council was formed in the Basque region as pre-autonomy regimes prior to the constitution with each enjoying symbolic powers and rights. The acquisition of the autonomous community status came through a detailed process: submission of a proposed draft autonomy statute by the region to the Spanish government and Congress of Deputies for approval; approval of that statute in Madrid by a complex process involving the ruling party, the parliament, and ministers; a regional referendum; promulgation of a related decree by the king; election of the autonomous parliament; and the case-by-case negotiation of the transfer of powers, responsibilities and resources to the autonomous community (Clark, 1989: 19).

The Basque statute of autonomy was the most far-reaching one with regional parliament's control over local administration, police, social services, education, internal commercial regulations, and courts which was to be financed by the regional government through local taxes and the budget share to be allocated by the center (Ben-Ami, 1999: 510-511). The Basque region acquired its police force even prior to Catalonia and the fueros, together with the conciertos economicos that also applied to Navarre and gave it financial privileges that far exceeded the settlements reached

with the other regions. Yet, the discontent remained most vocal and apparent in the Basque region.

Similarly, in Catalonia where nationalist sentiment runs high, the major nationalist party has successfully capitalized on its position as the main coalition partner in the Madrid governments. Through its central position in Spanish politics, the CiU extracted many concessions and widened the scope of Catalan autonomy. Gibbons indeed argues that "it is their votes in Congress that have made the crucial difference to the response of government in the 1990s" with Catalonia establishing its police force and securing special measures for the promotion of Catalan language at that particular period (1999: 29).

The autonomy arrangement based on the 1978 constitution was in fact controversial in many respects from the outset. The perception of the autonomy settlement by various groups remarkably diverged. Gibbons in fact points at a contradiction embedded in the process as "(t)he nationalists regarded it as leading to real and separate decision-making and discretionary executive powers, while the UCD and Suarez meant to introduce a limited system of devolved executive powers only" which "contributed, not least, to internal conflict in the UCD and its eventual electoral decline" (1999: 17). Even today, the distribution of power between the local, autonomous and central levels of government remains to be a highly contested issue. Colomer in fact concludes that "(t)here are few institutions that promote cooperation between the central government and the regional governments in Spain, apart from the arbitration role played by the Constitutional Court and adds that "(m)ost deals, however, are still made through bilateral relations of party leaders in the central and the regional governments" (1999: 49-50). Failure to institutionalize the gradual transfer of competencies to the regional governments was hence

perceived as one basic problem. The 1978 design was also criticized for falling short of meeting the expectations of the regions. Demands for the revision of the autonomous communities scheme are still voiced by different groups. Nunez even argues that "one may conclude that region-building in Spain at the end of the 20th century is still an open and evolving matter" with various nationalisms still voicing discontent (2000: 135). In Guibernau's opinion, the central question as regards the autonomous communities system revolved around "whether it would turn into a simple administrative decentralization device or would symbolize the acknowledgment of particular cultural and political aspirations of national minorities that could eventually lead towards a federalist structure" (1995: 246). In fact, in the general elections of 2000, the issue was still topical with the Socialists and the IU asking for a more thorough-going federal system. (17) Yet, the PP government's tough determination to defend the existing constitutional framework testifies to the fact that such a change might not be forthcoming at least in the short-term.

One impact of the outlined design seems to be that regional identities were strengthened to the point where new ones were crafted to feed into demands for autonomy by regions where no prior claim to distinctiveness was articulated. Thus, a spillover across regions seemed to be discernible with demands for autonomy spreading. Many commentators have offered instrumentalist explanations. In accounting for the 'chain reaction' associated with the spread of regionalism, Nunez argues that "(r)egional elites now encounter greater opportunities for achieving power and controlling resources" as the current system "created an additional arena of political power and competition (regional parliaments, meso-territorial administrations and elections, and so on)" (2000: 127). Nunez also adds that "(p)ropaganda campaigns, cultural and schooling policies, an appeal to historical

forerunners (more or less real, more or less imagined) and invented traditions, as well as the permanent - and always useful- argument of enduring discrimination in comparison with other 'favoured' regions, have also contributed to spread regional consciousness among the population and to legitimize the existence of all the autonomous communities" (2000: 132). Many of these regionalist forces even began advocating the recognition of their status as 'nationalities' on a par with the Basques, Catalans, and Galicians.

Managing the conflict: an integrated strategy?

As the political pillar of the strategy for managing the conflict, the Spanish authorities considered that undertaking a dual transition could placate the environment of violence and conflict. A strong link has been established between democratic transition and decentralization in the Spanish case as both processes seem to have coincided in late 1970s. Ben-Ami in fact argues that "a democratic regime in Spain had paved the way for the fulfilment of regional-nationalist aspirations" (1991: 510). Through the autonomous communities system, the Spanish government seems to have given the message that it was being responsive to regional grievances. Similarly, Madrid was providing a room for the consolidation of regional identities and the recognition of the multinational character of Spain through the rights granted. The autonomy design of 1978 was thus considered to be in line with democratic ideals as decentralization and democratization were perceived to be complementary objectives.

Yet, the decentralization process was never devoid of problems with the transfer of powers to the regions being weakened following the coup attempt and the LOAPA. The LOAPA emphasized that the government could enact 'basic legislation and norms' in the defined competence areas of the autonomous communities, that in

case of a conflict between two types of legislation the national one was to prevail, and that simultaneous (concurring) elections and fixed terms would govern the regional elections in all the communities. In fact, the controversy surrounding the autonomy arrangement in early 1980s which reached a climax with the LOAPA moved the Constitutional Court to the center of the whole political debate. While reaching the verdict that government's concern with equality through harmonization across Spain in order to avoid discrimination was well-placed, the Constitutional Court concluded that "institutional uniformity as proposed in some sections of the LOAPA, was not constitutionally compatible with the autonomous process" (Gibbons, 1999: 20-21). Gibbons argues that this decision led the then governing PSOE to recognize that "while restricting the spread of regional powers by means of a uniform, harmonized regime (the LOAPA way) was out of the question, a set of common guidelines was necessary, with the aid of which regions would draft their laws, regulations and timetables for the assumption of powers" (1999: 21). It is thus possible to conclude that while decentralization proved to be a contested topic in the course of the democratization process, Spanish authorities have managed to incorporate political designs such as the autonomous communities system into democratic transition with a view to managing the conflict.

A cultural strategy has also been drawn with multilingualism being embraced. Article 3 of the 1978 constitution defines Castilian as the official language, affirming at the same time the co-official status of the regional languages in their respective regions. A commitment to the protection of linguistic diversity is also undertaken in the same article as it states that "(t)he richness of the linguistic modalities of Spain is a cultural patrimony which will be the object of special respect and protection". In terms of the implementation of policies to that end, Catalonia progressed most

rapidly. With the laws promulgated in 1983, "(s)tate education was to be conducted in both languages and the use of Catalan made compulsory in regional -and local-government offices" (The Economist, March 6, 1999: 31).

The Spanish strategy of coping with the conflict also had military and socio-psychological pillars. The introduction of economic, cultural and political precautions was accompanied by the perseverance to root out violent nationalist forces from the political scene. Various formal as well as covert organizations were mobilized in the fight against ETA terrorism. The public was also perceived as a major component of the strategy of conflict management. Public revulsion against violence and mass demonstrations across Spain led to a context where the Spanish government capitalized on public sensitivity. The Spanish governments particularly during the PP rule successfully averted a rise in support for ETA by engaging the public in this struggle.

The trouble with asymmetrical relations: The realm of economics

In the economic realm, attempts were made to reduce discontent by the regions to the minimal level. The constitution recognized in Article 138 that the state will be "insuring the establishment of a proper and just economic balance among the various parts of Spanish territory" and that " the differences between the Statutes of the various Autonomous Communities may in no case imply economic or social privileges". The autonomous governments were also granted some power in relation to budgetary matters. Organic Law on the Financing of Autonomous Communities (LOFCA) passed in 1980 established a consultative council composed of the finance ministers of the autonomous governments and the Spanish government to discuss resource distribution. The principle of 'fiscal co-responsibility' granted these regions the opportunity to shape their own budget. The constitution also defined a framework

for financial and tax autonomy. With the Inter-territorial Compensation Fund (FCI), public investment funds were extended to the regions in line with a number of criteria such as population-density, emigration, unemployment levels or income. Furthermore, regional governments have also been able to raise money by means such as local taxes.

It is possible to argue that economic relations, allocation of resources and distribution of economic power have always been controversial topics across Spain. On the one hand, this is basically due to the fact that there were intense financial demands waged mainly by regions other than those granted the status of 'historic nationalities'. These regions demanded what they perceived to be the imbalanced development across regions to be redressed by the active interference of the central government. In fact, regionalist or nationalist demands except for when voiced by the Basque region and Catalonia chiefly focused on such economic concerns. Coverdale indeed states that "in other parts of Spain, regional nationalism is to a large extent a result of relative economic deprivation" (1979: 34). Gunther, Sani, and Shabad argue along similar lines by stating that "(a)s in Andalucia, this increase in micronationalism appears to have been fueled by a combination of underdevelopment, a sense of relative deprivation, and appeals to the electorate on the basis of Third World dependencia or 'internal colonialism' rhetoric" (1988: 384). Autonomy schemes were thus expected to be structured to rectify the economic imbalances and reverse the discrimination from the perspective of these other regions.

On the contrary, the economically powerful regions were discontented with their own perception of subsidizing the other regions and the Spanish economy and thus wished to be relieved of that burden. A focus on the amount of taxes paid and

the percentage of government expenditure returning to their region produced discontent mainly in the Basque region and Catalonia. The main grievance seems to be that while contributing to the national budget at a level they perceive to be excessive through the taxes imposed, central government spending was mainly channeled to regions other than the two. Extreme nationalists and Marxists even argued that the Basque region was being ruled by Madrid as a colony. A second source of discontent stemmed from the perception of a lack of parallelism between the centers of political power and of economic strength. Beramendi in fact draws attention at what he considers to be an imbalance in arguing that "the most developed areas did not coincide either territorially or in terms of identity with the centre of political power and economic policy" (2000: 85). Similarly, in reference to the 18th century Catalonia, Coverdale argues that "(t)he pattern established at this time of an economically strong but politically weak periphery, and a politically strong but economically weak center, has survived to the present with only a few brief parentheses" (1979: 26). Thus, the Spanish experience displays a case where the economically strongest regions voice discontent with power distribution which in turn feeds into their nationalist demands. The pressure exerted by them for greater control over fiscal and budgetary policy seems to point at such a complaint.

It was basically their experiences with industrialization and modernization which located Catalonia and the Basque region at the center of all these debates. Catalonia has been the leading actor of development in Spain from 18th century onwards. Coverdale argues that "(e)conomic differentiation between a rapidly industrializing Catalonia and a still largely agricultural central and southern Spain grew more pronounced with time, as the former's interests, needs and outlook were quite different from those of most other regions of Spain" and adds that the end result

was the perception by industrializing Catalonia of a seriously deficient central government in Madrid (1979: 27). The Basque region, on the other hand, has undergone traumas associated with rapid industrialization. Payne indeed argues that "(w)hereas Catalan nationalism rode comfortably on the wave of Catalan modernization, Basque nationalism developed as a kind of reaction against the beginning of rapid industrialization in Vizkaya from approximately 1880 onwards, and was spurred by antipathy to the workers who moved in from other parts of Spain, virtually for the first time in Basque history" (2000: 98). Yet, confidence in their regions' economic capacity and rapid industrialization meant that Madrid's policies were increasingly questioned. Concentration of major industries and entrepreneurship skills in these two regions bolstered these regions' position as producers and sellers of goods to the other regions of Spain. Medhurst in fact argues that this may be accounted for by the two regions' exposure to West European influences and the long established commercial traditions (1973: 10). Hence, Basque and Catalan nationalisms reveal that discontent does not necessarily stem from neglect and deprivation. Superior performance also may lead to problematic relations.

The progressive transfer of fiscal and budgetary powers to the regions also seemed unable to halt the controversy. It is significant that "(s)uccessive negotiating agreements on assignment of taxes have been reached by the national and the autonomous governments (excluding the peculiar formulas of the Basque Country and Navarre) for the periods 1984-86, 1986-91 (subsequently further extended), and 1997-2001, increasingly in favour of the autonomies" (Colomer, 1999: 48). The latest state of affairs on this highly controversial issue is that in response to CiU's pressures on the PSOE a system of 'tax co-responsibility' was instituted following the

1993 elections which enabled the regional governments to acquire responsibility for retention and disposal of 15 percent of personal income tax which was increased to 30 percent by the PP government in 1996 (Gibbons, 1999: 32). The Basque region which already enjoyed specific privileges under the historic fueros was given a further boost with new taxation powers handed by the PP which was trying to ensure PNV support in Cortes. Almost all tax collection was now handed over to the Basque regional government.

The relatively poor regions also had something to complain about in this process, arguing that the gap between the rich and poor regions would be further widened by the operation of financial regimes peculiar to each region. Hence, the greatest concern with the autonomy scheme has been the fear that autonomy would serve to aggravate inequalities. Gunther, Sani and Shabad point at the possibility that "greater regional control over taxation and spending on the part of Basque and Catalan governments could widen the gap between these two wealthy regions and the less-developed parts of Spain" with the other regions becoming obliged to rely on their own scarce resources due to the decline in central government's revenues (1988: 256). Thus, financial autonomy designs have not been equally supported across regions. Nunez states, for instance, that "(s)ome of the present problems have to do with setting up a mechanism for financial transfers from richer to poorer regions" as "since the beginning of the 1990s town councils' representatives have protested against financial and political 'discrimination' by both the central state and the 'centralism' of the autonomous communities" (2000: 127).

Consistent with the constitution's goal of restoring economic balance was the industrial growth experienced by other regions such as Madrid as the gap between the economic performance of regions was being narrowed down. In the Basque case,

this trend was even more evident as economic problems seemed to be aggravated by the political developments there. Coverdale points at how the strikes, demonstrations, revolutionary taxation, and threats on the businesses in the Basque region affected the economic performance of the region (1979: 99). Furthermore, membership in the European Community as it was then called has bolstered Spain's confidence in its economy. Even today, EU membership is increasingly expected to serve the greater leveling of economic development across regions.

A significant advantage of Spanish authorities has been that a clear sequencing could be undertaken in problem solving. The economic miracle of Franco era followed by the disastrous impact of the global economic crisis on Spain in 1970s meant that a successful economic transition surfaced as an urgent task. Lancaster focuses on how Spain gave priority to political over economic transition as "(t)his example of politics before economics is why the Pacts of Moncloa proved to be only the first in a series of such elite agreements" followed by the Acuerdo-Macro Interconfederal in 1980, the National Employment Agreement in 1981, and the Economic and Social Agreement in 1984 and concludes that "(t)heir existence permitted early democratic governments to postpone difficult economic decisions until Spain's political house was in order, democratically speaking" (1996: 295 and 334). It is possible to argue that the fact that Spanish authorities could first realize a democratic transition followed by an economic one based on pacts meant that they had a freer hand in dealing with the challenge posed by the conflict from mid-1980s on.

In sum, the Spanish authorities were faced with the complex task of retaining legitimacy by addressing multiple concerns at once: they had to convince the Basques and the Catalans that the two regions would not be asked to contribute

excessively to the well-being of Spain at the same time that they had to provide the other regions with guarantees that the gap would be narrowed down to their advantage. Yet what bolstered the Spanish position in all this was that resources did not need to be allocated to multiple goals simultaneously and could be geared up to the eradication of the conflict with the political as well as economic pacts concluded signaling consensus and convergence around certain principles.

Conclusion: Is There An 'End' to the Conflict?

It thus seems possible to argue that the integrated strategy upheld by the Spanish governments has so far failed to completely resolve the conflict. Clark indeed voices a major complaint in arguing that "the Spanish case reveals the limitations of the territorial devolution model (especially when applied to the entire territory of the state) to resolve conflicts that are ethnically based and to accommodate demands that have autonomy (broadly defined) and even independence as their ultimate goal" (1989: 17). In Gibbons' opinion "(t)he constitutional formula which enabled such a diversity of nationalities and regimes within a unified Spain generated the problem of how far the concept of a unified nation-state could be stretched before it snapped and came asunder" (1999: 36). Nevertheless, containment of the conflict has been attained, specifically through the alienation of those resorting to violence. While the Spanish governments advanced various initiatives for conflict management since the transition to democracy, what this peculiar combination of the three variables with the initiatives made possible was the confinement of the conflict.

The Spanish case clearly reveals that consolidation of democracy may be possible even under conditions of ethnic conflict. The role assumed by public opinion, the impact of the political party system, and initiatives taken for the management of conflict all gain significance in accounting for that. After averting the threat posed in early 1980s culminating in a coup attempt, the Spanish context has been free from risks of democratic reversal or decay.

Yet, at the same time, the Spanish experience also testifies to the fact that the operation of a consolidated democratic system in no way presents a guaranteed solution to an ongoing ethnic conflict. Thus, violence may fall short of being ruled

out indefinitely even when a democratic political system is consolidated. Similarly, despite the fact that a compromise formula has been drawn up in the shape of the autonomous communities system by the adherence of the reformist right, the left, and even the mainstream nationalists, constant controversies and demands for revision surrounding this settlement hamper any prospects for certainty.

The most striking factors that account for the Spanish record in democratization and ethnic conflict management are that:

- violence seems to remain an enduring aspect of Spanish politics, complicating the complete resolution of the conflict. Yet, the interplay of other factors seems to confine the scope and impact of violence,

- society proved to be sensitive towards the issue of violence by withdrawing support from those resorting to it and extending support to the political community,

- political parties succeeded in converging around a number of key principles to guide their conduct, even to the exclusion of those resorting to violence,

- Spanish authorities crafted solutions designed to produce an integrated strategy of conflict management.

This picture seems to reveal that the troublesome position occupied by the Spanish experience due to a lingering environment of violence was actually redressed by superior performance in and opportunities presented by the other key variables. The major impact of violence has been to block greater initiatives and dialogue at times. The objections waged in the course of the shaping of the autonomy settlement actually signaled the fears that a deterioration of violence and inflation of nationalist demands might further shake the determination of the Spanish state in confronting the challenges through democratic initiatives. The granting of autonomous status not only to the range of the claimants but to all parts of Spain

proved to be the Spanish response. Thus, while the violence factor served to make discussions on solutions a rather explosive issue, the positive developments in the other variables served to confine the potentially destructive impact of violence on prospects for democratic consolidation. It hence seems possible to conclude that despite the failure to completely halt violence, initiatives in conflict management were supported by a number of key actors and attitudes which made democratic consolidation possible.

Nevertheless, the Spanish case also testifies to the intractable nature of such conflicts due to a variety of reasons. Intensification of the regionalist demands and lack of complete consensus on how much to stretch the autonomy formula is one reason. The Barcelona Declaration by the PNV, CiU and the BNG stressing that the current constitutional formula and the autonomy scheme fall short of meeting their regions' aspirations for self-government in a multi-national or even confederal state was one sign of the growing demands for revision. A plan expected to be revealed by the PNV advocates 'a free associated community' as Ibarretxe terms it (The Economist, August 16, 2003: 24). Neither the PP nor the PSOE currently extend support to the Basque scheme. It is argued, for instance, that while the CiU plans for constitutional reform affirm 'right to self-determination' and seek enhanced powers on a wide range of issues with the most critical one being taxation, the Socialists' proposals for the region also extend beyond the current settlement (The Economist, March 29, 2003: 39). Failure to completely terminate violence despite the confinement of support for violent alternatives forms another difficulty. May 2003 municipal elections reveal that the EH failed to score any victories in Bilbao, Vitoria or San Sebastian. Hence, marginalizing support for ETA and the political parties associated with it is still a major achievement. Increasing tensions in relations

between the ruling PP and the PNV upon the ban on the HB and the PNV's campaign for a new type of association with Madrid are other indications of the intractable nature of the conflict. Furthermore, the planned retirement of Pujol from Catalan politics is also likely to alter the current situation. The November 2003 Catalan elections already resulted in the doubling of support for the ERC which makes the evaluation of whether the post-Pujol era will be one where Catalan demands for greater autonomy will be more forcefully asserted highly significant. Rajoy was picked by the PP ruling council to succeed Aznar. Analysts argue that his leadership "could soften the perennial rows between the central government in Madrid and Spain's 17 regional administrations" (The Economist, September 6, 2003: 29). Basque and Catalan moderate nationalists as well as the PSOE welcomed the choice. The new leader is expected to soften the tone of the party's discourse.

TABLE 1:

Actors and Attitudes Contributing to Conflict Management in the Spanish Case

The Actors	Attitudes Displayed
Political parties	- Nationwide parties perceive a stake in extensively organizing in the regions (through their provincial branches and by presenting prominent regional figures as their candidates) and cooperate in ruling in the regions, - Mainstream parties attempt to attain a consensus on certain principles: the PP and the Socialists cooperated against the formation of a united Basque front, engaged in constant dialogue on the autonomy scheme, and collaborated in the drawing up of the provision of Law on Political Parties invoked for banning the HB, - Increasing coalition and blackmail potential for the regionalist parties at the national and regional level, - Pluralism within the nationalist camp granting the voters a choice between moderate as well as radical versions of nationalism, - Mutual dependency between regional and statewide parties with both set of actors needing each other in order to govern at the regional and national level.
Convergence among the political elite and in the party system	-around European integration: Keating underlines that in the minority nations of Spain "Europe took on a particular importance as a new framework in which their aspirations to self-government could be realized, without confronting the Spanish state head-on" via the subsidiarity principle and Europe of the Regions concept (2000: 32), -around autonomy schemes: despite initial opposition by Basque nationalists, the extreme left and the extreme right and the current demands for revision, the autonomy scheme has been perceived as a flexible means of addressing the problems, -around rejection of violence: Anti-terrorism Accord between the PP and the PSOE in December 2000; Ajuria Enea Pact initiated by the PNV-PSOE coalition ruling in the Basque region; the Lizarra Declaration by the Basque nationalist parties with the HB being drawn into talks with local parties and unions for the first time; isolation of the HB upon its failure to condemn violence with cooperation flowing during the ceasefire period and ebbing away after that.
The public	- No extensive support for exclusive identities: success in marrying Spanish identity with regional identities, - Public support for the autonomy design, - Vocal public condemnation of violence: the Blanco event represents a major eruption of popular mood, - Popular support for the tough PP policies for the extermination of violence.

NOTES:

(1) Ben-Ami points at the conditional nature of this integration in stating that "(o)f the four Basque provinces, three - Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa and Alava- were integrated into the Castilian Kingdom in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and that only after the Castilian kings had recognized their regional fueros (...) in matters of jurisdiction, administration and financial management" (1991: 493).

(2) In fact, Giner rather characterized Carlism as "the 'separatism' of the age" where "(i)n areas with a recognized historical identity and local law like Navarre, the Basque country and Catalonia, 'liberal' centralism from Madrid was answered by an affirmation of ancient roots" (1994: 83).

(3) Guibernau (1995) and Liebert (1990) present an account of the Catalan choice of non-violent brand of nationalism and how the small and scattered groups opting out for violence were marginalized. Guibernau in fact argues that Catalans rather opted for "(c)ultural resistance, that is the use of all sorts of symbols of Catalan identity in the public as well as in the private sphere" (1995: 84).

(4) The activities of the government-backed counter-terrorist groups have actually troubled the then Socialist government and Prime Minister Gonzales. His interior minister is imprisoned, convicted of running death-squads against ETA activists. A major paramilitary group was the GAL which was finally disbanded in 1986. It was the only one among such groups which was being subjected to an investigation. A legal case was brought against it after it was disbanded despite the fact that a variety of groups were employed in the fight against terrorism since the Francoist era.

(5) In Sullivan's opinion, the shooting of Etxebarrieta who was an ETA activist committed to traditional nationalism and armed struggle after an incident where he shot a policeman dead gave ETA its first martyr as a result of which "(m)asses were

held for him throughout the Basque country and traditional nationalists rallied to ETA's support" (1999: 2).

The trial of ETA leaders and two priests before a military tribunal in December 1970 was perceived as a watershed. Payne argues that "(t)he Burgos trial quickly mushroomed into the nearest thing to a political crisis that the Franco regime had seen since the 1940s" (1975: 246). Transparency was observed throughout the trial due mainly to the high level of foreign and public interest in the issue. When six ETA members were sentenced to death, the protests in the Basque society have produced the possibility that violence may follow. This concern is usually perceived to have underlined Franco's commuting the death sentences. Sullivan in fact examines how the trial was perceived by the ETA leaders as highly crucial with respect to the "mass support it had produced for those sentenced to death" (1999: 2).

(6) Carrero event is usually perceived to have exerted a deep impact on Spanish politics at large. Some analysts even argue that the killing had the final effect of bolstering liberalization. Payne in fact argues that "the deed changed the course of regime politics" and adds that "(t)he result has been to chart a more liberal course that is moving in the direction of slightly freer political associations" (1975: 248).

(7) The rift within ETA was highly evident and stemmed from a variety of sources. Whether the organization should commit itself to Marxism has been a major issue of disagreement. Another issue of contention was over allegiance to traditional nationalism and Sabino Arana's legacy. The responses to be given to the initiatives by the Spanish government thus became an issue of disagreement along these debates. The most serious split came into form in 1974 with ETA-PM agreeing to negotiate with the Spanish government provided that its conditions were met whereas

ETA-M rejected any kind of dialogue with Madrid. While the former coalesced with Euskadiko Ezkerra (EE), the latter faction had sponsored the Herri Batasuna (HB).

(8) The HB was convicted of releasing an ETA video in the official time period allocated to it for propaganda purposes prior to 1996 elections. The video introduced the 'Democratic Alternative' scheme prepared by ETA as a proposal for solution to the Basque issue. ETA's icon and three ETA militants in masks were involved. A declaration issued by the HB in Egin magazine was also included in the file against the organization as an indication of its praise for terrorism. The HB rejected any organic link with ETA and regarded the video as covering a proposal for peace. HB's claim was that its deeds were solely directed at the objective of securing peace for Euskadi (the Basque land).

(9) The ceasefire period was not altogether devoid of conflict. In Spring 1999, under the reign of ceasefire, a leader of ETA has been arrested in France, a major unit of it was surrounded, and another militant has been found death. Government's statements that the arrested unit might have targeted Aznar were not regarded to be convincing by other Basque nationalist parties who "denounce the crackdown as 'a provocation' " (The Economist, April 3, 1999: 24).

(10) The mechanisms proposed by the Ajuria Enea Pact included the primacy of rule of law in the fight against terrorism, exclusion of those resorting to violence, proposals for solution only by the legitimate political parties, reintegration of those renouncing violence into the society, and effective cooperation between the central government and the regional government with the latter taking the major responsibility.

(11) AP's discontent with the transition process was highly evident. Branded as a Francoist party, the AP voted against the 1978 Constitution. AP also proposed forty

amendments during constitutional negotiations with the desire mainly to water down the content of the autonomy statutes.

(12) Nunez in fact sets the Union del Pueblo Navarro (Union of the Navarrese People- UPN) and the Unidad Alavesa (UA) apart from these regional parties as parties that come up with truly regional contentions that date back to fueros (2000: 129).

(13) Even under the present circumstances, Catalans are highly on alert over guiding their language against any potential foreign influences. The latest controversies over the 1999 attempt by Catalonia's premier to come up with a bill urging the cinemas in Catalonia to show at least a quarter of their films in Catalan or become subject to fines and closures as well as whether the movie Harry Potter should be dubbed into Catalan or never be released testifies to this sensitivity. For the details of debates and the related rejection by Catalonia's high court of the proposed bill, see The Economist, March 6, 1999 and The Economist, December 8, 2001.

(14) Miguel Angel Blanco was a 29 year-old PP councilman kidnapped by ETA. ETA declared that if its conditions involving the transfer of ETA prisoners to jails in the Basque region were not fulfilled in 48 hours, it would kill Blanco. That actually happened to be the case with the Spanish government failing to abide by the deadline.

(15) The rapid route to autonomy specified in Article 151 applied to the historic nationalities of Basque region, Catalonia, and Galicia. Andalusia was also allowed to enjoy the rights under Article 151 provided by 'exceptional route' as distinct from the other regions which, like itself, did not enjoy the status of historical regions. The fact that it is a dominant region in terms of population and land area is explanatory.

(16) Various factors are enumerated in accounting for how the Spanish choice of autonomous communities differs from a federal solution: the lack in the 1978 constitution of a federal distribution of powers, the failure to erect a contractual federation-making, the lack of territorial representation at the central level and the sustained existence of centralist administrative bodies were all listed. For a detailed discussion of how the Spanish state is distant from forming a federal state structure, see (Guibernau, 1995: 248-250). A central political discussion of the 1990s has been on why the Senate was a 'chamber of provincial representation' rather than a chamber of regions and of territorial representation. Four members were elected from fifty-two Spanish provinces with only twenty percent of members being appointed by regional parliaments from among their members. The Senate is also less powerful than the Congress. Pointing at how the Congress always prevails in case of a conflict with the Senate, Colomer concludes that "(t)he Senate is thus not a decisive actor in the decision-making process and can not effectively represent the autonomous communities in the national arena" (1999: 50).

(17) In fact, Gibbons argues that "in practice Spain might well attain most of the characteristics of a federal state, for example, by transforming the role of the Spanish Senate, and by re-evaluating the relationship between the different layers of its government at local, provincial, regional and central levels (1999: 37).

The Canadian Case: Lingering Prospect for Separation and Democratic Consolidation

The Canadian case is of immense value to the analyses undertaken in this study due basically to the fact that it presents an example of democracy being consolidated and sustained even through periods of the intensification of ethnic tensions. Canada indeed stands as a case which performs affirmatively in all the variables that this study concentrates on. Yet this case also reveals that even in a context where all the possibilities including the option of separation are being discussed, uncertainty may still linger. None of the democratic mechanisms resorted to thus seems to offer a guaranteed settlement of the issue.

The Setting:

The peculiar conditions that are presented by the Canadian context may be analyzed as follows:

Multiplicity of problems:

Analyzing ethnic relations in Canada surfaces as a complex task. The desire of the provinces to guard their autonomy and ethnic as well as regional cleavages all place a burden on the federal government to accommodate the claims of a variety of actors. Extensive immigration into Canada and the constantly changing composition of Canada's population complicate this picture even further. The federal government, thus, is in no way solely under challenge by the English-French cleavage, despite the fact that this cleavage is located at the very center of the political system. Drawing attention to debates over rounds of discussions on the Canadian constitution, Milne stresses that "(t)he number of issues is daunting; Quebec's demands, western alienation, northern concerns, self-government for aboriginal peoples, strengthening of national political institutions" (1993: 208). In Forbes' opinion the factors

conditioning Canada's recent ethnic politics are the appearance of 'visible minorities' in Canadian cities mainly due to immigration from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean as well as "a relative decline of the 'two founding races' and a growing predominance of English over French" (1994: 93). (1) What is particularly crucial in all this is that the Canadian case presents a complex task of accommodation as the immigration policy allowed for yet more diversity in addition to the still disputed relations between the French, the English, the Aboriginals and the provinces.

Redefinition of the terms of the Canadian federal arrangement has become a major issue. No representation of regional communities at the central parliamentary level has been instituted. Yet, the quest for greater autonomy has been a topic of heated debate in the Canadian context, with Quebec nationalism and regional alienation particularly in the West providing the main sources of grievance. Furthermore, the North has become the latest region to voice its demands and to advocate provincial status (MacIver, 1999: 249). Regional and provincial identities have thus always managed to remain intact. In his analysis of regionalism, MacIver argues that "(a) perception of difference from the rest of the country, intensified by a sense of remoteness, economic grievance and political exclusion are the common factors contributing to regional identity", with Canada being perceived as consisting of the Atlantic or Maritime region, Quebec, Ontario, the West and the North (1999: 249). A recent upsurge in regionalist demands has also been noticed by various analysts. The fact that Ontario and Quebec have always been regarded as the center of Canadian politics forms one potential reason.

Identifying regionalism as a central tenet of Canadian political life, Williams argues that "(t)he construction of a Federal Canada was the means by which the power and energy of these competing regional systems were to be checked and

harnessed so as to create a viable, sovereign state" (1995: 32). In accounting for the strength of regionalism in the Canadian context, on the other hand, Simeon lists a number of factors: the regional character of Canadian life and politics; the highly regionalized economic structure; the differences in national and ethnic origins of the population of the various provinces; the strong correlation of region with voting preferences; the regional character of party strength; the visibility of conflict between regions (such as Central Canada versus the extremes, or East versus West, etc.) (Lerda, 1996: 282). A related continuous evolution in the Canadian federal system has thus become inevitable. In Gagnon's opinion "during the latter part of the nineteenth century, the provinces asserted themselves at the expense of a centralized conception of Canada, and made it a more fully federal system, which has oscillated from that time onward bringing forward a greater balance between the central and the provincial governments" (1989: 159). Hence, gradually "(t)he role of the federal government has become less dominant as it is persistently challenged over jurisdictions and tax revenues by the provinces, especially Quebec" (MacIver, 1999: 253).

Furthermore, groups of different ethnic background had contesting visions of Canada's future. Ethnic diversity and the changing ethnic composition of the population in Canada are surely crucial to the analysis at this point. Referring to the figures of early 1990s, MacIver states that "Canadians of purely British origin are still the largest group but have declined from nearly 60 percent to just under 30 percent of the total population in the last one hundred years" whereas "(t)he French proportion of the total population has been declining steadily for even longer and now stands at about 23 percent" (1999: 239). (2) The groups of other ethnic origins form approximately a third of Canadian population, encompassing Germans, Italians,

Ukranians, Scandinavians, Asians, Afro-Caribbeans and Latin Americans, with the aboriginals constituting the smallest component of the population (MacIver, 1999: 239 and 240). These figures testify to the fact that the Canadian settlement could currently in no way be determined by an agreement among the two core actors of Ontario and Quebec.

This seems to stand as a signal that all sorts of bargains have to include a number of other actors as well. Williams points at how "(r)enegotiations of the fundamental character of society have allowed Canada's 'third force' (the so-called 'Ethnic Canadians') to articulate their aspirations and demands for a truly plural Canadian identity" with the backlash being particularly strong in Western provinces (1995: 40). Moreover, as another distinct group, the aboriginals found greater channels for pressing ahead with their own claims. In fact, "(t)he Assembly of First Nations has declared Quebec's claims to distinctiveness to be less valid than those of the aboriginal peoples" (MacIver, 1999: 254). The aboriginals increasingly became a party to the negotiations on the amendments to the constitution. Their demands for acquiring greater powers and enlarging their areas of jurisdiction were constantly voiced. Similar to Quebec, they also had a claim to a special or distinct status as the 'first nations'. Keeping the demands of the groups with no territorial base apart from those of Quebec, Phillips argues that the main demand of the aboriginal people has been for recognition of their inherent right of self-government, with this right amounting to "little more than the right to run their own housing authorities or school boards" (1995: 118). The recent talks for treaties between the federal or provincial governments and the native groups from British Columbia to Quebec also constitute a significant political debate. (3)

Yet, all the more significant is the fact that all these different groups are living in an intermingled fashion, with no homogeneous region in terms of the concentration of the population. It is essential to recognize that the regions thus display huge diversity within the Canadian context. MacIver states that "(w)hile the regions have a strong sense of identity, they are also internally diverse and polycentric and the identification of regional interests is not always unanimous" (1999: 249). In the case of the English-French cleavage, for instance, Milne estimates that "(t)here are nearly a million Francophones living in [rest of Canada] and about the same number of Anglophones in Quebec..." (1993: 217). The total picture is then complicated by the fact that when articulating their demands, all the groups should display some concern for the sensitivities of others with whom they inhabit the same province.

Quebec and ethnic politics:

The fate of the francophone Canadian population has become the most pressing aspect of ethnic relations in Canada owing mainly to the debates over the future status of Quebec. Despite the variety of ethno-cultural communities inhabiting the Canadian territory, MacIver argues that the English-French cleavage has been bolstered in time, "transforming the ethno-linguistic dichotomy of French and English into an ethno-territorial polarisation of Quebec and the rest of Canada" (1999: 239 and 253). Yet, many authors argue that a clear 'French and the rest' divide long existed in the perception of the francophone population of Quebec. Kellas indeed argues that "(t)he French-speaking population in Canada, concentrated in Quebec, but also strong in Acadia (New Brunswick) have always constituted a separate nation within Canada, and they rarely intermarried with the non-French-speaking immigrants" (1998: 116).

Forbes argues that "Canada took form as a result of 'The Conquest' (of the French by British forces under General James Wolfe in 1759) and then the northward migration of British Loyalists who opposed the American Revolution two decades later" as "(t)wo groups of colonists, one English-speaking and Protestant, the other French-speaking and Roman Catholic, but both defined in part by their opposition to the American colonists to the south, came together under the sovereignty of the British Crown" (1994: 87). Taking the early history of Canada back to the rivalry between Britain and France for control of North America and Quebec's retention by the British, MacIver draws attention at how "(f)or well over half a century after the conquest the French continued to be a majority of the population in Canada, a fact acknowledged in the institutions of the colonial government" as "(a) sequence of legislation including the Quebec Act of 1774 recognised the distinctive features of Quebec society, guaranteed its language, religion, legal system, social customs and provided its elite with a share in the exercise of political power" (1999: 240). The first civilian regime following the British conquest of New France under the royal proclamation of 1763 indeed established English civil and criminal law on the French Canadian majority and brought restrictions on the exercise of Roman Catholic faith. Yet, it was with the reversal introduced by the 1774 Quebec Act that French laws were re-established and limitations on the practice of Catholicism were eased. A change in the balance of population between Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec) was remarkable in that sense. The 1851 census revealed that the francophones were less numerous than anglophones.

Rodal similarly identifies the 1774 Quebec Act and Confederation in 1867 as central to the bolstering of "the French / Catholic community's authority to order those activities critical to the maintenance of societal and cultural distinctness- a

different regime for education, marriage and family law, social welfare, land tenure and inheritance, and so on" (1991: 160). The Constitutional Act of 1791 "separated Quebec into two distinct colonies, each with its own elected assembly, but controlled by a governor: the predominantly English colony up Upper Canada, and the predominantly French colony of Lower Canada- respectively today's southern portions of Ontario and Quebec" (Coulombe, 2000: 277). Thus, in a context where political unrest in British colonies of New England was growing and the calls by American Congress for the Quebecois to fight in arms against the Crown was intensifying, "(e)nsuring the loyalty of the French Canadians and their elites (the landowners and the clergy) would require making concessions" as a result of which "the Quebec Act reinstated French civil laws and institutions and indirectly recognized the use of the French language alongside English in their application" (Coulombe, 2000: 276-277). Still, Lord Durham who was dispatched by Britain to investigate the rebellions of 1837 and 1838 in both parts of Canada came to the conclusion that "the solution lay foremost in assimilating French Canadians for the good of all" as a result of which "(t)he British government hence passed the Union Act in 1840, which united the colonies into a single province and whose main feature, in keeping with the assimilationalist scheme, was an elected assembly that under-represented the more numerous French Canadians" (Coulombe, 2000: 277). Yet, in time, a pattern of dualism emerged with the institutionalization of cooperation between the French and British communities, where a division into Canada West (formerly Upper Canada) and Canada East (formerly Lower Canada) and "(i)nstead of a single administrative structure controlled by the English, separate sections and ministries allowed each region to look after its own affairs" (Coulombe, 2000: 278). The Confederation agreement was concluded in 1867 whereby the provinces of

Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick formed the Dominion of Canada as four self-governing territories followed by the joining of the newcomers until 1949, when ten provinces were united. The confederal structure was hence completed. Yet, Forbes argues that "(e)ven before the drafting and adoption of a written federal constitution (the British North American Act of 1867), an informal federalism was practiced, involving dual ministries and separate legislation for the English-Protestant and French-Catholic parts of a formally united province" (1994: 87). It is argued that the chief devices in overcoming the English-French rivalry were federalism and 'brokerage' (or multiethnic) parties and the year 1867 was a consolidation of these patterns rather than their foundation (Forbes, 1994: 87).

Such a historical course of events has formed the backbone of the Quebec nationalist claims. The idea that Canada is the product of a compact between two founding nations has mainly appealed to the Quebecois as a justification of their pursuit of a special status within the Canadian settlement. A perception of subordination and erosion of their dominant status seems to have been located at the center of francophone grievances. For Quebec nationalists, the major threat was that the French-British compact arrived at the formation of the Confederation was being replaced by anglophone dominance. The francophone fears of assimilation into the majority anglophone culture of North America were at serious levels. Closing of French schools, restrictions on French language or conscription crises all were feeding into those fears. The decline in Quebec's birth rate served to magnify the concerns among the French speakers as their percentage in the Canadian population was declining constantly. Hence, self-preservation surfaced as the major concern.

In the context described, Quebec's claim to a special status has served to severe its relations with the other provinces. Its insistence on a political settlement

granting it a unique status within the Canadian settlement and the Quebecois resentment at a multi-ethnic society based on their fear of denial of their founding nation status has drawn much opposition. MacIver indeed argues that "Ontario has been virtually alone amongst the provinces in being prepared to recognise and endorse Quebec's claims" (1999: 254). Furthermore, Quebec increasingly has been perceived as defying the national unity of Canada. Milne indeed draws attention at how those advocating separation in the rest of Canada argue that Quebec should secede without the territories it gained by virtue of being a part of the Canadian union and without those rejecting to join Quebec in its separate existence on the grounds of the self-determination principle, thus leading to Quebec's transformation "from 'a large province to a small country' " (1993: 211). Others in the rest of Canada are concerned that a separation of Quebec might signal further similar demands to come. To summarize the tensions between Quebec and the rest of Canada, Milne argues that "other Canadians are sick of constitutional politics and furious over Quebec's blackmail and general chequebook approach to Canada" (1993: 208).

Furthermore, the concerns of the anglophones and aboriginals in Quebec were also highly remarkable. Phillips states that "Quebec, for example, includes eleven First Nations within its present borders, occupying over half the territory; it also includes 800, 000 anglophones, as well as a variety of others who may identify with none of the three founding peoples" (1995: 141). Those of neither English nor French origin had their own reservations on the rights to be granted to the Quebecois. The aboriginal claims for greater self-government and increased powers especially gain significance in the context of discussions over the future of Quebec with the aboriginals occupying a huge amount of Quebec territory. Milne indeed speaks of Quebec "where virtually half of the province and its huge hydroelectric megaprojects

would lie on land claimed by the Cree" (1993: 217). (4) He also adds that "it was probably inevitable that Quebec's nationalist claims to priority would raise the indignation of aboriginal peoples both in that province and throughout the country", stimulating the aboriginal population to stage a vocal opposition to the Meech Lake Accord most particularly. A variety of other issues led to a widening of the gap between the aboriginal and francophone interests in Quebec. Forbes confirms that "because of Quebec's poor relations with the native peoples on its present territory, Quebec separation from Canada might well trigger a process by which the native peoples in the North try to separate from the newly independent nation, in order to remain part of Canada" (1994: 97). There was "the clear threat by the anglophone Cree Indians of northern Quebec that they would themselves secede from an independent Quebec, taking a large part of its territory and natural resources with them" (MacIver, 1999: 262). Considering the fact that Quebec also has an immigrant population, it is crucial to add that these people had concerns of their own such as the right for their children to be educated in English over which they engaged in serious confrontation with the provincial authorities.

Quebec has also experienced an internal transformation. MacIver argues that "for two hundred years Quebec remained a traditional, defensive and inward looking society" and "(b)y the twentieth century it was a distinct and self-contained, francophone society, remote from its European origins and suspicious of its English Canadian neighbours" (1999: 243). Secularism has allowed Quebec political system and party system to exert effective control over Quebec nationalism and the campaign for a 'distinct society' status. Forbes draws attention at the changing nature of French-Canadian nationalism with the emphasis shifting from religious differences to the language issues in a context where the "(n)ationalists no longer

spoke of their compatriots as a minority, 'French Canadians', who were dispersed across the country and whose 'minority rights' needed protection, but rather as a majority, les Quebecois, exploited by foreign capitalists and oppressed by Anglo-American cultural imperialism" (1994: 90). Similarly, Balthazar stresses how modernization in Quebec led to rivalry rather than greater integration with Canada "as the provincial government of Quebec created its own welfare, cultural and economic programs and expressed a fresh new will to regain the jurisdictions it had lost to Ottawa over the years" (1997: 3). Vigor of Canadian nationalism in Trudeau's period mainly through his commitment to centralism has allegedly given great momentum to Quebec nationalism. Gagnon for instance argues that "Canada's pursuit of homogeneity has led to the mobilization of political forces in Quebec", pointing mainly at impact of the Charter of 1982 (2000: 199). It is thus possible to argue that fear of assimilation, confidence in Quebec's potential, and a feeling of being let down by the rest of Canada all served to stimulate the Quebec nationalist cause. As regards what the Quebec nationalists particularly demand, the then Premier Bourassa has in 1986 outlined Quebec's conditions as follows: recognition of its status as a distinct society; a formal voice in Supreme Court appointments; willingness to negotiate an agreement with the federal government on the topic of immigration policy; limits to federal spending powers in areas of provincial jurisdiction with the recognition of potential for compensation; and provincial veto on constitutional amendments affecting the province (Williams, 1995: 48). (5)

The federal response to the multiplicity of different claims seemed to revolve around the idea of constructing an all-encompassing Canadian identity. Williams argues that "(t)he ideology of multiculturalism therefore has been used by central government as a means of uniting the country and giving it a renewed sense of

purpose" and that, for instance, "(t)his top-down forging of a new identity was based upon federal patronage and public subsidy, wherein any writer, poet, musician, painter or photographer worth their salt could be in receipt of a Canada Council grant to tour the country and explore the outer edges of the intellectual renaissance mediated through state-regulated and state-subsidised national culture" (1995: 42). Yet, the multicultural design for Canada has not achieved unconditional support from Quebec where the francophone citizens came to possess concerns over their status as a constituent nation. In their opinion, the francophone identity was now being relegated into a lesser position of being simply one among the many. The francophone discontent was reciprocated as there was the belief that "(t)he rest of Canada should enjoy a broadly multicultural society within a unilingual English system, with an occasional dispensation for third-force ethnic components in such cities as Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary" (Williams, 1995: 44). For many in Canada, the francophones were not that 'constituent' a nation anymore. Driedger's argument conforms to that statement when he claims that "(e)xcept for New Brunswick, where one-third (31%) of the population speaks French at home, French is hardly used at all outside Quebec" as "(o)nly three percent of the population in Ontario and less than three percent of the population elsewhere use it in the home" (1996: 80). English Canadians also had concerns of their own, centering mainly on how their dominant position might be affected in a multicultural Canada.

Domestic peace and violence potential:

The major advantage that the Canadian case seems to enjoy relates to the way in which violence was ruled out of the political sphere as a method in the pursuit of political objectives. Swift military action as well as lack of support for the perpetuators of violence have jointly resulted in the marginalization of violent attempts. Hence, the Canadian example is set apart from the other cases to be examined with respect to how the political system can be completely isolated from the violence factor.

<u>A period of violence: The Front pour la Liberation du Quebec (FLQ) and its failure</u>

There have been periods when force was employed in pursuing political objectives. During the times of the Confederation, rebellions took place centering on concerns over the status of the francophones faced with increasing domination of the anglophone population. The rebellions of 1837 and 1838 constituted a cause of concern for the anglophones. The rebellions in the second part of the 19th century for the extension of the rights of francophones were quelled and their leader was hanged, aggravating further the tensions between the anglophones and the francophones (MacIver, 1999: 242-243). Metis (francophone) revolts and the hanging of their leader Riel have acquired symbolic significance in Quebec nationalist discourse.

From mid-1960s on militant and violent union activity became a frequent occurrence in Quebec. The most systematic campaign of violence aimed at achieving a desired future for Quebec has been resorted to by FLQ. Launching their attacks in 1963, "(t)he FLQ described itself as 'a revolutionary movement made up of volunteers ready to die for the cause of political and economic independence of Quebec' " and targeted " 'all colonial symbols and institutions' including all vested interests of American colonialism, the natural ally of English Canadian colonialism"

(Janke, 1992: 37). The offices representing the federal government and the officers in Quebec have been the major targets of violent FLQ attacks. Moreover, "(m)any companies or public sector organizations involved in labour disputes were the targets of bombings by the [FLQ]" (Janke, 1992: 36). The activities undertaken by the FLQ mainly took the shape of bombings directed against government and English establishments, robberies, demonstrations. Yet it was the kidnapping actions that earned it greater publicity. The organization has been subject to some internal transformation as well. The emergence of a faction representing a shift to socialism has also been a point at the evolution of the FLQ. Janke argues that by 1966 there developed socialist approaches which claimed that "the fight had shifted from federalists versus separatists to the proletariat versus the bourgeoisie" as "(t)he war for the national liberation of Quebec will be violent, organized, armed struggle" (1992: 39). (6)

It is particularly crucial that government's response has been to form the Combined Anti-Terrorist Squad (CATS) in 1964 in Montreal. Yet, police and intelligence authorities have usually been pointed at in accounting for why the FLQ actions deteriorated into a crisis. Despite initial criticisms directed at the security forces and intelligence agents, determination to root violence out has characterized Canadian governmental strategy. Prime Minister Trudeau's approach to the issue was clearly reflected in his statement that "(s)o long as there is power here which is challenging the elected representatives of the people, then I think that power must be stopped" (O'Malley, 2001: 3).

The FLQ's initial major deed then led to what came to be termed as the 'October crisis'. The British Trade Commissioner Cross was kidnapped in 1970. He was released later on the condition of the granting of safe passage to those involved.

A second kidnapping action by the FLQ targeted the Minister of Labor and Immigration in Quebec government and resulted in his murder. The choice was critical not only because Minister Laporte was a senior and respected political figure, but also because he was known to be a close friend of the then Prime Minister Trudeau. Emergency powers were introduced in Quebec and martial law was declared. The National Defense Act allowed for the military to be located in the troubled cities. The first invocation of the War Measures Act during peace time in Canadian history was in 1970. Premier Bourassa of Quebec called on the federal government to invoke the War Measures Act on the grounds that "(a)ccording to information in our possession and which is available to you, we are faced with a concerted effort to intimidate and overthrow the government and the democratic institutions of this province by the planned and systematic commission of illegal acts, including insurrection" (Janke, 1992: 55). Hence, the FLQ was perceived as a major attack on Canadian democracy. The political authorities in Quebec insistently called for Ottawa's support in confronting this attack. The result was the invocation of the War Measures Act which declared the FLQ as an illegal organization. Various arrests then followed. The use of the army in the streets and the restrictions on the use of civil liberties caused concern among the population. Similarly, Roberts argues that "the memory of the extreme federal reaction continues to influence Quebec nationalist consciousness" (1998: 58). Even Trudeau's real motives in invoking the War Measures Act were being questioned by the media.

In relation to the kidnapping and murder of Laporte, Macfarlane concludes that "(w)hile such tactics may secure an immediate objective, like the release of prisoners, through threat alone they cannot in themselves secure fundamental objectives such as Quebec independence, to which the government and the people

are opposed- indeed they are likely in many conditions to undermine support for their own cause" (1974: 109). The event termed as the October Crisis indeed proved to be a watershed in many ways. Some of the FLQ activists gave up arms and declared their decision to continue the fight within the legitimate framework provided by the Parti Quebecois (PQ). Janke concludes that the crisis culminated at a point where "(f)or federalists, the defeat of the FLQ showed the need to fight Quebec separatism with a vigorous campaign from Ottawa, while for Quebec nationalists it confirmed that the only possible route to sovereignty or independence was through the legitimate political structure" (1992: 67). Violence increasingly became less of an influential factor in Quebec. Zolf concludes that "(t)he October Crisis drove political terrorism and the FLQ out of existence" and "galvanized legitimate democratic separatism into the major force in francophone Quebec that it still is today" (2001: 4). Hence, "(t)hroughout the period of constitutional negotiations, politically-inspired violence in Quebec was limited to scattered vandalism against businesses with 'illegal' English signs and arson attack against an English rights association in Montreal" (Janke, 1992: 69-70). Even Rose who headed the FLQ cell which kidnapped and murdered Laporte began to lead the Parti de la Democratie Socialiste when he was released from prison.

The kidnapping of the British Trade Commissioner Cross proved to be another major deed by the FLQ in terms of its consequences. It was due to this incident that the demands, communiqués and manifesto of the FLQ were broadcasted, printed or revealed. Drawing attention at how the FLQ "gained widespread publicity and public sympathy for their cause" by scoring a propaganda victory, Janke argues that "(t)he authorities appeared to have bargained successfully for the release of Cross, but at the cost of widespread sympathy for the FLQ cause,

opening the way to legitimizing it" (1992: 50). Yet, Janke concludes that "(t)he bombing campaigns of the 1960s created fear and uncertainty among the population, but without a coherent strategy the FLQ failed to convert this effect into political leverage" (1992: 62).

The level of public support enjoyed by the FLQ hence also demands careful scrutiny. It seems possible to argue that after an initial period of receptiveness in the face of intense information on what the FLQ was, public distaste for the organization's activities proved more dominant. The killing of Laporte was a true landmark event for the level of public support enjoyed by the FLQ and the strength of the organization. Janke concludes that "(w)ith the death of Laporte there was an immediate swing of popular opinion behind the government" (1992: 58). The government's efforts seemed to obtain the same extent of support across all provinces and from people of diverse background. The Economist states that "(w)hen Pierre Trudeau reacted to the kidnappings by imposing martial law, he had the backing not just of 88 percent of all Canadians but 86 percent of Quebeckers" (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 12). Similarly, Zolf claims that "85 percent of Canadians, both French and English, completely approved of Trudeau's handling of War Measures" and adds that "(a) snap election right after War Measures would have given Trudeau the biggest landslide victory in Canadian history" (2001: 5). Newman also confirms that the public supported the War Measures Act "(s)o much so that the Progressive Conservatives, who had originally opposed its implementation, reversed their field after finding themselves on the wrong side of public opinion, and leader Robert Stanfield could not hold the caucus together in opposition" (2001: 2). In spite of occasional criticisms of government's methods in tackling the problem, a rejection of violence seemed to unite the public. Hence, the FLQ was increasingly perceived as

brutal and its image was gradually deteriorating. Furthermore, Laporte's death so intensified the pressure on the FLQ that a major crackdown on it was inevitable by 1971. Almost all last vestige FLQ groups were demolished by the end of 1972. One can then state that the FLQ campaign of bombings, kidnappings and robberies was mainly concentrated in the period between 1963 and 1972.

In reaching the conclusion that the FLQ may be regarded as amateur when compared to terrorist organizations elsewhere, Janke states that it "lacked the organization or command structure to generate a co-ordinated assault on the government or to drive a wedge between the English and French communities, or between the 'proletariat' and the 'bourgeoisie' " (1992: 61). The extent of the threat posed against the political system by the FLQ also displays a marked divergence. Maloney indeed refers to the 1970 estimates presented by Loomis and claims that "there were in the vicinity of 100 'trigger pullers', 100 propagandists , 200 to 300 dealing with infrastructure (monetary support, safe-houses) and up to 3,000 other passive sympathizers) " (2000: 4). (7) Another basic difference that Janke notices relates to the intentions. He argues that the deaths resulting from the FLQ actions were for the major part not deliberate and rather accidental, with the organization showing "an almost total lack of ruthlessness in its actions " and "playing at revolution rather than pursuing it aggressively" (1992: 61).

Whether a return to violence will take place has become a major concern in recent years. The demonstrations organized by Villeneuve in late 1990s that openly called for war seemed to have justified that concern. Alberta Report perceives it to be striking that Villeneuve who was among the three founders of the FLQ and its last jailed member "has returned to public life, threatening violence against partitionists-those who argue that dissenting regions of a separate Quebec would be allowed to

remain Canadian" (Torrance, 1997: 1). Villeneuve also came up with the Mouvement de Liberation Nationale du Quebec following the failure of the 1995 referendum, with this organization declaring that "(f)rom now on, all Quebecois have the duty to rise up and fight" (Torrance, 1997: 1-2).

Its limited resources and appeal as well as prompt counter-measures facing it have marginalized the impact of the FLQ. Their limited room for maneuver coupled with a number of sensational deeds altered public perception of their activities and left their cause devoid of the public support that was essential for effectiveness. It is thus true that the Canadian political system also experienced a brief period when violence seemed to stand as a major threat and that, even today, there is scattered evidence that a return to violent means may in no way be completely ruled out. Still, a number of factors have combined to ease the task of the Canadian authorities and have enabled them to eliminate the detrimental effects of violence. These factors may be listed as follows:

- federal and provincial authorities' determination in eliminating violence,

- Canadian public stance expressing distaste for the choice of violent methods following a brief period of being exposed to information on the FLQ,

- and the refusal by the actors in the political system to endorse FLQ's strategy, with all the legitimate political parties carefully refraining from associating themselves with the proponents of violent methods.

The Party System:

The controversy over Canadian unity and reforms:

It is indeed particularly significant that strong political figures at the national level were continuously able to produce various schemes for managing the conflict. Such efforts by both Trudeau and Mulroney made them central to Canadian politics. Trudeau was a French-speaker from Quebec who served as Canada's prime minister in the period between 1968 and 1984. In Kellas' opinion, he "was a Canadian 'official' nationalist who sought the unity of Canada through bilingualism and strong central power" (1998: 117). Trudeau was convinced of the utility of a federalist solution. While Milne defines Trudeau's strategy as a 'centre-building strategy' (1993: 221), in Roberts' opinion, Trudeau's insistence on bilingualism and the repatriation of the constitution accompanied by a charter of rights and freedoms was "intended to thwart the Quebec nationalists and demonstrate that Canada could be reformed to provide a secure and welcome home for the province and its culturally distinct population" (1998: 59). Trudeau's approach to the Quebec issue has always been rather straightforward. His determination to reject violence and to ensure Canadian unity has been complete. Even at the height of the crisis of 1969 - 1970, Trudeau stated that "(s)ociety must use every means at its disposal to defend itself against the emergence of a parallel power which defies the elected power in this country, and I think that goes to any distance" (Janke, 1992: 53).

It was in the 1984 elections that Trudeau's party lost its stronghold in Quebec and suffered in the West. The Progressive Conservative Party of Mulroney won in the federal elections. Conservatives also won in Quebec and it could be claimed that they "owed this success very largely to the Quebec origins and connections of their leader Robert Mulroney, who was now expected to deliver a Quebec solution, where

Trudeau had failed" (MacIver, 1999: 259). His impressive initial success came through his capitalizing on the resentment felt by the Quebecois upon their perception of Trudeau's failure to fulfill his commitments. Mulroney's emphasis on further constitutional reform and veto power for Quebec enabled him to obtain broad support in Quebec in 1984. Roberts accounts for the victory in 1984 of the Conservatives in reference to "the ability of Mulroney's first-time followers in Quebec to sweep away the perennial Liberal favorites" and associates that result mainly with Trudeau's deeds of campaigning for the no vote in the referendum, his role in the October crisis, and his repatriation of the constitution without the support of Quebec (1998, 61). Mulroney's major move was reaching an agreement with the provincial premiers on what was framed into the Meech Lake Accord, thus keeping up his promise of devising a solution that would be endorsed by Quebec.

Yet, the costs of both policy approaches were apparent. Trudeau has most often been criticized for engaging in extensive centralism. His policies during the 'October crisis' also proved to be highly controversial. Yet, Janke argues that "(t)he most bitter fights involved those who had left for Ottawa and those who were seeking independence at the provincial level, and the election of Trudeau as federal Prime Minister in 1968 increased the tensions between French Canadian federalists and Quebec nationalists" (1992: 35). Still, Trudeau's vision of Canada was endorsed even by many Quebecois.

As regards Mulroney's approach, the major question was whether the conservatives could preserve the support obtained from Quebec without alienating support from the West. The rise of the Reform Party in the West by voicing the grievances of the province in its relations with the federal government has indeed begun to work to the dismay of the Conservatives. Similarly, the Liberal Party at the

federal level was being harshly criticized by western Canada where it lost a considerable degree of support upon its being perceived as a party favoring the Quebecois demands.

In Gagnon's opinion, "the long tradition of third political parties or 'protest parties' exemplifies the perceived alienation from the heartland" in Western Canada (1989: 149). It was from the West that many new political parties such as the Social Credit or the CCF originated. The Reform Party seemed to present no exception to this pattern. Williams argues that "(m)uch of the support for the Reform Party in the October 1993 Federal Election was an attempt to re-establish 'the national ideal', based upon adopting a hard line on Quebec, a re-assertion of fiscal and moral probity and a return to basics" (1995: 44). It was mainly the 1997 elections which witnessed the rise of the Reform Party. Its leader Manning "launched a bitter attack against all federalist parties that might want to ameliorate the national conflict by adopting constitutional language acknowledging Quebec's special status" (Roberts, 1998: 67). Lerda argues that the Reform Party simultaneously "expressed criticism over the Quebec requests and over the risks of weakening the federal government's mandate to develop national social and economic problems" (1996: 287). As the official opposition at the central level, the Reform then began challenging the claims waged by Quebec. Yet, the West produced few minor separatist movements such as the West-Fed, the Unionist Party and the new Western Canadian Party organized by Preston Manning in Alberta. Rather, political actors solely advocating greater provincial control over the Western resources managed to obtain larger public support.

At the level of federal politics, the Liberals are still a dominating actor. The recent overwhelming dominance of the party extends to such a level that "some

Canadians mutter, only half-jokingly that their country is becoming a one-party state" (The Economist, March 23, 2002: 52). MacIver indeed characterizes the Liberal party as a main example of bi-ethnic political parties and "the political home of multiculturalism and traditionally the strongest exponent of the national unity view" (1999: 256 and 261). The Liberal Chretien seems to have taken a rather tough attitude as regards the issue of Quebec independence. The federal Liberals have long attempted to draw up a strategy to counter the independence claims by Quebec. It was from 1995 on that they have managed to develop their own plan for repudiating the Quebecois claims to a separate existence. Roberts argues that the Liberals' defensive plan mainly encourages the indigenous people to claim independence from Quebec had the latter achieved its own separate existence, "challenges the borders of an independent Quebec, queries the share of the federal debt to which an independent Quebec would be liable, and asks who has the right to define a future referendum question and whether independent Quebeckers would be allowed to retain Canadian citizenship" (1998: 65). Furthermore, the Liberals launched in 1997 a request to Supreme Court "to rule on whether and under what conditions a declaration of independence would be lawful" (Roberts, 1998: 65).

The most recent elections of November 2000 at the federal level resulted in a victory for the Liberal Party of Canada whereas two provincial parties constituted the main opposition. Commentators argue that "(i)n Canada, provincial politics has little bearing on the centre", pointing at the ideological differences between the parties running under the same banner (for instance, 'Liberal') at federal and provincial level of politics (The Economist, May 12, 2001: 59). This fact is also termed as the 'Canada's Liberal model', with federal party being independent of its provincial organizations and local affairs (The Economist, March 17, 2001: 62). What is rather

peculiar about the Liberal Party seems to be that it is able to obtain support from a variety of provinces and regions of Canada, thus appealing across Canada.

TABLE 2:

Canadian Federal Election Results for Year 2000

Parties	Percentage of Votes (%) 2000 Federal Elections	Number of Seats (301) 2000 Federal Elections
Liberal Party of Canada	40.8	172
Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance	25.5	66
Progressive Conservative Party	12.2	12
Bloc Quebecois	10.7	38
New Democratic Party	8.5	13
Green Party of Canada	0.8	-

Other parties encountered greater difficulties in expanding their base of support. The rather leftist New Democratic Party (NDP) is currently experiencing a decline which has set in motion a period of constant debates within the party. The support the party has been able to obtain was largely confined to Western Canada and Atlantic Canada. Similar debates over potential reforms within the party structure are also underway in the two right-wing federal parties as both the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives chose new leaders and focused recently on potential ways of boosting their parties' performances. The Alliance is rather a novel creation perceived as representing "an effort to broaden the political base of the western Reform Party by wooing eastern Progressive Conservatives" (The Economist, March 23, 2002: 52). Entailing a degree of unification among some

right-wing forces, the Alliance also aimed to counter the Liberal dominance. Formed by an attempt at the merger of the Reform Party with sections of the Progressive Conservative Party, the controversy over leadership seems to have blocked the complete merger of the two and the emergence of a stronger contender to the Liberals. (8)

Hence, one central factor in the Canadian party system seems to be the increasingly regional basis of support for political parties. Even by 1965, analysts claim that "Canada must be one of the few major industrial societies in which the right and left polarization has become deflected into disputes over regionalism and national unity" (Lerda, 1996: 282). MacIver draws attention at how "(o)f all three major national parties, the Liberal party has for long had little support west of Ontario while the New Democratic Party has had scarcely any east of Ontario; the Conservative Party after a surge of support in Quebec during the 1980s was electorally annihilated across Canada in 1993" (1999: 257). (9) In both the 1993 and 1997 elections, the Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois have become significant actors in the West and Quebec respectively, representing region-specific interests. The originally weak basis of the Reform Party in central and eastern Canada exemplifies this fact. Analysts argue that the fact that the Reform Party virtually has no presence at the provincial level accounts for why it is seeking a merger with the Conservatives (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 16).

The preferences made by voters across different provinces in fact all matter to Canadian national politics. Yet, some provinces are believed to be located more centrally to the political processes. Driedger claims that "(w)ith a concentration of the British economic elite and with more than one-third of the entire Canadian population, [Quebec] has enormous political influence in Canada" (1996: 93).

Roberts details the political weight of Quebec in stating that "achieving a majority bloc in the federal government requires major representation from Quebec" (1998, 54). Even Trudeau bluntly pointed at the centrality of Quebec to Canadian politics in stating that "Quebec can decide who will govern this country, but more importantly how this country will be governed" (Kilgour, 1996: 2). This extensive influence is in no way exclusively exerted by Quebec. Lemco indeed argues that "the provinces with the largest populations, Ontario and Quebec, have dominated the national agenda while western and Atlantic regional interests have been underrepresented in the institutions of power" (1994: 15). Provincial relations also deteriorate as a result of perceptions of lack of parallelism in political clout. Indeed, "(i)n the Atlantic region, as well as in the West and the North, the longstanding complaints that the country's affairs are unfairly dominated by Quebec's constitutional demands and Ontario's economy are becoming more insistent" (Lemco, 1994: 15). Hence, provincial choices highly determine the course of national politics. This statement gains all the more significance as far as Quebec and Ontario are concerned. This pattern occasionally seems to present a major cause for concern among the nationwide parties. Forbes in fact argues that Canadian multiethnic brokerage parties are in difficulty as they "are challenged externally by new parties- such as Reform in the West and the Bloc Quebecois in Quebec - that make no pretense of trying to bridge English-French (or any other important ethnic) differences" (1994: 99). Furthermore, he also adds that these parties weakened their own standing mainly by nomination fights as "rivals for a party's nomination mobilize their own ethnic compatriots to pack the local nomination meeting, and the result is an unseemingly clash of ethnic groups" (Forbes, 1994: 99).

It has to be added that the francophone political actors have occupied central positions in Canadian politics. Drawing attention at federal policies respectively introduced by Prime Ministers Pearson and Trudeau and sustained by their successors, Rodal argues that "French-speaking Canadians have held every critical portfolio in cabinet in recent years, occupy almost one-third of all cabinet posts, and head important Crown Corporations, state enterprises, and national cultural institutions" (1991: 158). Similarly, he adds that "(i)t is virtually unthinkable today that a Canadian Prime Minister would not be bilingual" as by 1991 "the Prime Minister of Canada has come from Quebec in 30 of the past 42 years" (Rodal, 1991: 158).

Various parties at the federal level expressed strong support for Canadian unity. Equality Party extends support to Canadian federalism and unity, yet performs poorly in elections. Lemco defines the Equality Party as 'an anti-Bill 101, anti-Meech Lake, English rights party' and considers it to be particularly striking that it was for the first time in 1989 that the party won four seats in the provincial Quebec legislature with two of the four members not even speaking French (1994: 10). Vision Nationale seems to have emerged as a new federalist party rejecting sovereignty for Quebec. It is hence plausible to argue that the determination of the Liberal party as well as the other traditional forces of Canadian politics for preserving Canadian unity coupled with the emergence of new pro-federalist parties jointly display strong support for Canadian unity at the federal level. It is thus possible to argue that at the federal level, the Bloc Quebecois (BQ) seemed to stand isolated in its advocacy of the independence of Quebec.

The politics of Quebec separatism: The PQ, the BQ, and the Liberals

Quebec separatist political parties have also been active at the provincial and federal level. Challenging the existing class base and power distribution in Quebec, the diverse forces of "Rassemblement pour l'Independence Nationale (RIN), the Mouvement Souverainete-Association (MSA), the Ralliement National (RN), the right-wing Creditistes, and the Parti Socialiste du Quebec (PSQ) were brought together by Rene Levesque, a renegade Liberal cabinet minister, to form the Parti Quebecois" (Roberts, 1998, 57). It was thus in 1968 that various movements advocating independence were gathered under the PQ. A key role may be attributed to the PQ basically due to the fact that it provides a channel for the expression of discontent. Lemco draws attention at what he perceives to be the unusual role played by the PQ when he mentions that "(o)ne would be hard-pressed to find a sovereigntist party in any western industrialized country that is so fully integrated into the nation's political life" (1994: 14). The party has become the official opposition in 1973 and has formed the Quebec government in 1976. It is remarkable to state that in 1970 Liberal Party obtained 44 percent of the vote and 72 out of 108 seats. In the same elections the PQ was able to obtain only 7 seats and the 24 percent of the votes. The Social Credit Party capitalizing on rural discontent performed better, winning 12 seats with 12 percent of votes. Yet, in 1976 the PQ obtained 41 percent of the vote and 71 out of 110 seats in Quebec Assembly. PQ was once more the winner of Quebec elections of 1981. The PQ has been in office in Quebec from 1976 until 1985, with the chief objective of attaining a separate status for Quebec termed as 'sovereignty-association'. The party indeed organized the referendum to that end. The leadership change in PQ in 1985 was followed by the Liberal Party success within the same year in Quebec elections. Liberals were also the winners of

1989 elections. Despite the fact that the Liberals lost in 1994 provincial elections by a close percentage of the votes, they obtained the highest percentage of votes in 1998. Yet, "because many of Quebec's federalists- most of them English-speakers or immigrants- are concentrated in relatively few seats in Montreal and near the borders with Ontario and the United States" (The Economist, October 14, 2000: 74), the PQ was able to obtain a greater number of seats and hence to govern.

Still, in analyzing how Quebec separatism acquired some extra vigor from 1988 on, Williams argues that "the mobilizing factors within Quebec were the resignation of the moderate PQ leader, Pierre Marc Johnson in 1987, and his replacement in March 1988 by the acerbic Jacques Parizeau" (1995: 55). He also adds that "Parizeau and the new PQ leadership were thus far more prepared to take on Ottawa and move the independence cause forward to a higher level of nationalist mobilisation and political struggle" (Williams, 1995: 55). Hence, the ultimate goal of the party seems to have become achieving political independence for Quebec. Yet, sustaining economic ties with the rest of Canada was regarded as essential to the economic well-being of Quebec. Furthermore, when leading the PQ, Levesque stated that "French language and culture could only survive in Canada if it was secured in Quebec by the powers and resources of the provincial state" (MacIver, 1999: 247). When in provincial government, the PQ in fact took various steps to ensure the dominance of French culture and language. Legislation to that end were passed with the Charter of the French Language in 1977, "making French the sole official language in Quebec, prescribing French as the language of public services, commerce and the workplace and the principal language of education for all except Canadian born English speakers", and with the Sign Law "which required that all

advertising and commercial signs, even in small shops, must be in French" (MacIver, 1999: 247).

The PQ won the 1994 Quebec elections with 44.7 percent of the votes and 77 out of 125 seats. Hence, it was again placed in charge with its nationalist policies, pioneering a second referendum effort in 1995. Prior to the referendum, the PQ, BQ and Action Democratique du Quebec (ADQ) leaders agreed on proposing a novel treaty on economic and political partnership with Canada. Hence, a consensus plan which entailed the offer of a partnership to the rest of Canada was formulated in June 12 and then subjected to a referendum. (10) It is also significant that the ADQ which initially advocated a confederal type of relation between Quebec and the rest of Canada cooperated with the PQ in the referendum attempt. Defined as a moderate nationalist political party, the ADQ introduced pluralism into the nationalist camp by presenting a limited degree of competition to the PQ. Despite the fact that the main competition for the votes in Quebec province takes place between the PQ and the Liberals, the ADQ is still a contender for a portion of the votes that have traditionally been channeled to the PQ. In the most recent provincial elections of April 2003, the Liberals obtained 46 percent of the vote and 76 out of 125 seats whereas the PQ won 33 percent of the votes and 45 seats. It is argued that with 18 percent of the vote, the ADQ "sucked off enough of the PQ's supporters to allow the Liberals to win in many French-speaking districts outside greater Montreal" (The Economist, April 19, 2003: 46).

In fact, commitment to unconditional independence always stood as a major area of contention among the actors in Quebec. A split over support for sovereignty-association versus outright independence has even led to the departure of hardline nationalists from the PQ. The formation of the Rassemblement Democratique pour

l'independence (RDI) threatened a split in the nationalist vote through weakening the competitive power of the nationalist camp against the Liberal party. A policy shift was undertaken during the leadership of Johnson. The commitment to the sovereignty-association scheme was discarded in favor of a policy of 'national affirmation'. This new approach entailed the waging of a struggle to enhance the powers of Quebec through operating within the federal system and by advocacy of a Quebec constitution and a presidential form of government. Yet, developments of the 1990s revealed how the debates over the extent of sovereignty and whether conditions should be attached to it created tensions within the party. The defeat by a low margin in the 1995 referendum set in motion a number of changes in the separatist camp the major result of which was the change of leadership in the PQ. Roberts concludes that the defeat was accompanied by Parizeau's putting the blame on 'money' and 'ethnics' as "his outburst, broadcast to all of Canada, confirmed English-speakers' view that the Francophone separatists were fundamentally racist and ethnic nationalists" (1998: 65). The highly popular BQ leader Bouchard was then to replace Parizeau who became an all the more controversial figure following his peculiar interpretation of the referendum results. Bouchard resigned from party leadership in early 2001. His 'go-slow' approach towards the issue of a new referendum created tensions and led to the questioning of his independist credentials within the PQ, accounting for the fact that he "devoted much of his resignation speech to lambasting the xenophobic, intolerant elements within the PQ" (The Economist, January 20, 2001: 48). His successor Landry is perceived as having strong secessionist credentials, with his reactive attitude towards the rest of Canada as exemplified by his rejection of an $ 18m federal grant for a zoo in his previous post as Quebec finance minister because he had to fly the Maple Leaf flag over it and

his turning down an offer of $1.5 billion under a federal program of redistribution, arguing that Quebec was being humiliated (The Economist, March 10, 2001:58). Yet, a degree of moderation was believed to have affected Landry's approach particularly prior to 2003 provincial elections (The Economist, April 12, 2003: 52).

At the federal level, BQ staged a quick rise in the 1990s through its advocacy of independence for Quebec. It was in 1990 that the BQ was formed by six MPs from Quebec who departed from their parties (mainly the Conservative Party) and chose Bouchard, a former Conservative Progressive Party member serving as the environment minister in Mulroney Cabinet, as their leader. The BQ shortly became the counterpart of the PQ in the Federal Parliament. In Williams' opinion, the PQ and the BQ at the federal level are united in their belief that "(b)ecause successive attempts at re-negotiating Quebec's 'distinct society' status within the federal system had failed, ... the only way for the Quebecois to realise their national self-interest was to push for indepencence within a North American community of free and equal states..." (1995: 38). Roberts in fact defines the BQ as "a nationalist formation contesting only federal elections on a separatist platform, attracting provincial right- and left-wing petty bourgeois and trade union nationalists, and drawing campaign support from the exclusively provincial Parti Quebecois" (1998, 61). The BQ began to occupy the position of official opposition in Ottawa. It obtained 54 out of 75 federal seats for Quebec as a result of which it became the second largest party in the House of Commons in 1993 federal elections. The number of seats dropped to 44 in the following elections of 1997. Despite the fact that the reservoir of support for the party is basically located in Quebec, the fact that Quebec has a large number of seats in the House of Commons as well as the rewards associated with the regional concentration of the vote have enabled the party to occupy a key position.

As a nationwide political party, the Liberals have always stood as the main contenders across a variety of provinces. In the case of Quebec, for instance, no party has so far managed to win more than two consecutive elections, with power transfers particularly between the Liberals and the PQ taking place periodically. While in government in Quebec, the Liberals staged a relatively more moderate approach on a number of issues such as in language policies. Quebec Liberal Party has consistently functioned as a proponent of Quebec nationalism through advocating Canadian unity. Its successes at the polls are thus believed to signal a victory for national unity. The Liberals have been a major force in Quebec politics even prior to the emergence of the PQ, together with the Union Nationale. Many commentators regarded these two parties as the major contenders with two distinct visions of what Quebec should be transformed into. Despite the Catholic and agrarian dominance in the Duplessis period, the Liberal Party victory in 1960 was followed by the period of 'Quiet Revolution'. Roberts in fact argues that in the 1960s two ideological and strategic camps emerged in Quebec, the Liberals mostly in the governing position with an agenda on the perpetuation of Canadian federalism being opposed by left and right-wing nationalists and separatists who have occasionally governed Quebec (1998, 55). When the Liberal Lesage administration was defeated in 1966 a rise in support for the independence parties was discernible with a 10 percent swing to them. A new Union Nationale government was formed under the leadership of Johnson. Roberts in fact defines the Union Nationale as "a classic patronage machine" relying "upon right-wing nationalist ideology and a cynical quid pro quo with Liberal governments in Ottawa for economic benefits in exchange for Quebecois political support for the federal Liberal candidates" (1998, 56). Mainly exerting its impact through the Premiership of Duplessis, the Union Nationale Party was rather federalist. Yet, it

engaged in various confrontations with the central government with the objective of securing greater provincial power. Gill argues that the passing of Bill 63 in late 1969 by Union Nationale, guaranteeing the right to choose their children's language of instruction to all "was followed by the virtual elimination of the Union Nationale from Quebec politics in the election of April, 1970" (1996 :101). The Liberals' defeat by the PQ in 1976 elections was in turn accounted for by the introduction of Bill 22, involving the 'francisation' of many Quebec businesses and the enrollment of allophone children in French-language schools which was disapproved by the anglophones and allophones (Gill, 1996: 101). A major turning point for the Liberal party was its reclamation of power following the 1985 elections. Leading the provincial government once more, Roberts claims that Bourassa's Liberal government "remained federalist and supported the federal Progressive Conservative regime of Brian Mulroney, much as the right-wing Union Nationale of the 1940s and 1950s had supported federal governments" (1998, 61).

Currently, a major difference on the issue of Quebec's fate in fact sets the two major contenders in Quebec apart. Quebec Liberal Party's position has been to back the option of asymmetrical federalism with Quebec acquiring greater rights and autonomy whereas the PQ and the BQ advocate political independence for Quebec (MacIver, 1999: 248). Quebec Liberal government under Bourassa, for instance, proposed a process of further decentralization of powers to be negotiated with the rest of Canada. Charest who presided over the winning Liberals in Quebec elections of April 2003 also promises to fight for a more decentralized federalism by arguing that "Quebec's leadership will make Canada a stronger place" (The Economist, April 19, 2003: 45 and 46). It is also essential to add that the performances of these two key actors in Quebec politics displayed remarkable divergence. Kellas argues that

"(t)he Liberals were tarnished by scandals in the 1960s and early 1970s; the PQ failed in economic management when it was in power" (1998: 117). Bourassa and his Liberals have most particularly been criticized for inviting in the federal government and consenting to the War Measures Act in early 1970s. The Liberals always had to proceed in a cautious fashion in order not to lose their key role in Quebec politics. Analysts indeed comment that the basic difficulty faced by the Liberal leader in Quebec stems "from the pressure of fighting, in Quebec, for the cause of a united Canada- but not so tenaciously as to alienate the province's 'soft nationalists', those who see Canada as a sensible agreement but reserve their emotional attachment for French Quebec" (The Economist, October 14, 2000: 74).

Yet, some analysts argue that a greater degree of convergence recently seemed to have surfaced in the spectrum occupied by these political parties. The rejection of violence as an instrument in achieving political objectives has always stood as a major unifying point. Even Trudeau is reported to have stated during the October Crisis that there was a vast difference between the terrorist FLQ and the democratic PQ (Zolf, 2001: 2). The convergence among all the parties around the idea that constitutional reform might be discussed as a possibility is accompanied by the almost complete agreement among Quebec parties on the inevitability of such reforms. Milne claims that the post-Meech Lake Accord period strengthening the momentum towards sovereignty "has radicalized the constitutional policy even of the Quebec Liberal Party, and emboldened the [PQ] in its ambition to achieve a politically independent Quebec" (1993: 204-205). Hence, the proposals for constitutional reform increasingly began to emanate from the Liberals. Rodal claims that the convergence following the Meech Lake Accord between the PQ and the Quebec Liberals led to a situation where the latter "traditionally though conditionally

federalist, is presently committed to the achievement of political autonomy, involving the 'exclusive, discretionary, and total control' of most areas of governmental activity" (1991: 168). To many, Liberal Premier Bourassa of Quebec thus "appeared to have shifted to a more nationalist posture in the post-Meech Lake period" (Janke, 1992: 69). The Liberals were indeed in power in Quebec by the time of the Meech Lake campaign and were confronted by the opposition staged to the accord by Trudeau and Chretien as the new leader of the federal Liberal Party.

At the federal level, Mulroney's pledge to sort things out with Quebec has earned him high support among the Quebecois in 1984. With the election of Bourassa and his Liberals in Quebec the following year, a period of continuous change was expected to commence. In 1991 Quebec Liberal Party adopted a report which recommended greater autonomy for Quebec. Still, the Liberal Party in Quebec, for instance, refused to join the efforts in winter 1995 led by the PQ of extra-parliamentary commissions to consult the population of Quebec as regards the province's future, denouncing it "as presenting the population with the 'fait accompli' of Quebec sovereignty" (Balthazar, 1997: 10). It is thus possible to argue that whether Quebec had to leave Canada or seek reforms within the existing settlement was the major factor that divided the Liberals and the PQ and that helped the Liberals in Quebec in displaying an image as the champion of national unity. In fact, the lack of extreme fragmentation or polarization (except for on the issue of Canadian unity) also seems to characterize Canadian politics at large.

In the final analysis, it seems possible to argue that there are attempts by the major nationwide parties to obtain support from a variety of provinces with the Liberals representing that effort most remarkably. The fact that the Liberals allow their provincial branches to hold different positions than the center and to keep a

degree of autonomy from the federal body seems to exemplify that. That attitude indeed seems to account for how the Liberals always stand as the major contender in Quebec for instance. In terms of population, 1998 figures reveal that Quebec is the second largest province with 7.33 million, following Ontario with 11.41 million (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 4). Roberts refers to the 1995 census estimating the population of Quebec to account for 7.3 million of the Canadian total of 30 million, with nearly a million more French Canadians being spread across Canada (Roberts, 1998: 54). Based on these facts, becoming a major contender for Quebec seats becomes a serious stake at the level of federal politics. These figures in fact allow Quebec to exert an impact on Canadian politics at large considering the fact that it is the province with the potentially most explosive grievances. Despite the fact that other parties focusing on regional or provincial grievances also make their voices heard at the center, the PQ and the BQ are particularly crucial actors as their presence testifies to the fact that the cause of Quebec nationalism and independence is advocated by legitimate political parties and without recourse to violent methods. That factor alone seems to have provided the federal authorities with a party to negotiate with. Legitimate actors representing the grievances regardless of what their final objectives were was more acceptable for the state authorities to bargain with.

The Role of Public Opinion:

Differing levels of support for the Canadian project of conflict management through preserving unity can indeed be encountered across the Canadian provinces. Despite a nationwide support for the view that reforms are desirable, 'political community' does not seem to be the major target of discontent except among the proponents of the separatist cause. The fact that Canadian democracy has established a reservoir of diffuse support through its operation essentially seems to isolate the system from major threats.

Perceptions on Canadian unity: The 'rest of Canada' versus Quebec ?

The official referenda results can be explanatory with respect to the public attitude on the issue of Canadian unity. In the 1980 referendum where the turnout was at 85 percent, 59.5 percent of the Quebec electorate rejected the 'sovereignty-association' formula which would have opened the way for a renegotiation of the political terms between Ottawa and Quebec whereas 40.5 percent accepted the scheme. The Meech Lake Accord which advocated the 'distinct society' status for Quebec in addition to the granting of additional powers to all the provinces was rejected in a statewide referendum in 1992, following its rejection by the provincial legislatures in 1990. The proposals for a series of amendments embodied in the Charlottetown agreement were put to a series of referenda in 1992. Balthazar argues that "(i)n spite of a vigorous campaign on the part of all political leaders, the population remained unresponsive" in the referendum on the Charlottetown Accord, with the Quebecois believing that this was too little, too late and the rest of Canada rejecting what they considered to be unacceptable guarantees for Quebec (1997: 9). In the federal referendum, over 54 percent voted against the deal. Another referendum was held in 1995, seeking approval for the potential future status of

Quebec as a sovereign state in economic and political partnership with Canada, a proposal to which 50.6 percent objected and 49.4 percent expressed support for. The attainment of such support for the scheme in a referendum with a 93 percent turnout seemed to reveal that the nationalist cause gradually gained greater momentum in comparison to the prior attempts at obtaining public support. Remarkably, the majority for the 'No' option thus narrowed from 702,230 in 1980 to 54,288 in the 1995 referendum (Gagnon, 2000: 206). Balthazar lists a number of factors in accounting for the strengthening of the 'yes' campaign: the lack of any constructive proposal for a reformed Canada, the charismatic leadership of Bouchard who led the 'yes' campaign and the catastrophic scenarios envisioned for a potential victory of the 'yes' vote such as the loss of one million jobs (1997: 11). It is thus possible to state that the official tests for Canadian unity so far have revealed greater support for the 'national community' as it is currently defined in spite of a declining gap between the levels of support for independence and unity options.

Public opinion surveys on allegiance to Canada, to the official policy of multiculturalism, and to the existing legal documents such as the 1982 Charter also seem to offer explanations. Various surveys results seem to display that agreement on the multicultural model is not complete. MacIver states that "(m)ore than two fifths of Canadians in a 1993 survey declared their loss of confidence in multiculturalism and ipso facto, in the ideal of the mosaic" (1999: 255). Driedger concludes his analysis of the survey results in late 1980s by arguing that "(m)ulticulturalism is accepted by half or more of the population in all regions, and it is in fact a reality in all of Canada except, perhaps, in the Quebec and Atlantic regions" (1996: 97). Various regions or provinces of Canada indeed display different characteristics with respect to their approach to multiculturalism. The fact that the

Aboriginal population has largely been concentrated in the North, the French in Quebec, the British in the East and other ethnic groups in the West is particularly significant. Driedger in fact brands the North as multicultural and multilingual, Quebec as "one of the most culturally and linguistically homogeneous parts of Canada" with a commitment to francophone and multicultural identity, Atlantic Canada as anglophone and anglocultural, Upper Canada (mainly the Ontario region) and the West as anglophone and multicultural, and identifies a bilingual and multicultural belt straddling the boundaries of Quebec with New Brunswick and Ontario (or stretching east and west from Ontario) with the highest degree of internal variation (1996: 82-97). On the whole, it is argued that "59 percent believe the country's 'cultural diversity tends to enhance the Canadian identity' " (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 12).

The findings of the Ipsos-Reid/ CTV / Globe and Mail poll conducted between March 5 and March 7, 2002 on a randomly selected sample of 1000 adult Canadians reveal that Canadians seem to be satisfied with 'the role and the effect' of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms even after 20 years as "three-quarters (74 %) of Canadians believe that their individual rights and freedoms are better protected today than before the Charter was enacted in 1982" (2002: 1). A significant regional variation does not seem to figure in these findings: "(r)esidents of Atlantic Canada (84%) are the most likely to express this view, followed by those in Saskatchewan/Manitoba (77%), Quebec (75%), Ontario (73%), and British Columbia (72%) " with the Albertans being the least likely in displaying confidence with 68% (Ipsos-Reid/ CTV / Globe and Mail poll, 2002: 2). Finally, as regards the issue of whether the Charter protects the rights of all Canadians or particular groups, "Atlantic Canadians (86%) are more likely to say they most associated the Charter

with the protection of all Canadians' rights" whereas residents of British Columbia ,

Saskatchewan/Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario and Alberta respectively follow with 75

percent, 75 percent, 72 percent, 70 percent and 63 percent (Ipsos-Reid/ CTV / Globe

and Mail poll, 2002: 2). Other studies also reveal that Quebec falls short of

displaying an attitude strikingly different from the rest of Canada. Presenting the data

from a 1987 survey, Manfredi concludes that "(w)ith the obvious and notably

important exception of PQ activists, Francophone Quebecers and English-speaking

Canadians appear to share the following perception of the Charter: it is a good thing

that strengthens national unity without undermining provincial power" (1998: 2). The

survey results suggested that 62 percent of francophone Quebeckers, 72 percent of

anglophone Canadians, and 94 percent of PQ activists characterized the Charter as

'very good' or 'somewhat good' whereas 70 percent of the francophone Quebeckers,

66 percent of anglophone Canadians and only 38 percent of PQ activists believed the

Charter strengthened national identity (Manfredi, 1998: 2). A remarkable degree of

legitimacy thus seems to have been conferred on the Canadian initiatives in

managing the conflict such as the multiculturalism design or the granting of rights

through the 1982 Charter.

Quebec independence has been another controversial topic. Williams quotes

from a survey published in La Presse in September 1993 where support for four

different options rated as such: 8 percent for a totally independent Quebec, 30

percent for sovereignty-association, 38 percent for extended powers for Quebec, and

22 percent for the preservation of the status quo (1995: 54). He also refers to a survey

published in Le Soleil in April 1993 which revealed that 37 percent favored Quebec

independence, 50 percent opposed it and 13 percent favoring independence failed to

sustain that choice in the case that the rest of Canada refused an economic

association with independent Quebec (Williams, 1995: 54). Hence, there seems to be no extensive public support for separation from Canada.

Self-identification figures may also be evaluated in accounting for public loyalties. Milne points at what he perceives to be "continuing tensions and ambivalence in the loyalties of (Canada's) citizens" (1993: 203-204). As regards levels of self-identification, Lemco states that "French-speaking Quebecers are twice as likely to identify themselves as Quebecois than are French Canadians and more than six times as likely to identify themselves as Quebecers than as Canadians" while the figures of 1991 display that 62 percent of francophones in Quebec feel profoundly attached to Canada whereas "Canadians outside Quebec are increasingly likely to call themselves Canadians in census reports, rather than listing their background" (1994: 13). Yet, Lemco concludes that "(m)any Canadians establish their identity first in terms of their province or region and only second in terms of being Canadian" (1994: 16). Still, provincial and national identities did not seem to be mutually exclusive as the endorsement of the former did not necessarily entail the negation of the latter.

Yet, one common point uniting the public stands to be that reforms to the federal system are being desired across Canada. A late 1995 survey by Maclean's/CBC revealed that one in two Canadians preferred decentralization as a future option whereas only one in twenty favored the granting of special powers to Quebec (Kilgour, 1996: 5). Similarly, Angus Reid polls reveal that almost 8 in 10 Quebecers and 2 in 3 Canadians are for major reforms in the way the Canadian federation works (Kilgour, 1996: 6). It thus seems possible to argue that rather than the granting of privileges to some in order to address their grievances, the Canadian

authorities are required by the public to engage in a general modification of the system and to address the grievances of all.

The response of other parts of Canada to the Quebec nationalist desire for separation has rather been varied. A basic divergence of perceptions between the francophone Quebecers and anglophone Canadians stems from the understanding by the former that Canadian state is based on a compact between the two founding nations the details of which might be subjected to revision and by the latter that Canadian federalism is structured on ten provinces that should be entailed to equal rights. Yet, it is essential to note that demonstrations and rallies in Montreal organized by the participation of Canadians from various provinces conveying the message to the Quebecois not to leave were frequent occurrences prior to the referendum. Roberts claims that "(i)n 'spontaneous' demonstration on the eve of the vote (inspired by Liberals and financed by federalist business and student organizations), English-speaking Canadians mounted a cavalcade to Montreal in which thousands of ordinary people expressed an emotional patriotic appeal to Quebeckers to stay in Confederation" (1998: 64).

Nevertheless, discontent with the performance of the current Canadian system is not peculiar to Quebec. MacIver indeed points at how "(s)immering discontent in the West and continuing hostility towards 'eastern' interests, including the federal government, consolidated opinion in that region as well" (1999: 261). Western opposition to the political authorities was traced back by some studies to the agrarian protests in the region in the 19th century (Lerda, 1996: 283). The centrality accorded to Quebec and Ontario has traditionally been a cause for resentment for the western region. There was the belief that "federal policies and Ottawa bureaucrats have transferred opportunities, jobs, and people from their natural location in the

West to Central Canada" regardless of which political party was in government (Kilgour, 1996: 2). The perception of political inequality in Canadian politics also seems to be rather widespread among the Western Canadians. The Westerners indeed claim that their region's representation in national institutions produced a disadvantage for the region.

Kilgour also refers to survey findings which seem to display the Western alienation: four in ten of the sample concluded the West 'gets so few benefits from being part of Canada that they might as well go it on their own'- the highest level since the question was first asked during 1979" (1996: 3). Yet separatism has never been a significant option endorsed by the public in Western Canada. On the contrary, western Canadians were the most vocal opponents of a distinct society status for Quebec. The Angus Reid survey conducted shortly after the 1995 referendum reveals that "(f)ully one-third of British Columbians were prepared to see Quebec leave rather than make 'concessions'; 55 percent of Albertans (vs.42 percent in eight other largely English-speaking provinces) said they have become more 'hard-line' towards Quebec over the past year" (Kilgour, 1996: 7). Considering the fact that Western Canada is the only region where none of the groups forms the majority of the population (11), the perception of the Canadian system as a compact between the two founding nations was most fiercely rejected. It is a particularly revealing western challenge on the established system that the westerners even proposed that "the goal of 'unofficial bilingualism' - the combination of English with any other language- is more acceptable than that of English-French bilingualism" (Driedger, 1996: 96).

<u>Public opinion in Quebec and the 'political community':</u>

The Quiet Revolution is perceived by many analysts as the pioneer of Quebec nationalist claims. Janke perceived the Quiet Revolution as a watershed as "(i)t took

the Quiet Revolution to awaken Quebecois to the need to assert control over their language, culture and economy" (1992: 70). Yet, it seems possible to argue that Quebec nationalism recently seems to have gained greater momentum. Opinion varies on the potential stimuli of the upsurge in nationalist and, even, separatist sentiment. 1970 War Measures Act, federal government's support for the no option in the 1980 referendum, or failure of attempts at constitutional change such as the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Accord have all been referred to in accounting for growing support for separatism (Roberts, 1998: 60; Milne, 1993: 204; Fossum, 2001: 184). Thus, rejection by the rest of Canada seems to be the major underlying motive. A recent increase in the flow into Quebec of those whose native language is neither English nor French as well as their tendency to endorse English culture and language coupled with the declining birth rates currently top Quebec nationalists' list of concerns. (12) Such developments might indeed be expected to sharpen the positions held by the nationalists in the coming years.

In fact, level of support for independence has immensely fluctuated across time. Williams stresses that "during the Quiet Revolution of the early 1960s less than 10 percent favored independence " whereas "(s)upport grew to reach a peak of 24 percent favoring independence on the eve of the referendum held by the PQ in 1980", declining throughout the 1980s to the level of 10 percent by 1988 (1995: 50). He then added that "(t)he resurgence of Quebecois support for independence occurred around the late autumn of 1988, and peaked during the late autumn of 1990, when a clear majority favored independence (56 percent), falling back to a more usual 37 percent by October 1993" (Williams, 1995: 50). These figures seem to display that level of support for Quebec independence is highly sensitive to a variety of developments and might be expected to display significant shifts across time.

Political actors advocating separation for Quebec indeed attempt to tailor an enlarged role for the public in the drawing up of Quebec's future status. The PQ governments decided in 1990s in cooperation with certain other political parties within the National Assembly (and without the support of the Liberals) to consult the population of Quebec on the province's future. Arguing that "a majority remained somewhat reluctant to embrace the ideal of sovereignty pure and simple", Balthazar adds that this revelation of the public mood has induced the Quebec government to come up with a scheme of maintaining some form of Canadian unity (1997: 10).

The most significant aspect of the whole debate is that Quebec nationalists can not be characterized as a monolithic bloc. A variety of options on the future status of Quebec are indeed supported by Quebeckers. This multitude of opinion is best revealed by the fact that Quebec nationalists may indeed join federalists or separatist ranks. Janke in fact argues that "(i)t is illustrative of the political struggle between Quebec nationalists and Quebec federalists that all three of the people (including the Prime Minister) who signed the constitution on behalf of Canada were French Canadians, while the only province that failed to give approval to the constitution was Quebec" (1992: 69). Coulombe particularly points at how "(c)ommitted federalists from Quebec made their way to Ottawa in order to bring changes that would make the whole of Canada, not just Quebec, the home of French Canadians" (2000: 279). Many prominent political figures at the federal level were indeed francophones. Drawing attention at the fact that the Prime Minister and certain members of cabinet were French Canadians even during the 'October crisis', Janke adds that "since the 1930s a majority of Quebec-based seats in the Canadian House of Commons have been on the government side every year, except for short periods in 1957 and 1979" (1992: 70).

The class variable also surfaced as a major source of division within the nationalist camp. Roberts argues that 'the army of employment seekers that graduated from the universities in the 1960s and 1970s' "remain the shock troops of separatism, anticipating that independence will bring more opportunity" and adds that "(t)his is the class fraction that controls the Parti Quebecois and for whom its separatist strategy is designed" (1998: 59). In a different vein, Gill predicts that "the old elite is finding itself increasingly in competition with a business elite whose vision of Quebec is expressed in different terms from those of linguistic nationalism" (1996: 109).

Furthermore, particularly explosive was the fact that the ethnic background of Quebec people has been presented as a major factor accounting for their orientations towards the issue of separation. The English-speaking population of 600,000, the slightly smaller white ethnic minorities and the increasing third world immigrant population were generally regarded as federalist and were bundled together under the title 'allophones' (Roberts, 1998: 64). The debates on the future of Quebec have indeed occasionally taken a rather exclusionary twist. Simon argues that by the first months of 1996 "it was possible to read in the newspapers of Montreal that the sovereigntist camp had publicly given up on trying to attract Anglos or 'immigrants' to their side" as "the Securite publique Minister had politely asked the immigrants to stay out of the referendum debate, seeing that their opposition to independence was a foregone conclusion" (1996: 124). This deep frustration may be associated with the fact that the 1995 referendum revealed the significance of Quebec's ethnic cleavage with the majority of non-Francophones' 'No' vote making the Montreal area look like a federalist bastion (Balthazar, 1997: 11). In separate referenda in 1995, 96 percent of Cree Indians in Northern Quebec voted for staying in Canada had the Quebecois

decided to separate whereas 95 percent of the Inuit in the same region voted in favor of the option of remaining a part of Canada. Analysts indeed claim that "(w)hen support for secession in Quebec was blowing strong, Cree leaders took wind from its sails by saying that if Canada was divisible, so too was Quebec" (The Economist, February 23, 2002: 59). Amidst a growing body of law protecting the rights of the aboriginal people across Canada, the conflict between Quebec governments and the aboriginal population also intensified over such issues as the hydro-electric projects on the lands of the Cree Indians which was finally resolved through a negotiated treaty. Hence, the currently most central debate within Quebec seems to have become the one between the partitionists and the anti-partitionists, heightened by the passing of resolutions for staying within Canada by 35 municipalities. Whether only those parts of Quebec willing to secede may be allowed to leave whereas others sustain their status as parts of Canada currently poses the major controversy.

The federalist forces within Quebec indeed seem to be quite active in conveying their messages. Movement CDN (Citoyens de la nation), Les Nouveaux Federalistes, Group des Cent, Quebec Committee for Canada, Quebec Political Action Party, Alliance Quebec, and Quebecois Pure Laine et Canadien can all be listed as actively advocating the federalist cause. Among the most vocal has been the Alliance Quebec (AQ) which was formed to protect English-language minority rights in Quebec. AQ is believed to be active from the 1980s on in ensuring the granting of rights to English-speakers in Quebec.

The variety of opinion within Quebec is also reflected in the electoral preferences across the province. It is particularly significant that the federal parties have always stood as major contenders in Quebec elections. In 1972 federal election Trudeau's party was still able to obtain 56 out of 72 seats in Quebec, despite a

worsening performance nationwide. In 1976, Levesque was elected as Quebec Premier. Arguing that "the PQ's 1976 electoral victory was not a mandate to pursue separatism", Janke concludes that "(i)n the campaign Levesque played down separatism (promising a referendum at a later date), and the victory was in part a result of the voters' dissatisfaction with the Liberals" (1992: 68). Despite the disappointment at the 1980 referendum, the PQ still managed to stay in power, always challenged and even swept out of power by the Liberals. The federalist agenda of the Quebec Liberals which advocated enhanced powers for Quebec within Canada consistently appealed to many among the Quebec electorate.

Despite the fact that the 1995 referendum reveals growing support for separatism within Quebec over time, a number of factors such as support for Canadian federalism by sections of Quebec nationalists, organized advocacy of the federalist cause within Quebec and remarkable convergence on principles such as multiculturalism, the use of Charter of 1982 in the protection of rights and freedoms or the need for constitutional reforms serve to prevent public involvement in the issue from assuming an explosive course.

Initiatives in Conflict Management:

It seems possible to argue that Canadian authorities have engaged in efforts at responding to multiple grievances by resorting to political, cultural, social, and economic initiatives. An integrated strategy of conflict management has thus been drawn up.

<u>Bilingualism, multiculturalism, and the granting of individual rights: Political and cultural mechanisms</u>

At the very basis of the current Canadian settlement lies the British North America Act of 1867 which is also termed the Constitution Act. With this document, the federal government was assigned substantial powers. The provincial governments, on the other hand, could uphold their autonomy through judicial review. The federal design was also accompanied by various consociational practices such as bi-ethnic coalitions, shared ministries, equal representation in decision making, rotation of offices and meeting places have indeed been resorted to in different parts of Canada throughout the 19th century (MacIver, 1999: 256). Milne indeed identifies a significant transformation in Canadian policy with the current search for an asymmetrical relationship, characterizing it as "ironic since Canada's founding fathers first sought to contain asymmetry as much as possible, and to limit concurrency by developing, for the first time in 1867, the device of a double list of lengthy and exclusive sets of jurisdictions" (1993: 220).

Promoting multiculturalism became the major response of Canadian authorities to the challenge of preserving diversity. Multiculturalism was promulgated in 1971 as an official policy at the federal level. The Multiculturalism Act passed in 1988 basically called for greater respect for Canada's multicultural character. Trudeau's proposal of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework is

perceived by Coulombe "as a clumsy attempt to address the conflict between official bilingualism and multi-ethnicity" as "(t)he Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism had defined Canada as being composed of two distinct societies, one English-speaking and one French-speaking" (2000: 284). Particularly controversial has been the fact that "multiculturalism has replaced biculturalism as the most pervasive, and perhaps also the most popular public paradigm upon which to base state-unity" (Williams, 1995: 36). (13) In Coulombe's opinion, the federal multiculturalism policy has the major components of "cultural preservation (funding cultural events, heritage retention programmes, etc.) and inclusion (removing the barriers to full participation in society)", with the recent shift of priorities "towards education about principles of common citizenship, participation, and inclusion" (2000: 284). Yet discontent with the multicultural scheme was still spread among various groups. The major objection to multiculturalism came from the French Canadians who were seeking an equal status with the English rather than equality with all groups in the population. The loss of status as one of the two founding nations was perceived as a threat. Thus, any expectation that multiculturalism would silence down Quebec's demands for independence proved to be far from realistic.

The lack of complete consensus on bilingualism, multiculturalism or the federal structure ensured that constitutional reform has always stood as a major topic in Canadian politics. The card played by Trudeau to block a potential yes vote in the 1980 referendum was the promise of constitutional reform. The repatriation of the Canadian constitution in 1982 from Britain set the stage for another round of discussions on the terms of Canadian unity. The federal-provincial conference has focused on the negotiation of the constitution. It may then become possible to argue that "(t)he major difference between federal and provincial proposals was that where

the former emphasised bi-lingualism, civil rights, the amending process and the strengthening of federal institutions, the latter emphasised provincial autonomy, the division of powers and greater influence for the provinces" (MacIver, 1999: 258).

It was in 1982 that the ratification of the constitution was undertaken. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms was also entrenched in the 1982 Constitution Act. The scope for judicial review by the federally appointed judiciary was expanded and parts of the Charte de la Langue Française were rejected through the 1982 Charter (Forbes, 1994: 91). A shift of power to the federal government was believed to have permeated the document. It is also essential to stress that the Canadian Charter included a notwithstanding clause allowing provincial governments to opt out of various Charter provisions. Even when the Supreme Court nullified Quebec statutes, the notwithstanding clause allowed Quebec governments to retain their policies. The provincial government was, for instance, able to defend Bill 101 through the utilization of the 'notwithstanding clause'. The fact that the 1982 Constitution was ratified by the Canadian parliament and nine provinces as opposed to the rejection of Quebec National Assembly led to the surfacing of deep resentment among the Quebec public. (14) The main objection raised by Quebec was that it left the status of francophones in Canada unresolved. Phillips refers to how the Charter was described by many commentators as 'a consciously nation-building project' and by many Canadians in Quebec as a 'vehicle for imposing pan-Canadian values and identities' (1995: 127). The response by Quebec to all these debates on the nature of the granting of rights took the form of a Quebec Charter with a tone that is in greater accordance with the collective claims to rights and thus is more vocal on the protection of French language rights.

The aboriginals also had grievances of their own, centering on their belief that the Charter was imposed on them by the federal authorities. It is thus possible to argue that there was a perception among the francophones and the aboriginals that their demands for certain collective rights might be hampered by the Charter's insistence on individual rights and freedoms. Trudeau's insistence "that 'only the individual is the possessor of rights', and that the central point of a constitutional charter is precisely to guarantee the inalienable rights of individuals against the collectivities that might otherwise threaten them" (Phillips, 1995: 128) seems to testify to this aspect.

Cultural grievances were highly visible among the francophone population, with education in French and the fate of Catholic schools being the major issues of contention. Various conflicts seemed to revolve around the issue of language and education mainly within Quebec. The desire of immigrant population to choose English-education for their children aroused major controversies amidst intense protests from Quebec nationalists. Another striking contention centered on how McGill University was perceived by many as a symbol of English domination and its conversion into a French institution was aimed (Janke, 1992: 36). In order to alleviate these concerns, linguistic guarantees were provided by the Canadian constitution to the francophone population. Prospects for bilingualism and biculturalism proved to be controversial throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was established in 1963. The Official Languages Act of 1967 published in 1969 stated that in the conduct of public services the state was obliged to undertake its actions in both official languages, transforming "an overwhelmingly English-language federal civil service into a sustainable bilingual operation" (Williams, 1995: 39). The officially bilingual

Canada then engaged in efforts to ensure that government services would be handled bilingually. Similarly, the right to publicly funded education in both official languages was recognized.

Opposition to official bilingualism was most adamant among Quebec nationalists who were advocating the dominance of French language in Quebec. The response of the provincial PQ government was to launch Bill 101 termed as the Charter of the French Language of 1971, identifying French as the official language of Quebec. All governmental and quasi-governmental institutions were to function in French and access to English-language educational institutions was highly restricted. Bill 178 of 1988 banning the use of English on commercial signs in Quebec followed. In Rodal's opinion "Bill 101 made French the language of work in Quebec, and opened enterprise, in particular its upper reaches, to francophones and the products of Quebec's new educational and managerial system" (1991: 164). This measure aimed at reducing the level of discontent with the status of French among the francophone Quebecois seemed to have created problems of its own. The period following Bill 101 witnessed the alleviation of the status of French language in reversal of the former social inequality of languages. Furthermore, Forbes draws attention at a critical aspect of the choice of bilingual services by stating that "(t)o provide these services, bilingual civil servants had to be hired (the Act was a kind of affirmative action program for French Canadians) and unilingual ones had to be made bilingual (for the better part of a decade, many civil servants, most of them 'anglophones', spent many hours a week attending language classes)" (1994: 91). The limitations on access to English schools as well as French language requirements for the immigrants led to the surfacing of new sources of discontent for segments within Quebec population. The policies on bilingualism also faced some opposition in

anglophone Canada as "(e)ven at the early stage many English-speaking Canadians, especially those in the far west of Canada where there were few French-speakers, protested that Trudeau was showing undue favouritism to Quebec and inflicting bilingualism on what they saw as an English-speaking country" (Janke, 1992: 37). The bilingual framework also raised concerns among the population which could be classified neither as anglophone nor as francophone. The Canadian government felt compelled to address all such concerns. Thus, upon the agreement on a bilingual framework, the government called for measures "to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, but with the crucial qualification, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution", accompanied by the a rejection of the existence of an official Canadian culture by Trudeau (Forbes, 1994: 94).

There are intense demands for representation from various groups. While, for instance, constituencies of women, Aboriginal peoples, or Quebecois have proposed changes to the composition of the Supreme Court with the objective of attaining proportionate representation, the relatively less populated regions of Western and Atlantic Canada have advocated an American-style Senate allowing equal representation for each province regardless of the density of its population on grounds that they are currently underrepresented in a House of Commons (Phillips, 1995: 117). The Report of the Special Committee on a Renewed Canada of 1992 outlined a fourfold challenge of inclusion as "the first of these was 'to ensure that Quebec feels itself a full and willing partner in the constitutional family again'; the second, to include the Aboriginal peoples 'as equal partners' in the Canadian nation; the third, to meet the grievances of Western and Atlantic Canada, whose citizens had

long felt themselves under-represented in an electoral system that favoured the more densely populated regions; and the fourth, to 'reflect more adequately than at present the gender balance and genuine diversity of Canadian society' " (Phillips, 1995: 119). Constitutional engineering has thus always been an ongoing process in the Canadian context in keeping up with this variety of demands. Constant demands for a revision of the constitutional framework have thus emanated from different circles. Main Quebecois demands center around recognition of their status as a distinct society, granting of a veto right for the province, limitation of federal government's spending power in areas of provincial jurisdiction, increased powers in immigration matters, and participation of the province in the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court. The elimination of improper favoritism for Quebec alleged by the other provinces as well as the aboriginal claims to territory, status and rights are the other demands that need to be accommodated through constitutional revision.

The main challenge for the Canadian authorities hence was the accommodation of different, and even conflicting, positions. Despite the efforts of the respective Canadian governments to come up with a formula that was acceptable to the federal authorities, the provinces, and the aboriginals at the same time, consensus was hard to achieve. A special formula directed at that end was the Meech Lake Accord which recognized Quebec as a distinct society with peculiar powers. While advocating the granting of the status of a distinct society to Quebec, the Accord offered "all provinces a range of additional powers, including a constitutional veto, the right to opt out of certain federal spending programmes, and the right to negotiate immigration policies tailored to the needs of each province" (Phillips, 1995: 131). This time it was the other provinces that blocked a design that seemed acceptable to Quebec. Three provincial legislatures declined from ratifying. (15) A

reconciliation of the positions of Quebec and all the other provinces had to be undertaken. The Canadian government's efforts at finding an all-encompassing solution by gathering as many provinces as possible at the negotiation table soon produced the Charlottetown Agreement of 1992. Aboriginals were assured of their 'inherent right to self-government' and Quebec was recognized as a distinct society. Despite the fact that the agreement was endorsed by all governments and four aboriginal organizations, the results of the referendum led to the repudiation of the scheme. 54 percent of those participating in the referendum rejected the renewal of Canadian constitution on the basis of the agreement. Hence, despite the drawing up of various initiatives, failure to secure consensus on them prevented their operation.

The range of suggestions for conflict management is still wide. Gagnon reveals how some Canadian intellectuals such as Taylor or Tully are seeking for an altered federalism to tackle the problem (2000: 203-204). (16) It is always possible in the Canadian context to refer to an ongoing constitutional process with the constitution always being subject to deliberation. Separation, the transformation of the current design into an asymmetrical federation with new powers for some provinces, the continuation of symmetrical federation, and further centralization have all found advocates across Canada. The drawing up of an alternative plan to that of separation remains to be a challenging task for all the legitimate Canadian political actors.

It is essential to note that all these political and cultural mechanisms were accompanied by military means. Hence, the Canadian strategy for conflict management included the military component. In the brief period when violence seemed to function as a major threat to the stability of the Canadian political system, the federal government assisted by the provincial authorities has resorted to military

initiatives to rule violence out. In spite of the criticisms it received in the conduct of its operations, the FLQ and the wave of violence were effectively stemmed out.

Correcting the imbalances: Economic initiatives in conflict management

In addition to the political, cultural, and military initiatives listed so far, efforts have been undertaken by the federal government to correct the economic imbalances which formed the basis of complaints by various provinces. Economic power has displayed great variance across Canadian regions and provinces. MacIver indeed claims that Canada is made up of "ten provinces and two federal territories which range widely in income, wealth, and resources, although efforts are made to minimise the effects of such inequalities" (1999: 238). Quebec and Ontario have been perceived as economically leading regions, with economic power being concentrated in Montreal and Toronto most particularly. This fact has served to further aggravate the grievances of Atlantic and Western provinces. Faced with all these imbalances, a sense of isolation and neglect seems to be extensively entrenched in many Canadian regions. Furthermore, the claims waged by Quebec were also opposed by Ontario on economic grounds. Lemco even argues for the existence of signs that "Ontario does not look forward to being left with the primary responsibility for supporting the 'have-not' Maritime provinces" in case of a departure of Quebec (1994: 16).

On the other hand, the major criticism of Ottawa by Quebec nationalists revolved around the latter's perception that Ottawa was not supportive of social projects and social provisions they were willing to undertake. Some analysts argued that a basic difference in philosophical approach to economics distanced the Quebecois from the federal government. Social democratic themes seemed to dominate the Quebec nationalists' economic discourse. The then Premier Parizeau of

Quebec is quoted to have stated that "sovereignty is the only to save Quebec from the kind of right-wing policies that Ontario has adopted lately" (Roberts, 1998: 64). As regards the 1995 referendum, Gagnon also argues that "economic factors and the downturn of the economy brought advantage to the YES side, since the neo-liberal federal agenda left very few hopes for the Quebec middle and lower classes" and adds that "(s)ocial issues, such as education (increase in tuition fees for post-secondary students), social security reforms (pensions plan for older citizens) and the overall mismanagement by the federal government of the public finance (higher taxation) also favored the YES side" (2000: 211). Reservations on Quebec independence voiced by Quebec nationalists mainly centered on the need to preserve beneficial economic links to Canada. Yet, it is argued that the establishment of NAFTA reduced the Quebecois commitment to maintaining an economic union with Canada, with the relations of free trade with USA being regarded as providing a greater opportunity. An additional tension in the relations between Quebec and the rest of Canada has thus been provided by NAFTA as "(t)he Free Trade Agreement with the United States created considerable dissension in English Canada, especially Ontario, where it was blamed for subsequent economic setbacks and recession" (MacIver, 1999: 261).

Tensions relating to economic imbalances also reigned within Quebec particularly from 1960s on. The central location of the anglophones in Quebec economy and business came under increasing challenge from 1950s on. There was the concern among the francophone population of Quebec over the lack of proportionality between their percentage in the province's population and their control over Quebec economy. The dominance of the non-French management class was a particular cause for concern. In response, "(e)conomic instruments created by

the Quebec government in the 1960s, Hydro-Quebec, the General Investment Society, the Quebec Deposit and Investment Fund, contributed to the advent of a dynamic network of private enterprises controlled by French-speaking Quebecers" (Balthazar, 1997: 3). Following the language policies of the 1970s "(t)here was also an exodus of many English-speaking businesses from Quebec and several head offices were transferred from Montreal to Toronto" (Janke, 1992: 68). Indeed, intense efforts to order the economy in Quebec through bolstering its institutions and the market as well as attempts at reducing economic links with Ottawa and other parts of Canada seemed to have characterized the policies of governments in Quebec over the last two decades.

Currently, the key question seems to revolve around the potential impact of separation of Quebec or its sovereign-associate status on the province's economy. The sovereignty-association option has the qualification of preserving strong economic links with Canada in coping with the potential economic costs of separation. The dependence of Quebec on the Canadian economy and market is expected to be gradually overcome. It has also been this concern over economic well-being that at times determined the pace and direction of Quebec nationalist claims. The economic developments in the 1980s weakened the nationalist cause to a certain extent by raising concerns over the future performance of the province's economy. Furthermore, the integration of the professional middle classes into the Canadian economic system was believed to lead them to uphold a reserved approach towards nationalist sentiment. Similarly, Roberts draws attention at how "(m)ost big capitalists, both English and Quebecois, with all their international connections, opposed separation, seeing it as economically too risky and likely to disrupt their

extensive connections with the rest of Canada", some even threatening to move their headquarters out of Montreal (1998: 64).

Other regions and provinces had even deeper economic grievances of their own. The Westerners, for instance, "have long believed that the West has been treated like an internal colony, its economy dominated by Central Canadian commercial elites who exploited the West for their own gain" (MacIver, 1999: 250). A major source of Western discontent lies in the fact that its economy was mainly based on agriculture and oil and was thus sensitive to fluctuations. Federal response to Western economic needs was also a major source of conflict with Ottawa. Trudeau's National Energy Program (NEP) in 1980s was indeed perceived by the West "as yet another federal effort to take control of energy resources and to appropriate an unjust federal share of the revenue" (Lerda, 1996: 284). Injustices were believed to have been aggravated by other mechanisms. Referring to Mansell's work, Kilgour argues that "(b)etween 1961-1988, Albertans contributed $ 145 billion (expressed in 1990 dollars) more to Ottawa's revenues than they received in federal spending and transfers" with the British Columbians being the only other net contributors to the Confederation at that period (1996: 3). Kilgour also argues that a reversal of what is perceived to be the discrimination against the West is significant in accounting for why support for NAFTA runs high in Western provinces (1996: 2-3). Economic marginalization of Atlantic Canada in the context of the poorer and the less populated eastern zone is also to be mentioned. The perceptions of economic injustice surface as the basic factor in stimulating regional opposition to Quebec demands.

Perceptions over the extent to which the federal schemes have succeeded in addressing the grievances have been varied. On the issue of how the provinces have

always been critical of federal policy on redressing regional disparities, Williams argues that "(w)hen it was narrowly focused on the most dependent regions (e.g. the Atlantic Provinces), it was heavily criticised by the wealthier provinces (e.g. Ontario, Quebec and BC)" and "(w)hen the policy was decentralised to the provinces it proved unmanageable because the more prosperous regions used the finances to boost their relative advantage vis-à-vis the poorer regions, thus confounding the rationale of the policy" (1995: 56). Williams also points at how "(c)onventionally centralist experts interpret every dollar spent by the Federal Government in Ontario as an investment in a dynamic burgeoning region while 'regional development programmes directed at the Atlantic Provinces have the attendant negative welfare connotation; they are often viewed as charity" (1995: 42). Hence, federal-provincial financial relations are highly strained. Gagnon points at what he regards as the 'regionalized nature of Canadian political economy', arguing that "the balkanized nature of the Canadian economy reduces the extent of common economic interest amongst the various regions, and constitutes a major difficulty for the central government's attempts to elaborate a workable national strategy" (1989: 149).

Yet, despite the difficulties associated with accommodating various regional demands, the respective Canadian governments have attempted to draw up schemes to address Quebec's and other provinces' economic grievances. The formation of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) in 1969 was one such effort. Arguing that the DREE has failed to achieve its goal of regional development, Williams claims that it has rather sustained the core-periphery dualism of Canada's economic geography (1995: 41-42). Yet, Quebec was identified as the main beneficiary of the DREE schemes. Janke alleges that the DREE "directed a disproportionate amount of investment towards Quebec", claiming that the 'October

crisis' was succeeded by a period where "the federal government poured a significant amount of funding into Quebec to help economic growth, but also to raise the profile of the federal government" (1992: 67). Quebec was one of the provinces that received equalization payments from richer provinces. In fact, figures reveal that Quebec ranked first in terms of federal transfers and of equalization transfers in the period 1999-2000 (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 14). Political calculations as well as the political weight of the provinces also seem to matter in resource allocation at critical junctures. The Liberal urge to perform more impressively in Atlantic provinces to recover from the potential losses elsewhere was believed to account for Chretien's economic support for the region in compliance with his proclamation that it was "a time of great potential for Atlantic Canada" (The Economist, September 9, 2000: 74).

Conclusion: Is there an 'end' to the conflict?

The Canadian case clearly reveals that sustaining a consolidated democratic political system even under conditions of the intensification of ethnic conflict is possible provided that violence is eliminated, an integrated strategy of conflict management is designed, the public actively expresses support for the initiatives, and the political parties contribute to conflict management through renouncing violence as a method. Still, the Canadian case reveals that in spite of the functioning of a consolidated democratic political system, termination of a conflict may not be possible. The fact that constitutional discussions are a lingering aspect of Canadian politics due to the failure to accommodate various grievances is the main indicator. The Canadian case indeed presents an unusual degree of uncertainty with the prospect for separation lying ahead for an indefinite future. The Supreme Court statement in 1998 that "(a) clear majority vote in Quebec on a clear question in favour of secession would confer democracy legitimacy on the secession initiative which all of the other participants in Confederation would have to recognize" (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 15) reveals the centrality of such a possibility. Questions revolve around whether and when another referendum will be held, whether Ottawa will be turning over some more authorities to the provinces or will take up a more defensive attitude, and whether the Quebec issue will increasingly become associated with continuous debates over the constitution and the future of Canadian democracy. The Clarity Act passed in 2000 which granted the right to determine whether the referendum question is explicit enough and the majority supporting it is substantial enough to the federal parliament can indeed be perceived as a step in the direction of reducing the level of uncertainty associated with the independence debate.

Major factors that come to the forefront in the Canadian context may be listed as follows:

- violence has exerted an impact on the political system only for a brief period of time and has virtually been exterminated,

- the public has been united in its rejection of violence and in its support for Canadian unity except for a section of Quebec nationalists who advocated separation and who have been opposed by the other provinces and groups within Quebec,

- the bulk of the political parties broadly converge around Canadian unity despite their consensus on the need for reforms,

- Canadian authorities integrated political, economic, cultural, and social mechanisms in conflict management.

Hence, the Canadian case is located at the center of this study as the example which rates most favorably in all the variables analyzed. All these characteristics thus combine to secure the operation of the democratic political system in Canada. It hence seems possible to conclude that initiatives in conflict management were supported by a number of key actors and attitudes which made democratic consolidation possible.

The intractable nature of the conflict was related to a number of factors. The intensification of the regionalist demands; the lack of complete consensus on how much to stretch the federal formula; increasing tensions in the relations between the provinces; continuous struggle between the center and the parts; the conflicting nature of anglophone, francophone, aboriginal and ethnic Canadian demands; aboriginal claims to the divisibility of Quebec; debates on the details of a future referendum; and demands for enhanced representation by various groups may indeed be listed. Chretien stated that Canadians "lead the world in the recognition of

aboriginal rights" (The Economist, August 30, 2003: 38). Self-government rights as well as greater control over their natural resources are granted to those groups who define themselves as the First Nations. Since two such agreements were concluded, demands from other communities for a similar reconciliation are likely to follow.

TABLE 3:

Actors and Attitudes Contributing to Conflict Management in the Canadian Case

The Actors	Attitudes Displayed
Political parties	- Nationwide parties, and particularly the Liberals, perceive a stake in organizing across all the provinces, - The province-based parties such as the Reform or the BQ occupy central positions in national politics with the former expanding its base of support, - Provincial party branches preserve autonomy from the federal structure, - The PQ represents moderation with the extremist members departing from the party. The battle between the moderates and the hardliners for the control of the PQ and the ADQ's emergence display respect for pluralism within the Quebec nationalist camp. Quebec nationalists can not be regarded as forming a monolithic block as there are groups of federalist as well as separatist persuasion.
Convergence among the political elite and in the party system	- around the need for political reform, - around the preservation of Canadian unity except for the PQ and BQ, - around the rejection of violence: The killing of Laporte imposed greater unity among the different political parties. While stating that "(w)e believe that the inflexible and uncompromising argument of reason of state dictated by Ottawa bears a heavy share of the responsibility for the tragedy we have witnessed", even Levesque acknowledged that "(t)his is not a time to split hairs. As of today the people of Quebec must declare their support for the [provincial] government in every way possible" (Janke, 1992: 58). Cooperation between the federal and provincial authorities has also been a striking aspect of the period termed as the 'October crisis'.
The public	- No extensive support for exclusive identities, - A redefinition of the relations between the federal government and the provinces was publicly supported, - Vocal public condemnation of violence, - Popular support for governmental policies such as the War Measures Act, multiculturalism, and the 1982 Charter.

NOTES:

(1)The latest changes in immigration patterns are also significant: a policy of seeking reductions in the level of immigration flow, a shift from an immigrant inflow on the basis of family reunification to attempts at attracting skilled workers, Toronto and Vancouver becoming main destination of new immigrants, and the recent political discussions on immigration bills may all be listed (The Economist, June 10, 2000: 74).

(2) Other figures on Canadian population may display some slight variation. Forbes states that "(a)n ethnic origin census of the Canadian population at the present time would, however, reveal a breakdown like the following: British 37 percent, French 27 percent, Other Europeans 25 percent, Asians and Africans 8 percent, and Native Peoples 3 percent", concluding that the 'others' category is to be classified as English in line with the census statistics on language (1994: 93).

(3) For a detailed analysis of talks with the aboriginals over treaties on land and settlement issues, see The Economist issues of August 5, 2000, p.52 , November 13, 2001, p.70, May, 12, 2001, p.59 and February 23, 2002, p.52. The 1997 Supreme Court ruling stressed that natives continue to have aboriginal title to their traditional territory and it is the moral, if not the legal, duty of the government to negotiate with these groups (The Economist, November 13, 2001: 70).

(4) Milne summarizes the events that clearly led to the rising tensions between the aboriginal population in Quebec and the provincial authorities starting from the events in 1990 in stating that "the Oka crisis in Quebec during the same summer saw a conflict over aboriginal lands lead to an armed confrontation over an aboriginal roadblock of a principal route into Montreal. Two years later, a successful aboriginal fight against Quebec Hydro's dam project that would have caused extensive flooding

of their traditional lands in the north was completed with the cancellation of the Quebec Hydro contract by the state of New York. Relations were further soured recently when Ovide Mercredi, leader of the Assembly of First Nations, publicly questioned Quebecois nationalist credentials in hearings before that province's legislative assembly" (1993: 218).

(5) Gagnon outlines the claims made by all Quebec governments since 1960s as recognition of Quebec as a distinct society; reform of the constitution to guarantee Quebec a veto power and maximize the scope of Quebec's jurisdiction in most policy fields; re-appointment of federal-provincial fiscal resources to reflect Quebec's needs; a reduced federal role in the development, implementation and financing of provincial policies or programs; and, an increased role for Quebec in determining the composition as well as operation of federal institutions and as regards the federal policies or programs (1989: 153).

(6) Internal friction also seemed to characterize the organization of the FLQ. The conflict between the Lanctot and Rose groups led to divergent actions by the organization. Both factions were indeed made up of young activists with opposing views on the organization of the FLQ.

(7) Janke draws attention at how, at the height of the crisis in late 1960s and early 1970s, The Gazette published excerpts from a 'secret report' "claiming that the FLQ had 122 active cells, 130 members and more than 2000 sympathizers in its support network" (1992: 54). Yet, Janke considers these figures to be an exaggeration (1992: 63).

(8) For a detailed account of the debates over leadership within the Alliance, see The Economist issues of May 5, 2001, p.54 and July 14, 2001, p.52.

(9) At the level of provincial politics, by the end of 1990s, Liberals dominated in the east and governed in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, standing as the major contender to the PQ in Quebec. Conservatives mainly dominated in the central provinces whereas the NDP strikingly held office in British Columbia and Saskatchewan (The Economist, July 24, 1999: 16).

(10) It was upon this agreement among the parties that the 1995 referendum question was formulated as follows: Do you agree that Quebec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer for a new economic and political partnership, within the scope of the Bill Respecting the Future of Quebec and of the agreement signed on June 12, 1995?

(11) The British form the largest group in Western Canada followed by the Germans, Ukrainians and the French who thus form only the fourth largest component of the population. Driedger indeed reveals how more than half of the population reported to be of non-charter ethnic origins (1996: 95).

(12) Milne indeed predicts that "(a)s Quebecers themselves become more multiracial and pluralist, the expression of a united and decisive act of national will may become even harder to achieve" (1993: 211).

(13) Arguing that official multiculturalism does not refer to any coherent theory or set of principles, Forbes concludes that "(i)t is , in a sense, just the application to the other ethnic groups of the basic approach taken so far in dealing with French-English conflict: uphold individual rights; avoid talking about 'assimilation', except to decry it; and find ways of symbolizing the equality of numerically unequal groups, without abandoning majority rule" (1994: 95).

(14) Fossum states "(t)he Quebec Premier was not consulted on the final constitutional proposal, and the government of Quebec subsequently failed to

endorse it", yet adds that "the Constitution Act with the Charter was endorsed by almost all the elected representatives from Quebec in the federal parliament" (2001: 194).

(15) The major reason for the failure to secure the ratification of the Meech Lake Accord by the deadline of three years in provincial legislatures was the 'distinct society' status granted to Quebec. In the Manitoba legislature, for instance, it was an aboriginal member that voted against the Accord, on the grounds that "the amendments should also have recognized Canada's 350000 aboriginal peoples as a distinct 'society' " (Janke, 1992: 69). Similarly, "(t)he Liberal government in Newfoundland withheld ratification on the grounds that the Accord failed to offer sufficient protection for Quebec's English-speaking minority" (Janke, 1992: 69). New Brunswick also displayed no enthusiasm for the Accord. Forbes concludes that the failure to ratify was "in keeping with broad popular sentiment" (1994: 92).

(16) MacIver argues that "(b)ecause of the shortcomings of other federal institutions conflict resolution has been conducted mostly through the machinery of federal provincial inter-governmental relations" as "(n)one of the federal institutions is well-adapted to the purpose of resolving the complex multilateral conflicts that occur in the Canadian federal system" (1999: 257). MacIver's suggestion revolves around a possibility that "an imaginative and well crafted offer of 'renewed federalism' could still avert separation and swing opinion behind the federalist option and thus secure the future of Canada" (1999: 262).

The Sri Lankan Case: Erosion of Democratic Stability under Conditions of Ethnic Conflict

Sri Lanka exemplifies a context where a democratic system in operation is confronted by the rising ethnic tensions at a critical juncture where the quality of democratic performance needs to be enhanced following the installation of democratic mechanisms. Sri Lanka indeed presents a case where the performance in the variables analyzed in the context of this study is rather troublesome and, hence, democratic consolidation is at risk. This case analysis clearly reveals how a democratic political system may encounter various setbacks and deterioration of its democratic performance rather than progressing towards consolidation under conditions of intense ethnic conflict. Under the circumstances experienced by Sri Lanka, it is possible to reach the conclusion that even survival may become a major challenge for the democratic political system. De Silva states that Sri Lanka "remains a functioning democracy and one of the few postcolonial states with an unbroken record of democratic rule" and emphasizes that it provides "a superb example of how democracy can survive under almost impossible conditions" (1997: 97 and 98).

The Setting:

A number of peculiar conditions which will be outlined below interact to make the Sri Lankan experience with ethnic conflict an enduring one:

<u>Primordial or Instrumental?: The roots of the conflict</u>

The transition in Ceylon from colonial rule to independence based on the peaceful operation of democratic structures has always been presented as the most striking aspect of any analysis of the Sri Lankan case. De Silva states that Sri Lanka "was the only example, up to the late 1950s at least, of a peaceful and orderly transfer of power in the decolonization process of the British empire so far as the

Asian, African and Caribbean colonies were concerned" (1999: 6). Drawing attention at the peaceful transition to independence in Ceylon, Bell-Fialkoff voices the widespread belief that "(w)hen Great Britain granted Ceylon its independence on February 4, 1948, a fairly bright future seemed assured" (1999: 191). Unlike the transition experienced by a number of other political systems in its region, massive violence did not seem to characterize this particular process. The clashes between different groups were not then structured along the lines of the currently dominant Sinhalese-Tamil conflict either. De Silva underlines that the Buddhist-Christian confrontation was the major source of conflict from the last quarter of the 19th century on only to reach the peak in 1930s and 1940s (1999: 14). Similarly, Harris argues that "(b)efore 1948 and Independence the local communal riots afflicted rich Christians (1883), Muslim traders(1915), Indian Tamils (from 1928) and Malayalees (from 1930), but not Sri Lankan Tamils" (1990: 211).

The controversy over whether the current conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils is of recent origin stands as a major one. Pfaffenberger points at that "the history of Sri Lanka throughout the colonial period is remarkable for the absence of ethnic conflict qua ethnic conflict, with the notable exception of the 1915 Buddhist-Muslim conflict - in which, to testify to the newly-constructed character of Sinhalese-Tamil conflict, the Tamil leadership took the side of the Sinhalese" and adds that "(t)ensions among Sri Lanka's ethnic communities emerged only as a result of competition for scarce state resources in the early twentieth century, when the British colonial regime made clear its intention to cede internal political power to Ceylonese representatives" (1994: 3-4 and 8). Similarly, Tambiah argues that "the Sinhalese-Tamil tensions and conflicts in the form known to us today are of relatively recent manufacture - a truly twentieth-century phenomenon" as there is

"over the last three decades a trend toward an increasing 'ethnic' mobilization and polarization previously unknown" (1986: 7). De Silva's opinion sharply differs in emphasizing that "(e)thnic conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils is a twentieth century manifestation of an age-old rivalry" (1999: 8 and 9). Still, it should be made clear that transition to independence and the negotiations preceding it have been critical in posing the two communities against each other.

A historical outlook reveals that the Sinhalese and the Tamils lived under separate kingdoms for prolonged periods. Bose in fact stresses that "(t)he only period during the medieval epoch when the whole island was, more or less, under a single sovereign authority was during the reign of the Sinhalese under Parakramabahu VI (1412-57), who took advantage of a period of relative decline of the Jaffna kingdom to subjugate it" with the Tamil kingdom soon regaining its strength (1997: 47-48). An independent Tamil kingdom used to exist in what may today be considered as northern Sri Lanka up until the seventeenth century when the Portuguese annexed its territories. It can indeed be mentioned that when the Portuguese arrived in 1505, there existed three indigenous kingdoms in the form of an independent Tamil kingdom centering around Jaffna and two other kingdoms ruled by Sinhalese monarchs with one centering around Kandy at the centre of the island and the other around Kotte near the western coast. Respectively, and starting with the fall of the kingdom centered around Jaffna in 1619 to the Portuguese and culminating in the submission of the one around Kandy to the British in 1815, a uniform colonial administration was imposed on the whole island. Furthermore, the relative degree of autonomy enjoyed by the Kandyan kingdom as "penetration of the hinterland was never total" during the colonial times has been at the basis of Sinhalese identity formation until its being subdued by the British in 1815 (Bullion, 1995: 15 and 16).

The British policy of imposing a unified administrative structure in fact seems to be located at the basis of the current structure. Bose argues that "(a)dministrative unification meant, for the first time in the country's recorded history, the disproportionate growth in importance of a single urban centre, Colombo, which had been selected as the administrative capital of the unitary colonial state" (1997: 49). The way in which the unified administrative model was structured as well as the modalities of the transfer of political power turned into a major topic of contention between the Sinhalese and the rest.

As a first step, the universal suffrage principle was introduced in 1931. DeVotta indeed states that it was in the 1920s that "Tamil politicians first began to fear what universal-suffrage elections might mean in a society where Sinhalese outnumbered them six to one", strengthened by the Sinhalese leaders "taking advantage of their community's overwhelming numbers, the first-past-the-post electoral system, and a unitary state structure with no substantive minority guarantees" (2002: 85). Tamil elites hence vocally opposed universal suffrage with a particular emphasis on a 'fifty-fifty campaign' in the 1940s. This campaign was intended to secure equal representation for the Sinhalese and the minority groups. These efforts, however, failed to redress the majoritarian nature of the Sri Lankan political system upon independence. No minority guarantees were incorporated into the system. The rejection of special minority clauses by both the Donoughmore Report and the Soulbury Constitution made both documents unacceptable to the minorities as both secured their way through majority vote. This is indeed perceived by analysts as the shattering point of the Sinhalese-Tamil cooperation in shaping the newly emergent political system. Tambiah, for instance, argues that Ceylon Tamil National Congress was a body made up of the Sinhalese and Tamil English-educated

elite who, regardless of their ethnic identities, united in the bid for achieving greater

representation in legislative assembly and colonial administration, and yet adds that

"this unity of the Sinhalese and Tamils was already showing cracks when, under the

Donoughmore Constitution in the 1930s and 1940s, representation in the Legislative

Council on the basis of territorial and demographic criteria became the dominant

electoral principle" (1986: 67).

The installation of the Sinhalese majority domination:

The numerical domination of the Sinhalese population seems to have strained

the relations between them and the Tamils who constituted the largest minority in Sri

Lanka. Dharmadasa states that the Sinhalese formed the 69.3 percent of the

population in 1953 whereas the Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils accounted for

10.9 percent and 12 percent respectively (1992: 307). The 1981 census figures,

however, reveal 74 percent of the Sri Lankan population to be Sinhalese, 12.6

percent to be Sri Lankan Tamils, 5.6 percent as Indian Tamils, 7.4 percent as

Muslims and only 0.4 percent as consisting of the other groups (Tambiah, 1986: 4).

The CIA World Fact Book of 1993 reflects a slight variation in this composition with

the Sinhalese accounting for 74 percent of the population, the Sri Lankan Tamils

following by 11 percent, Indian Tamils and Sri Lankan Moors both separately

constituting 7 percent of the population in which the rest are being made up of the

Burghers, Malays and Veddas (Pfaffenberger, 1994: 5). Pradhan refers to the

government statistics of 1998 which portrays "the ethnic composition of Sri Lanka's

population of 18.7 million as follows: 82.7 % Sinhalese, 8.9 % Tamil, 7.7 % Sri

Lankan Moor, and 0.7% others" (2001: 6).

Despite the fact that the major conflict seems to revolve around the Sinhalese

and Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils who are the descendants of tea plantation

laborers brought to the island by the British in the 19th and 20th centuries are another major party to the conflict. The majority of the Sri Lankan political actors rejected the granting of citizenship rights to all Indian Tamils as a result of which negotiations for repatriation were embarked on with India. In the final analysis, only a portion of the Indian Tamil population could secure the citizenship right. Tambiah stresses that the separation of the plantations from the villages as well as the role of European-owned enterprises in prolonging the social distance between Sinhalese peasants and Indian laborers were remarkable in keeping the Indian Tamils as a separate community (1986: 66-67). As will be examined later in this study, the gathering of the Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils around a common cause did not prove to be a task devoid of troubles either.

The Muslim population also has become a key actor to the conflict. This is mainly owing to the fact that the non-Tamil inhabitants, especially with a remarkable concentration of the Muslim population, reach significant ratios in the population of the eastern provinces. The eastern provinces are one of the two parts of Sri Lanka over which the Tamil nationalists have a claim for in their independent state together with the north where they form the majority. Bose in fact finds it particularly striking that the Ceylonese Muslims "comprise close to a fifth of the population of the areas that would constitute the state of Tamil Eelam (and one-third in the eastern province)" (1997: 183) whereas the Tamils are believed to constitute 40 percent of the population of Eastern province (De Silva, 1999: 34). In Pfaffenberger's analysis, it is important to note that "(a)s much as half of the traditional population of the East Coast consists of Tamil-speaking Muslims, who could not be expected to support partition fully since their community crosses the Eastern Province borders to embrace towns and cities throughout the country" (1994: 14).

A continuous geographical mobility is also underway for the Sri Lankan population which may partly be accounted for by the waves of violence and employment prospects. From the economic perspective, the estimates are that around 53 percent of all Tamils live in the zone of their numerical domination whereas 47 percent are scattered around the other zones which makes Tambiah conclude that "this dispersion is dictated by the necessity, especially for the Sri Lankan Tamils, of finding employment and earning their livelihood outside the Northern and Eastern provinces because these provinces are peripherally situated in relation to the island's economic and administrative centers and urban formations" (1986: 12). De Silva confirms this pattern by stating that "for much of the 19th century and early 20th century, the most pleasing prospect in Jaffna was the road that led to Colombo" (1999: 13). The 1981 census in fact testified to the same trend as it revealed 73 percent of the Tamils to be living in the north and east whereas the same figure was 85 percent in 1911, 78 percent in 1946, and 75 percent in 1971 (Bose, 1997: 20). Yet, violence, especially in the parts of the country where it took the shape of communal violence, drew many families out of the north and the east. On the other hand, many others were flowing into the north and the east, a trend that was further strengthened by the eruption of violence in the south. In addition to opting for the destination to where one's community was in numerical superiority, many also fled Sri Lanka in the hope of obtaining greater security and well-being which led to the emergence of a huge diaspora. Pradhan, for instance, claims that an estimated 520,000 Tamil refugees have left the country since the start of the war and this refugee flow is running at about 15,000-18,000 people a year (2001: 1).

At the basis of the conflict stands a confrontation between the Sinhala identity centering mainly on the Sinhalese language and Buddhism as opposed to the

Tamil identity revolving around Tamil language and Hinduism. A distinction has also been drawn between the Indo-Aryan origins of Sinhalese and the Dravidian origins of the Tamils. An uncompromising consolidation of identities seemed to have taken place in both communities. In fact, Pfaffenberger stresses that "(a)ncient Pali texts (such as the Mahavamsa and Culavamsa) recount the heroic feats of leaders such as Dutthugamani, who expelled the 'demonic' Tamil invaders and restored righteous (i.e., Buddhist) rule to island" and are seen as forming the origins of the Sinhalese ethnic nationalism (1994: 20). (1) A parallel process of identity-formation was also undertaken by the Tamils. Mc Gowan underlines that "(j)ust as Sinhalese nationalism was given propulsion by Dharmapala's national mythology, so, too, did Tamil nationalism gain power by a set of myths that embraced messianic destiny and cultural superiority" and adds that "they had absorbed the form and answered the glorification of the Sinhala people and their Aryan roots with their own celebration of a noble Dravidian past" (1992: 172). (2)

For some analysts problems of social integration which the unitary state structure could not remedy were evident early in the Sri Lankan case. Manogaran argues that "(w)hile the Kandyan Sinhalese and Low Country Sinhalese have been integrated through marriage and other forms of social and political interactions, Tamils and Sinhalese continue to maintain their separate identities although they have been governed under a unitary government for almost two centuries" (1994: 93). This clash of identities indeed took stage at the price of ignoring the common experiences of the Sinhalese and Tamils. Harris indeed points at the fact that the Sinhalese and the Tamils "shared caste, kinship, popular cults, customs, sacred places and a single history" and adds that "poverty and cultivation- the crucial signs of 'backwardness'- remained the lot of the majority of Sinhalese and Tamils" (1990:

209 and 210-211). Yet, it has been the ethnic as well as religious origins and differences that came to the forefront and drove the two communities apart.

The trouble in the case of Sri Lanka thus seems to be that one of the reasons for the protracted nature of the conflict is that cleavages seem to be overlapping. Religious and ethnic divisions coincide and regional concentration of the communities seems to further complicate the picture. Bell-Fialkoff concludes that "the country has been torn apart by a savage ethnoreligious conflict that pits the Buddhist Sinhalese who live in the center, south, and west of the island against the Hindu Tamils in the north and east" (1999: 187).

Mutual fears and suspicions seemed to drive the Tamils and the Sinhalese further apart in addition to this divergent identity formation. The erosion of mutual confidence between the two communities has various causes. The Tamil resentment at the lack of fulfillment of the promises made by mainly the Sinhalese politicians during electoral campaigns as well as the breaching of the pacts concluded between the political leaders of the two communities have assumed a significant role in the current confrontation.

The gradual change in the attitude of the Tamil political actors and the final ascendancy of those among them who favor a sovereign state of Tamil Eelam also seem to be the most striking aspect of any analysis. Tamil advocacy of a federal state gradually began to weaken with the emergence of a radical movement demanding Tamil separation. Indeed, Bose points at a "gradual and evolutionary process whereby members of what was previously a mere 'ethnic category' began to see themselves as the standard-bearers of a 'unique nation' " as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) declare the Tamils to be (1997: 22 and 14). Thus, the shift to radicalism has actually taken place.

Attempts to curb down the presence of Tamil students in the universities through modifications to the university admissions policy as well as the insistence on preserving a superior status for Sinhala against the Tamil language proved to be policies radicalizing the Tamil camp. Hence increasing limitations on the educational and employment opportunities for Tamils coupled with the feeling of being marginalized in the political processes may be listed as factors driving the Tamil youth increasingly to the belief that a separate Tamil state would offer a degree of security that could not be matched by the current conditions. The perception that the rights they enjoyed prior to independence were being eroded was becoming more widespread among the Tamils. Furthermore, exclusion from state service seemed to be another source of grievance. Mc Gowan indeed points at that "(b)etween 1956 and 1970, out of the 200,000 people recruited for the newly created state corporations, nearly 99 percent were Sinhalese" (1992: 170). As a very significant example, Dharmadasa, for instance, points at how the recruitment of non-Sinhalese to the armed forces has been limited following the abortive coup attempt of 1962 led by a group of Christian army officers (1992: 315). It is also essential to note that "Tamil politicians have generally claimed that the Sri Lankan state has used state-owned land - primarily state-owned land in Eastern province- as a means of changing the demographic pattern in what they call the 'Traditional Homelands of the Tamils' "(De Silva, 1999: 25). Pfaffenberger in fact states that "(a)ccording to one report, the proportion of Sinhalese in the Trincomalee District has risen from 4 % in 1900 to 33% in 1993" (1994: 14). The perception by the Tamils of a conscious attempt by the Sinhalese authorities to disturb population balance within dominantly Tamil-speaking areas became another source of resentment.

In response to all these policies, respect for the right to self-determination has been advocated by the Tamils. In fact, in the brief period when the Tamil militant groups including the LTTE were able to cooperate, they affirmed their commitment to four 'cardinal principles' which may be listed as: "1.That the Sri Lankan Tamils be recognised as a distinct nationality; 2.That the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka be recognised as the historical and traditional homeland of the Sri Lankan Tamil people; 3. That the right of the Sri Lankan Tamils to 'self-determination' (...) be acknowledged; 4. That the plantation Tamils, though outside the Eelam formation, be restored full rights of citizenship and franchise" (Bose, 1997: 138).

Discontent with the Sinhalese traditional position in the socio-economic realm formed the basis of their attempts at instituting supremacy. Wilson and Chandrakanthan claim that "as the 19th century progressed, Tamils proved especially responsive to the educational opportunities provided by Christian missionaries from Britain and elsewhere" and add that "(c)ombining as they did educational advantage with entrepreneurial flair, Tamils moved en masse not only into the colonial administration, but also property and commercial enterprise in Colombo and the Western Province" (1998: 1). This seems to have caused resentment among the Sinhalese. DeVotta draws attention at how "Tamils' prominence in civil-service, military, and professional careers where English was the lingua franca made the Sinhalese feel envious and marginalized, and led them to clamor for a revamped system that afforded the majority community a dominant place" (2002: 86). (3)

Similarly, support for Tamil separatists flowing from Tamilnadu has been a major source of concern for the Sinhalese. Bullion indeed claims that "the modern Sinhalese have increasingly regarded themselves as the protectors of the true Thereveda Buddhist home of the Dharma 'righteousness', in the face of the perceived

threat from the fifty-five million Tamils across the Palk Strait in Tamil Nadu as well as from their Sri Lankan and Indian 'brethren' in Sri Lanka, who collectively comprise some 18.2 per cent of the population" (1995: 15). This feeling of being a minority in the region was exemplified at the extreme by the militant Sinhalese activist Cyril Matthew who claimed that "(f)or the non-Sinhalese, even if they do not have Sri Lanka as their homeland, their races have other countries of their own. ... the Sinhalese have one and only one country, and that is Sri Lanka. ... If the Sinhalese get annihilated in Sri Lanka as a race, they are lost forever" (Mc Gowan, 1992: 169).

This precarious setting of polarization thus necessitates various difficult compromises. The most explosive aspect is that any scheme that intends to promote the conditions of the majority in the areas concerned comes along with other major problems. Increasing presence of the Sinhalese in the east mainly due to what are regarded as state-sponsored colonization schemes or Tamils in Colombo or Muslims in the east justifies the argument that the settlement of the conflict necessitates the accommodation of the demands of a variety of groups as any final scheme is to affect all the major groups.

Domestic peace and violence potential:

A number of factors account for why violence seems to have become an enduring aspect of Sri Lankan politics, weakening the odds of democratic consolidation. The failure of the state security forces to confine the conflict as well as their failure to reflect an image of impartiality, the huge machinery sustained by the LTTE and other militant forces, and the tendency of the public to turn to exclusive militant organizations for protection when other alternatives seem to fail may be enumerated. The high human toll that is associated with widespread violence in the context of Sri Lanka is the major factor that makes this variable central to any analysis. In Pradhan's estimates by 2001, more than 62000 people have died in the conflict (2001: 2). Samuel, on the other hand, states that "(t)he displaced have, at times, totaled around ten per cent of the entire Sri Lankan population" (1998: 4).

Radicalization in Sinhalese and Tamil Politics: The Bolstering of the Militants

In talking about the potential for violence in the Sri Lankan case, one is inclined above all to focus on the LTTE which has long been waging a campaign for a sovereign Tamil state in the north and east of Sri Lanka. Yet, the picture is more complicated than one may expect, with violence emanating from a number of different actors. For one thing, the cycle of violence also seems to be perpetuated by the fact that imposing discipline on the state security forces in such a widespread conflict proved to be a complicated effort. Moreover, sporadically constituted mobs and gangs actually intensified violence by taking part in various activities. The relations between these unorganized groups and government forces were also controversial. Tambiah indeed refers to the records by the Civil Rights Movement which stated that "the gangs were organized, they came in government vehicles, they were sometimes accompanied by MPs, and for the most part they belonged to the

JSS, the trade union of the government in power" which was led by Cyril Mathew (1986: 53).

Resort to use of force has not indeed characterized Sinhalese-Tamil relations from the inception. Initially, nonviolent protests have been upheld by the Tamils. In order to protest the language policy, for instance, Tamil Federal Party called for a general strike of Tamils in public employment. The Tamil youth has indeed lived in an environment of continuous protest with "boycotts of schools, picketing of government offices, the performance of satyagraha [i.e.Gandhian campaign of nonviolent resistance], and the hoisting of black flags to protest government actions" (Mc Gowan, 1992: 177).

It is essential to state that the factors cited to justify the resort to force are various. Tambiah's perspective stresses that "(i)n any case the 'terrorist' violence has come at the end of what the Tamil youth and radicals construe to be a persistent, unfair, and sporadically terrorizing campaign of discrimination and domination on the part of the majority Sinhalese that began especially in 1956, with the accession to power of Buddhist Sinhala chauvinism, and against which constitutional, democratic, and lawful action and protests by the Tamils have been to no avail" (1986: 17). More specifically, Tambiah underlines that Tamil "resistance became militant in 1972 when the government introduced its so-called standardization policy with regard to university admissions, which was realistically seen by the Tamil youth as serious discrimination against them" (1986: 17). Various LTTE statements also point at the inevitability of defying the 'standardization' policy. The ineptitude of Tamil political parties in voicing the grievances of the population is often cited as another cause for the assumption of leadership of the Tamils by the militant actors. Hence, the established sources of authority came under challenge. Referring to the 1970s, Harris

indeed stresses that "a few small groups of young Tamils began to talk of the need to end what they saw as the policy of weak compromises pursued by the established Tamil parties- and to take up armed resistance to Sinhalese aggression and strive to achieve an independent Tamil state" (1990: 215).

The most potent of the Tamil militant groups, the LTTE, had the chief objective of fighting against the deployment of what they perceived to be an army of occupation in Jaffna and in the Northern Province. (4) The Tigers display an uncompromising commitment to the establishment of a Tamil state which they term as the Tamil Eelam. The LTTE mainly attacked the symbols of state authority by targeting the police, the military, and the offices of the Sri Lankan state. Yet, civilians were also targets of the LTTE, with the members of political parties being the particular ones. Tamil politicians serving for the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) were among the major targets for the LTTE. Important political figures have also been the victims of LTTE campaigns. The major suspects of Rajiv Gandhi's and the Sri Lankan President Premadasa's assassination in 1993 have been the LTTE despite its ardent denial of involvement. Sinhalese villages in the north and the east were also targeted by the LTTE. Furthermore, in addition to killings and intimidation of the Sinhalese population in the north and the east, De Silva points at "ethnic cleansing in which the whole Muslim population of the Northern province, (estimated at 75,000 persons) was expelled en masse on 22 October 1990" (1999: 42).

In Pradhan's opinion, "(t)he Tigers are a formidable fighting force" as "(t)hey are well-armed, have a small navy that regularly attacks and sinks government ships, and may have aircraft" (2001: 3). De Silva claims that "the LTTE's was a genuine army, well-trained, highly disciplined and with a degree of commitment that its rivals

could not match" and adds that "(t)he size of the LTTE's forces has been variously estimated; in the early stages of its emergence as a powerful guerrilla army, i.e., in 1984-86, the range was from 1,500 to 3,000" (1999: 41). Yet, "Sri Lankan and western intelligence agencies estimate it has between 14 and 18,000 armed cadres" (Accord, 1998: 2). The importance that the LTTE attached to the military command structure was also evidenced by the fact that it insistently rejected a separation between the political and military wings, yet was urged to do so at critical junctures such as in negotiations with the government.

The Tigers indeed seem to be the most vocal advocate of Tamil grievances. Bose argues that "the Tigers' commitment to social equality and justice, and their aggressive mobilisation of traditionally degraded and peripheral Tamil social groups, has the capacity to explain much of the movement's popularity, and resilience in the face of extreme state repression" (1997: 36). The leadership displayed by Prabakaran is often cited in accounting for how the LTTE has become the most pervasive one of the militant groups. Rajanayagam indeed argues that he "has become a folk hero around whom all types of legends are spun" (1994: 172). (5) Furthermore, the Tigers are considered to be the only option for many Tamils as all the other militant groups are believed to have discredited themselves by being associated with criminal behavior or collaboration with the Sri Lankan and Indian state authorities (Bose, 1997: 88).

Yet, it has to be mentioned that this predominant position has come as a result of clashes with other militant forces. Dharmadasa refers to how by the mid-1980s there were no less than thirty-six Tamil militant groups (1992: 317). In Rajanayagam's opinion, three of these groups need to be set apart in that they "have either followed a firm, original, and recognizable line of argument and ideology from

the beginning, or have grown from original roots, rather than as off-shoots from other groups, or have a firm power base in Sri Lanka itself": the LTTE, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), and the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS) (1994: 169). Other Tamil militant groups such as the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and the PLOTE occasionally allied themselves with the government and fought against the LTTE. Yet, the only time that the LTTE and the government could secure cooperation was in driving the Indian troops out with the LTTE receiving the support of the government in its fight against the Indian-sponsored Tamil National Army. Furthermore, cooperation between militant groups was as difficult to achieve. It was in 1984 that five militant groups came together under the banner of Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) and participated in the Thimphu conference with a single agenda. Yet, later, the EPRLF, PLOTE and TELO formed a coalition against the Tigers which was termed as the 'Three Stars' by Indian support.

Mc Gowan underlines that "(f)actional battles between various rebel groups cost the Tamil movement almost as much blood as direct confrontations with Sinhalese security forces" (1992: 182). The LTTE has indeed been merciless towards the other militant groups which, it suspected, might have a claim to its dominant position. (6) India in fact displayed a crucial role in the clashes between different militant groups and its association with the EPRLF has made this latter group a major target for the Tigers. The EPRLF aimed to end what they regarded as suppression of all the people of Sri Lanka and their preference for the end result was not a design that would be uniquely Tamil as they welcomed cooperation from the discontented Sinhalese elements of the Sri Lankan society. Indian cooperation with the EPRLF has been particularly rejected by the LTTE which perceived it as an

attempt by India to manipulate the Tamils in their struggle for an independent state. Bose indeed argues that "while New Delhi very much wanted to have a finger in the pie of the Sri Lankan 'ethnic conflict', it also desired that the bulk of Indian covert assistance should go not to the fiercely self-willed and independent-minded Tigers, but to some more pliable entity, which could then be used to undermine Tiger dominance of the Tamil armed struggle, and prevent the LTTE from getting too big for its boots" (1997: 140-141). (7) With the departure of Indian troops, the EPRLF was removed from becoming a major challenge as its leadership fled to India in order to avoid being exterminated by the LTTE.

Bose refers to the estimates that in the two and a half years of fighting between the LTTE and the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF), "an estimated several thousand Tamil civilians, mostly victims of massacres and torture perpetrated by the Indian forces and allied Tamil death-squads" lost their lives (1997: 132). This may be perceived as a factor accounting for how the Tamil population, despite the brutal methods of the LTTE, saw them as a guarantee to their security. Hence, battling against India has earned the Tigers considerable public support. Keeping a distance from the Indian troops indeed eased things for other actors as well. Rajanayagam argues that the public "showed its disgust with the feeble attitude of the EPRLF quite clearly in the elections when it voted for the EROS, which kept a sort of equi-distance from all parties concerned" (1994: 197).

The communal character that violence assumed in Sri Lanka seems to be the most explosive factor. It was most of the time gangs, mobs, and other civilians fighting against each other under the circumstances in which the state security forces either failed to intervene or actually took sides. The recurrent riots provide the clearest example. Bose indeed regards the events of 1956 as 'the first serious bout of

ethnic rioting in post-colonial Sri Lanka' when 150 Tamils were killed by Sinhalese mobs who were settled in the east as part of a state-sponsored scheme (1997: 60). Similar ethnic-based riots targeting the Tamils recurred in 1958, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1981 and 1983.

Sinhalese revenge attacks which culminated in the riots that erupted in 1983 proved to be a tragic landmark for Sri Lankan politics where communal violence reached the peak. The ambush of an army truck, as a result of which 13 soldiers were killed and mutilated, in Jaffna by the LTTE preceded these riots. Attacks targeted the Tamils and their property in Colombo. In analyzing the 1983 riots, Tambiah states that we are in fact dealing with an event which "many Sinhalese view as a venting of righteous anger against Tamil 'terrorism,' and many Tamils as a 'holocaust' and attempted 'genocide' " (1986: 3). The riots indeed served to sharpen radicalization. Bose claims that "(i)t was also only after July 1983 that Tamil youth began joining the LTTE and similar radical groups in really significant numbers, and that the armed insurgency spread from the peninsula to other areas of the North and East" (1997: 74).

It is also essential to note that the police and the army did not have to confront the Tamil militants solely. Sinhalese militant forces also presented a serious challenge to the state security forces. Bullion indeed stresses that it was the Sinhalese uprising that "served as an influence on restive Tamil youth, and it is not unconnected with the formation in 1972 of the TNT (Tamil New Tigers), the forerunners of the LTTE" (1995: 22). It was in 1971 that an almost exclusively Sinhalese Buddhist youth group rebelled against state security forces in protest of the poor economic opportunities provided to them. The People's Liberation Front (JVP) formed by the rural Sinhalese youth hence became an actor central to Sri Lankan

politics. Bullion estimates that the insurgents numbered 80,000 whereas the core supporters of the organization exceeded 100,000 (1995: 22 and 143). Prolonged rule of emergency was the governmental response.

The JVP as a Marxist organization conducted terrorist activities in the south of Sri Lanka. Harris describes the JVP as "an organization of educated rural Sinhalese youth, directed against upper-caste domination" (1990: 214). The UNP and SLFP members were indeed among its main targets. After its uprising in early 1970s was cracked down, the JVP gathered its strength in late 1980s to terminate the dominance of established Sinhalese elites. Dharmadasa perceives the JVP as containing "a haphazard mixture of egalitarianism and Marxism with Sinhalese ethnocentrism" and adds that this second wave of violence by the "JVP and its armed wing, the Deshapremi Janata Vyaparaya (Patriotic People's Movement), against the state, the politicians of the ruling party, and others who did not contribute to their nationalist ideology appears to be partly due to this sense of frustration" associated with the arrival of the Indian army (1992: 320). Up until 1989, confining the violence perpetuated by the JVP proved impossible. De Silva indeed argues that "(t)he ruthless JVP assault on the UNP government at the end of the 1980s was the deadliest threat that Sri Lankan democracy had faced up to that time" (1997: 102). Yet, recovery and reaction to the 1987 Accord did not last long either. Almost the whole leadership of the JVP was captured by 1989. Despite the fact that the JVP survived into the 1990s and latter times, its impact has rather been marginalized.

Enduring Hostilities and Prospects for Peace:

After the defeat it suffered at the end of 1980s, the JVP restarted functioning as a political party with limited appeal since 1994. In 2001, the People's Alliance (PA) agreed to form a one-year alliance with the JVP in order to secure the position

of the president and the government in the face of growing opposition. Plans for devolution and peace talks with the LTTE had to be dropped in return for this alliance. The JVP thus currently functions as a political party which aims to block serious devolution proposals. The JVP's opposition to Indian intervention as well as the Provincial Councils Act of 1987 was indeed a signal that it will consistently be opposing any schemes for devolution and autonomy. Despite the fact that it fell short of becoming the main political force representing the Sinhalese grievances, it is possible to argue as Bullion does that JVP's policies against Indian presence seemed to have made it a rather populist rallying-cry (1995: 145).

All the Sri Lankan governments rather seemed determined to lead an uncompromising fight against militancy. Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979 with which security forces were allowed to hold prisoners incommunicado for up to eighteen months without trial and Emergency Regulation 15A allowing the security forces to bury or cremate the bodies of people shot by them without revealing their identities or carrying out inquests were the clearest examples. (8) Similarly, a law was enacted in 1978 which proscribed the LTTE and organizations of the sort.

Despite the fact that the state has been able to crack down on JVP militancy and to pull it into the legitimate political process, its performance in combating the Tamil militancy has a more dubious record. It is quite significant that since 1989 the LTTE governance in significant parts of the north and the east "comprised a number of distinct structures dealing with central functions of government from the administration of justice to economic development and social provision" by the establishment of Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organization, Tamil Eelam Bank, and even a 'code of law' (Wilson and Chandrakanthan, 1998: 5). Civil

administration and hence the authority of the Sri Lankan state were being paralyzed in the east and in the north particularly.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987 did entail a settlement of the conflict between the government and the Tigers. It was after the Accord was put into implementation that the negotiations between the government and the LTTE commenced in line with the common desire to force the departure of the Indian troops. (9) Yet, the surrender of military arsenal which was an integral part of the Accord did not result in the complete disarmament of the LTTE. While the LTTE claimed to have surrendered 85 per cent of their arsenal, Bose argues that they handed in only a fraction of their weapons (1997: 157-158). Upon the departure of the IPKF, what is termed as Eelam War II started with fierce fighting. Similarly, after the rounds of talks between the government and the LTTE following the election victory of the PA in 1994, fighting resumed in 1995. This new round of battle was termed as Eelam War III.

Other calls by the LTTE for negotiations to succeed a declaration of ceasefire were not taken seriously by the government. Fighting continued on a large scale, with the government forces reclaiming Jaffna in 1995. Yet, it is generally argued that the army suffered its worst defeat in November 1999. Still, a ceasefire agreement between the government and the LTTE was brokered by Norway in February 23, 2002. This last agreement seems to be a genuine step in embarking on negotiations for a permanent settlement to the conflict. Whether it will be an enduring one or will collapse as the previous agreements did remains to be seen.

Currently, violent clashes between the Muslims and the LTTE seem to demand a prompt solution if the peace process is to endure. June 2002 ended with four day violence between Tamil and Muslim mobs in the east. Presidential

spokesman Peiris indeed argues that these clashes were mainly products of alleged extortion by the Tigers from the Muslim population (Karunaratne and Rodrigo, 2002: 1). Upon the rising wave of violence in the east, an insider from the Muslim party Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) is reported to have stated that "there was an imminent threat of Eastern Muslim youth taking to arms, if attention was not paid to address their grievance" (Edris, 2002: 1). Indeed, from the beginning of ethnic clashes, a separate wave of violence seemed to spread between the Tamil militants and the Muslim community, with a paramilitary organization termed as 'Home Guards' being the main claimant to the protection of the Muslims and receiving the support of the government. Each party or militant group has been promising concessions to the Muslim community with the objective of obtaining the latter's support. While the LTTE "promised the Muslims that special guarantees would be provided to safeguard Islam as long as it is not reactionary or harmful to others (referring to Islamic fundamentalism) and to give appropriate representation in the organs of the government" (Rajanayagam, 1994: 188), the fact that the concerns of the Muslims are far from being eliminated seems to account for the growing spiral of violence between the militants and the Muslim population.

Integrating the militant groups to peaceful political processes might indeed turn out to be a troublesome task for Sri Lanka too. This fact is reinforced by the negation of democratic ideals by some militant groups. Prabakaran, for instance, stated in 1986 that "(t)he government of independent [Eelam] will be a socialist government; there will be only one party supported by the people; I do not want a multi-party democracy" (Rajanayagam, 1994: 183). The establishment of provincial councils has made these militant organizations embrace the idea of participation through periodic elections. EROS actually took part in the elections. Yet,

Rajanayagam underlines that its founder has stated that "EROS MPs entered Parliament not because they accepted the Sri Lanka unitary government, but because they wanted to have a forum to voice their opinions and demands" (1994: 186). Similarly, the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) which joined the government forces against the LTTE "(s)ince 1994, has been the most significant force in electoral politics in Jaffna, though voter turnout has been exceptionally low" (Accord, 1998: 1).

The current ceasefire initiated in February 2002 also acquired a precarious nature with the LTTE activities still causing concern for Sri Lankan authorities. The organization is believed to preserve some of its camps and various recent political killings targeting the Muslims, Tamil political rivals and police officials were blamed on the LTTE.

The Party System:

It seems possible to account for why the party system failed to make a positive contribution to the management of conflict in the case of Sri Lanka in reference to a number of factors:

- ethnic outbidding engaged in by the mainstream political parties,

- marginalization of moderate Tamil parties in representing the Tamil grievances,

- radicalization of Tamil nationalist actors in defiance of non-violent methods of articulation of demands and in rejection of what they perceive to be the passive acquiescence of traditional Tamil political actors.

Competition for Sinhalese Votes: Ethnic Outbidding in Sri Lankan Politics

Due mainly to their numerical majority status across the country except for in the north and the east, the Sinhalese voters and the political organizations advocating their interests have become central to Sri Lankan politics. Bose indeed argues that "(f)rom 1952 onwards, the Sri Lankan Parliament would be more like an assembly of Sinhalese notables than anything else" (1997: 54). The fact that the Tamils were not dispersed in significant numbers across Sri Lanka meant that aside from the north and the east, the Tamil vote was not a serious stake for the Sinhalese parties. The Tamil parties also were not considered as serious contenders in the electoral process due mainly to their regional base of support. (10)

The first-past-the-post system that was upheld for a period also had its own peculiar imprint on Sri Lankan politics. It is highly significant that "(i)n no parliamentary election, except 1977, in post-colonial Sri Lanka has the victorious (Sinhalese) party ever won a majority of votes cast- it was more usual for that party to obtain between 30 and 40 per cent", yet win a landslide in terms of the seats except for in 1965 (Bose, 1997: 65). The introduction of the proportional

representation system made Bose conclude that this shift was intended to "compel the Sinhalese party that emerged as the front-runner to look for support to the party or parties representing the Tamils, in order to be able to form a stable government" (1997: 76).

In such a context, and under both systems, two parties that mainly appealed to Sinhalese voters have become the dominant actors of Sri Lankan politics. These were the UNP and the SLFP. The major problem seemed to be that the two main parties alternated in power singly or in coalition with other parties and rather opted out for questioning each other's Sinhalese nationalist credentials. DeVotta indeed argues that "(w)ith the island's mostly conservative populace opposed to the radical leftist parties, the voters had little option other than the UNP and SLFP" (2002: 96). Considering this fact, every single election resembled a contest on the basis of the single issue of the promotion of Sinhalese nationalism.

Bose in fact stresses that the 1956 elections "saw the inauguration of the thoroughly destructive phenomenon (in terms of its impact on inter-ethnic relations) of what has been alternatively called the 'competitive chauvinism' or 'intra-ethnic outbidding' of Sinhalese party politics" (1997: 58). DeVotta defines ethnic outbidding as "the auction-like process whereby Sinhalese politicians strive to outdo one another by playing on their majority community's fears and ambitions" with "each of the two major parties trying to convince Sinhalese voters that it alone was best equipped to secure and extend Sinhalese dominance" (2002: 84 and 88). (11) This fact of ethnic outbidding indeed shaped the course of the whole conflict. Establishing a degree of consensus among the major Sri Lankan political parties and even within them hence always proved to be a complex task. For one thing, various pacts or peace and devolution proposals advanced by either of the two parties was

not only rejected firmly by the other but also failed to secure unanimous assent within the party waging the proposal. All the more significant was the fact that inconsistency characterized the positions held especially by the two major parties as their policy preferences markedly differed when in government and when in opposition. The policies endorsed by the parties thus seemed to fluctuate in line with the popular outlook and the position occupied in the political spectrum. Particularly alarming has been the fact that "(a)s time passed, the electoral promise of pandering to this chauvinism tempted even the most cosmopolitan of Sinhalese politicians" (Wilson and Chandrakanthan, 1998: 3).

The only common thing that seemed to characterize the two parties was their willingness to tolerate Buddhist influence over politics. Dharmadasa confirms that "(c)hange of governments, however, did not affect the ascendancy of Buddhist influence over public affairs" (1992: 315). The enduring leverage of the Buddhist organizations and especially the clergy over political matters regardless of which party was in government is an established fact of Sri Lankan politics.

A closer look at the two main Sri Lankan parties reveals that established Sinhalese political actors were also increasingly challenged by the rise of alternative Sinhalese organizations. Bose defines the UNP as an "elitist, right-wing political organisation led by upper caste / class Sinhalese-Buddhists" (1997: 203). Within that organization, an early pattern of avoiding ethnic emphasis could indeed be discerned. Tambiah in fact sets Senanayake who was the founder of the UNP apart by arguing that even in the years of the Donoughmore Constitution, he did not exploit the ethnic issue and displayed a non-communalist approach to the minorities (1986: 130 and 131).

That pattern did not seem to last long, however. In the period of the UNP government under Jayawardene, significant changes were instituted in the political and electoral systems with the introduction of a presidential form of government and a proportional system of representation. His period was indeed perceived as a landmark in a number of ways. Bullion argues that "Sri Lankan politics after 1977 became increasingly polarized, with the UNP government using their overwhelming parliamentary majority in order to consolidate their powers against the legitimately elected opposition parties" evidenced foremost by the creation of the executive presidency in 1978 (1995: 13). Similarly, as a part of that strategy, the 1982 referendum to extend the tenure of the UNP government for six more years obtained the consent of 54.66 percent of the electorate. Hence, following the 1977 parliamentary election, elections were suspended until 1989, when the contentious referendum enabled the UNP government to prolong the term of the existing parliament for another 6 years.

Yet, it is possible to argue that the rise of the SLFP was the most radical development in Sri Lankan political system. The succession crisis within the UNP set in by Senanayake who aimed to install his son in the post culminated in the departure of Bandaranaike. Bandaranaike then formed the SLFP in 1951. The SLFP was in government between 1956-65 and 1970-77. The party is mainly recalled for its policies of promoting Sinhalese nationalism. The year 1956 presented a crucial landmark in that the elites who took over power from the colonial administration and who were represented mainly by the UNP came under increasing challenge. Pointing at the narrow base of social support for the UNP, analysts argue that "the SLFP appealed to and successfully mobilised 'a much more heterogeneous [and far vaster] bloc of vested interests' than the UNP had ever imagined doing" (Bose, 1997: 56).

Similarly, Bullion states that "the SLFP rapidly gained support from non-elites such as the rural peasants, monks, teachers and ayurvedic practitioners, a coalition of the Buddhist masses, who had felt excluded from power in the post-independence period" (1995: 18).

The ascendancy of the SLFP exerted a deep impact on the political system. Radicalization of political discourse proved to be inevitable. Bose stresses that the assumption of power by the SLFP, with its emphasis on a new brand of Sinhalese nationalism, imparted to UNP's conception of the state "an increasingly xenophobic and chauvinistic Sinhalese-nationalist component" (1997: 45). Hence, the rise of the SLFP urged the UNP to adopt a more nationalistic discourse. In Nissan's view, "(f)rom this date, the identification of the state and the interests of the Sinhala people became increasingly close" (1998: 3).

Bose concludes that "the conflict that manifested itself in the run-up to the 1956 polls was 'not so much between ethnic communities [such as Tamils and Sinhalese], as between two classes of society" as "(t)he over-privileged, pseudo-Westernised, English-speaking comprador class, almost exclusively concentrated in Colombo, contained within its ranks both Tamils and Sinhalese" (1997: 57). The SLFP's major emphasis in 1956 elections was on the status of Sinhala as the sole official language of Sri Lanka. A 'Sinhala Only' campaign was waged by the party. As the elections approached, the UNP adopted the very same policy in order to claim back the Sinhalese votes that seemed to have shifted to the SLFP. This policy was also considered as an attack on the English-speaking minority who seemed to have immense privileges as regards employment in public service. Yet the policy also seemed to attack the status of the Sri Lankan Tamils as it was the Jaffna Tamils who

were highly concentrated in English-medium education and the ensuing opportunities for state sector employment.

In the periods when it formed the government, the SLFP secured the cooperation of the Marxist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist Party (CP). Their common concern has been to keep the UNP which represented the interests of a different class away from power. Harris defines the LSSP as the 'strongest left-wing party in Sri Lanka' and concludes that "(y)et the LSSP proved no less compromising on the issue of Sinhalese communalism, identifying it as authentic Ceylonese nationalism" (1990: 214). These two parties have also assumed Sinhalese nationalist positions at various critical instances and were distant from moderating the environment of ethnic outbidding. Mainly being composed of Sinhalese members, these parties have deserted the two languages policy they held in the 1950s to extend support to the 'Sinhala Only' position in the 1960s. Devolution to district councils was also opposed by the two parties. Thus, they mainly adjusted themselves to the on-going outbidding.

Another major upheaval in Sri Lankan politics seems to be a rather recent one associated with the results of the 1994 elections. Liyanage argues that "(t)he popular thirst for an end to the war was then nurtured and consolidated by the People's Alliance and its leader Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, who in 1994 achieved unprecedented electoral success on a platform of peace and negotiations with the LTTE" (1998: 3). Her bid for presidency indeed secured huge support across various regions and ethnic groups. Bullion points at how "Kumaratunga became President by a margin of two million votes, the largest ever gained in any Sri Lankan election" with the heavy voting for Kumaratunga in Tamil areas being particularly explanatory of how widespread support was obtained (1995: 156). She declared in 1995 that

"(t)he first task is…a new approach predicated on unqualified acceptance of the fact that the Tamil people have genuine grievances of which solutions must be found" and added that "(w)ith this objective in view, the government is seeking to rebuild the constitutional foundation of a plural society within a united and sovereign Republic of Sri Lanka" (Edrisinha, 1998: 6). Samuel indeed argues that "the PA government had uncommon success in moderating southern politics between 1994 and 1997" (1998: 8).

The PA was indeed a coalition of several centre-left and leftist political parties whose major partner was the SLFP. The Trotskyist Sri Lanka Equal Society Party (LSSP), the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, the Democratic United National Front and Sri Lanka People's Party also participated. The PA coalition also obtained the backing of the SLMC and an independent Tamil candidate with an agenda of peace in 1994. Even this seemed to a remarkable gathering of diverse political forces.

The recent elections, however, brought the UNP back into power. Hence surfaced the need for coexistence between President Kumaratunga of SLFP who is to remain in power until 2005 and the UNP leader Wickremasinghe at a critical juncture where the attainment of peace seems to have acquired greater urgency. The seats obtained by the key political actors in 2001 elections were as follows:

TABLE 4:

2001 Sri Lankan Parliamentary Election Results

Parties	Percentage of Votes (%) 2001 Parliamentary Elections	Number of Seats (301) 2001 Parliamentary Elections
UNP	45.6	109
PA	37.3	77
JVP	9.1	16
TULF	3.9	15
SLMC	1.2	5
EPDP	0.8	2
DPLF	0.2	1

Pointing at the fact that "(r)ight-wing nationalist parties, which regarded the devolution plan as an affront to the Sinhalese majority, were trounced in the [2000] election", observers were led to conclude that a 'clear Sinhalese mandate for the dual-track policy' of devolution discussions and military combat was obtained (The Economist, October 14, 2000: 80-81).

Despite the fact that the UNP's insistence on its own proposals since 1994 has blocked the taking of certain other initiatives, the ground was now set for the UNP to conduct the peace talks following the ceasefire. A contrast may be drawn between the positions held by two leaders as UNP leader Wickremesinghe "favours an 'interim administration' for the Tamil majority in the north and east, in which the Tigers would presumably have a role" whereas "Mrs Kumaratunga's plan was to bring in a new constitution that would give the region more autonomy and then get the Tigers, humbled, she hoped, by her army, to accept it", with the former being more inclined to lift the ban on the Tigers than the latter (The Economist, December 8, 2001: 55). The recent upsurge in polemical debates between the President and the Prime Minister indeed proved serious. The former accused the latter of failing to

handle the peace process, to ensure security across the country, to guarantee her personal security and to join the National Security Council meetings. Controversy continued over which of the two actors was mandated by the people to do what through an exchange of letters while certain groups called on the President to make use of her executive powers. It was particularly striking that all the political party leaders except for those of the UNP have been invited to the 52nd anniversary of the SLFP. The LTTE's proposals for an Interim Self-Governing Authority revealed in November 2003 in response to the government position did not calm the situation either. Indeed, the political crisis in November 2003 whereby the President took over the ministries of defense, interior and media and prorogued the parliament culminated in the stalling of the peace process as well as the suspension of Norwegian facilitation. While the President and the Prime Minister are currently engaged in rounds of talks, the controversy over who is responsible for the peace process still continues amidst calls for a government of national reconciliation. The government insists on the December 15 deadline whereby the existing political dispute is expected to be settled to enable the resumption of peace talks.

Tamil politics: Radicalization and militancy

Despite the massive exclusion of the Tamil political forces from the central political processes, Tamil political parties are still critical to the course of the conflict. Bose points at how "not a single elected Tamil representative from the northern province had ever held a ministerial portfolio in the central government since 1956" (1997: 79). While the Muslims or the Indian Tamils occasionally participated in Sri Lankan governments, such a role was not envisaged for the Sri Lankan Tamil political parties. This situation was also caused by the divisions within the Sri Lankan Tamil camp. In Pfaffenberger's opinion, "(w)ith the Tamil speakers of

Sri Lanka fragmented into three communities that cannot make common cause, it was easy for Sinhalese political parties to ignore Tamil interests" (1994: 7). It hence seems possible to argue that neither the coalition nor the blackmail potential has materialized for the Sri Lankan Tamil political parties. This fact was not redressed when greater proportionality was incorporated into the electoral system as it was the Muslim party or the Indian Tamil organizations that came to fill in the vacuum left by the Sri Lankan Tamils. McGowan even argues that proportional representation further cut the number of seats that could be won by the Tamils (1992: 166). These other parties indeed formed coalitions, refrained from participating in them or withheld support in critical issues as a result of which they extracted concessions for their communities.

Yet, Sri Lankan Tamils have mainly extended support to regionally based ethnic parties. It was in fact quite difficult for the main Sinhalese parties to seek and obtain extensive support in Tamil-populated areas. Jupp similarly concludes that not even the leftist parties of LSSP or CP "succeeded in penetrating the Tamil north, due to the rigid caste structure and conservatism of the Jaffna Tamils, who subsequently formed their own parties, thus setting the pattern for separatist politics in the post-independence era" (Bullion, 1995: 17). Furthermore, the stakes perceived by the mainstream Sinhalese parties in the northern region were rather low.

Bose considers the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) as the first exclusively Tamil political party of Sri Lanka (1997: 52). It was upon the perception that the ACTC leader was coopted by the Sri Lankan authorities by being allowed to participate in the cabinet that cooperation with the Sinhalese parties resulted in a split within the ranks of the party. It is also claimed that the Citizenship Acts of 1948/9 "subsequently served to unite the Indian and Ceylonese Tamils politically, and

ultimately contributed to the demise of the more moderate Tamil Congress" (Bullion, 1995: 18). Chelvanayakam formed an alternative party in 1949 named as the Tamil Federal Party (FP) which "would set the agenda for Sri Lankan Tamil politics, and would constitute practically the sole challenge to the legitimacy of the unitary state" for the next three decades (Bose, 1997: 54). The formation of the FP could indeed be regarded as the manifestation of a deeper split within the Tamil camp. Pfaffenberger argues that Tamil Congress (TC) "based in Colombo and reflecting the interests of the many English-speaking, middle class families who lived outside the North and East, called for measures to ensure Tamil rights throughout the island" whereas the "Jaffna-based Federal Party (FP) advocated a federalist solution, and won increasing support as it became clear to Tamils that economic and political participation in a wider Sri Lanka was becoming increasingly out of reach" (1994: 9).

The FP declared in its first convention of 1951 the Tamil demand for participation in a federal state structure. In 1957, the FP called for a federal Ceylon and the status of an autonomous linguistic state in it. Nevertheless, a discernible shift took place in FP's position in time. While in the 1960s and early 1970s the party staunchly voiced its commitment to Sri Lankan unity within a federal framework, from 1975 on there were signs that a Tamil state might be desirable.

Chelvanayakam and the FP are indeed recalled for having united various Tamils groups around the same objective which makes the rise of the FP a true landmark. Wilson gives credit to the Tamil political parties, and particularly the FP, in narrowing the distinctions between three different identities of Colombo, Jaffna, and Batticaloa Tamils by advocating unity of all Tamil speakers (1994: 126). The novelty introduced to Tamil politics by Chelvanayakam was increasing emphasis on " 'the unity of the Tamil speaking peoples,' a formulation which included the Tamil-

speaking Muslims of the Eastern Province as well as the Batticaloa Tamils and the rest of the Tamil speaking people in the Eastern Province" (Wilson, 1994: 134). Issues that have previously been of lesser concern to Sri Lankan Tamil political actors such as the deprivation of the Indian Tamils of citizenship and franchise rights have now become incorporated into Tamil nationalist discourse. The actual result seemed to be that the Federal Party "contested the majority of constituencies in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and won the majority of Tamil seats in each of the provinces at every general election from 1956 to 1977" (Wilson, 1994: 135). Hence, Chelvanayakam was able to impose on the Tamil camp an unprecedented level of unity. Even the LTTE refers to Chelvanayakam as "Father Selva, the founder and inspiration of the Eelam freedom struggle" (Rajanayagam, 1994: 170-171).

The FP has taken part in shaky coalitions of convenience at various times. Yet, the intense level of ethnic outbidding among the Sinhalese parties served to curtail any contribution this cooperation could make to conflict management. The FP formed coalitions with the UNP as a result of which it bargained on a number of concessions. The response to these attempts was the formation of the United Front (UF) by the SLFP, the LSSP and the CP in the 1970 elections. The UF's main objective was to use the UNP-FP coalition to discredit the UNP. Hence, the leverage of the FP was once again restricted due to ethnic outbidding among the Sinhalese political parties.

The commitment of the FP to parliamentary politics and peaceful pursuit of objectives was for a long time the key aspect of the conflict. Nissan underlines that the FP advocated a non-violent civil disobedience campaign had its demands for a federal constitution, equal status for Tamil and Sinhala languages, granting of citizenship to Tamil workers in the plantations, and the halting of the Sinhalese

settlement as part of a government-sponsored plan in Tamil-speaking areas not been met (1998: 4). The way in which the FP began to lose its influence over the Tamil population and the related radicalization of Tamil politics seem to have reduced the potential affirmative impact of FP's presence on the potential for conflict management. It was particularly the death in 1977 of FP leader Chelvanayakam who "perhaps alone among the moderate Tamil politicians, possessed sufficient gravitas to persuade the restive, radical youths to give electoral politics one more try" that aggravated the political impact of the restive youths (Pfaffenberger, 1994: 10).

The Tamil United Front (TUF) which was renamed as the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) in 1976 gradually surfaced as the major actor in Tamil politics. The FP also began functioning as a component of the TULF. With the formation of the TUF in 1972, an attempt was made to bring together the FP, Tamil Congress and the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC). The latter soon defected by referring to the resilience of the difference between the positions held by the Indian Tamils and the Sri Lankan Tamils. The Six-Point Plan revealed by the TUF in 1972 outlined the organization's demands as the parity of status for the Tamil language, the extension of citizenship rights to all Indian Tamils, a formal commitment to a secular state structure, constitutional guarantees on fundamental rights and freedoms, the abolition of untouchability, and a decentralized structure of government (Bullion, 1995: 23). The TULF manifesto stated that the TULF "seeks in the general election the mandate of the Tamil Nation to establish an independent, sovereign, secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam that includes all geographically contiguous areas that have been the traditional homelands of the country" (Bose, 1997: 73). In the Vadukkodai Resolution of 1976, the TULF openly committed itself to the goal of 'a sovereign socialist State of Eelam'. Contesting with an agenda of a sovereign Tamil

state, the TULF obtained all of the 14 seats in the northern province and 4 out of 8 seats in the east in the 1977 elections. It hence obtained eighteen seats in 1977 by acquiring 6.75 percent of the total vote and became 'the first non-Sinhala-dominated official opposition' (Bullion, 1995: 13).

With the Sixth Amendment to the Sri Lankan constitution in 1983, the MPs refusing to take an oath against secession including the TULF MPs were expelled from the parliament. This event actually served to bolster the belief particularly among the Tamil youth that extra-parliamentary activity was the sole remaining channel for the expression of grievances. Hence, peaceful advocacy of separatism was declared to be illegal and in addition to the TULF "(u)nder the same legislation, three leftist parties, the JVP, the NSSP (Nava Samasamaja Party) and the CP, were also proscribed after the July 1983 riots, for alleged destabilization and extra-parliamentary activity" (Bullion, 1995: 33). The bans on CP and NSSP were abolished in 1985 whereas those on the JVP and the TULF continued.

The extent to which the TULF preserved its distance from the LTTE has been a matter of controversy. Opinion on the relationship between the two organizations is quite diverse. Bullion argues that the LTTE indeed "had strong links with the mainstream representatives in the TULF" as "(t)hese contacts were not made too overt, for fear of official opprobrium, but their increasingly militant activity was often covertly endorsed, in a similar manner to the Sinn Fein/Irish Republican Army relationship in Northern Ireland and other revolutionary separatist movements" (1995: 24). Similarly, De Silva underlines how, initially, "the TULF and the LTTE, drew sustenance and nourishment from their association with each other; certainly, the armed separatist groups gained respectability in the Tamil electorate by their association with the TULF, the principal political party of the Sri Lankan Tamils"

(1999: 40). On the other hand, Bose points at the existence of "evidence which would appear to indicate that the ostensibly 'moderate' and 'peace-loving' TULF leadership was, in 1983-84, desperately trying to create its own paramilitary force, in order to counteract the growing influence of the radical youth groups, particularly the LTTE" (1997: 88).

Yet, the TULF increasingly became marginalized in Tamil politics. The decline of support suffered by the TULF indeed had various reasons. The TULF's failure to obtain vital concessions even in its capacity as the main opposition party seemed to have fostered greater disappointment among the Tamil electorate with the party and the parliamentary process at large. This development was also partially connected to the way in which it backtracked from certain of its key positions for the purposes of survival. Sathananthan argues that in due course "the TULF abandoned its radical mandate, collaborated in a half-hearted and ill-resourced government decentralisation scheme and lost significant popular support" (1998: 2). The opportunity to become the Tamils' main representative seemed to have slipped through the organization's fingers. In its negotiations with the government, the TULF began to devise peace proposals modelled along a federal structure rather than an independent Tamil state. The TULF also actively participated in the drafting of the government's devolution proposals following the 1994 elections and continues to be a party to peace negotiations.

As was mentioned in the previous part, militant groups also started showing a greater degree of interest in the political process from the 1980s on. They have increasingly participated in nationwide as well as provincial elections. Bose points at the Thimphu talks as the landmark since "(a)t this meeting, for the very first time, the various Tamil fighting groups (the Tigers foremost among them) were invited, at the

behest of the Indian organisers, to send their representatives to participate in the deliberations, thus according them de facto recognition as political parties with a right to speak for the Tamils that was at least on par with the traditional leadership of the TULF" (1997: 137). The establishment of provincial councils became the major stimulant of this expanding participation. The elections to these councils were carried out in spite of the chaotic circumstances and the tight control of Colombo over these bodies. Yet, the militant groups attached increasing importance to competing in them. To cite an example, the first Jaffna local elections since the early 1980s were held in January 1998. Samuel states that "(d)espite uncertainties about the LTTE stand on the elections, apparent voter disinterest, the LTTE slaying of nine EPDP cadres (including two candidates), the contesting of parties still under arms, the fielding of unknown candidates and inadequate campaigning", the 17 councils were shared with ten for the EPDP, four for the Democratic People's Liberation Front (DPLF), two for the TULF, and one for the TELO (1998: 7). All the more significant was the fact that "(i)n January 1990, the LTTE also announced that it was transforming its political wing into a party, the People's Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLT)" to contest in provincial council elections (Rajanayagam, 1994: 184).

At the level of national politics, certain militant organizations were able to obtain parliamentary representation or engage in cooperative relations with the central government. The EPDP has backed the national government until the 2000 elections though not forming a part of it. As regards the 2001 elections, Tamil militant organizations acquired three seats, with two for the EPDP which has been on cooperative terms with the PA and a single seat for the DPLF as the political wing of the militant group PLOTE which has largely been eliminated by the LTTE. The TULF's 15 seats also have to be taken into account. Analysts argue that the 2001

election "has given the Tigers a new sort of clout in Colombo" as "(f)our Tamil parties, all of them past victims of the Tigers' policy of assassinating moderates, joined to form the Tamil National Alliance, which trounced the Tamil party backing Mrs Kumaratunga in the north and east" and consented to Tigers' representation of the Tamils in talks with the government as a result of which "(f)or the first time, the Tigers have something akin to a political wing with seats in the parliament" (The Economist, December 8, 2001: 56).

Other major actors:

Indian Tamils also have organizations reflecting their political stances. Indian Tamils' support for devolution rather than a separate state constituted the major rift between their organizations and those of the Sri Lankan Tamils. The organizations representing the Indian Tamils such as the CWC and the Democratic Workers' Congress had their reservations on a federal future for Sri Lanka as their members were mainly the inhabitants of Sinhalese-dominated regions. Indian Tamils were initially united around the CWC. By participating in or extending support to the national governments, they distanced themselves from the Jaffna-led struggle for an independent Tamil state. The CWC entered into parliament in 1994 elections in alliance with the UNP. The recent moves by the PA to convince Tamil political actors to support its initiatives for peace and constitutional amendment have indeed been reciprocated by the Ceylon Tamil parties and the CWC. In addition to its cooperation with the major Sinhalese parties, analysts argue that "(i)ts role of power broker between the dominant political forces of the south, together with its prominence in a major export industry, has helped the CWC win significant gains for its impoverished Up-country constituency, including a range of labour rights and, most notably, uncontested Sri Lankan citizenship" (Accord, 1998: 5). Recently, the

CWC is facing increasing competition from the Up-Country Peoples' Front aiming to appeal to the same constituency.

Muslim demands center on increased security, protection of their culture and a degree of administrative devolution. The SLMC has been the major actor representing the grievances of the Muslim population. The SLMC consistently attempted to function as an integral part of the political process and cooperated with the main Sinhalese parties at critical junctures. Nevertheless, feelings of insecurity caused by attacks on the Muslims occasionally disrupted their cooperative attitude. The participation of the SLMC in the PA coalition, for instance, was halted due to Sinhalese-Muslim riots culminating in the damaging of two mosques and the departure of 7 out of 11 SLMC MPs from the government. Relations with the LTTE have also been problematic. Recent attacks on the Muslims in the east also led certain SLMC MPs to threaten to cooperate with the opposition as they protested their party leader by accusing him of acting as if cooperation with the LTTE was possible (Edris, 2002: 1). The Muslim parliamentarians are indeed reported to have "decided to come together and in one voice call upon the government and the LTTE to take immediate steps to address grievances of Eastern Muslims" as they voiced commitment to the peace process by July, 2002 (Edris and Chandrasinghe, 2002: 1). Recent attempts at formulating common Muslim positions have been undertaken by the Muslim political leaders. Rajanayagam underlines that "(i)n 1990, three Muslim parties [All Ceylon Muslim League (ACML), Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and Muslim United Liberation Front (MULF)] agreed to establish a Muslim ethnic council with equal status and powers within a merged North-East Province" (1994: 189). Yet, most recently, there are signs that Muslim political actors engage in their own ethnic outbidding. With the Muslim party National Unity Alliance threatening

to resort to armed struggle for the protection of Muslim rights, the SLMC warned of the danger of division within and rejected such claims. The current fragile security situation in the east places the credibility of the Muslim political leaders under questioning with people protesting them for failure to ensure security.

In a fashion similar to the interest of Tamil militant groups in the political process, the Sinhalese militant organization JVP recently seemed eager to take an active part in politics with the lifting of the ban on it. In fact, the JVP became a key actor in the discussions on the motion of no confidence in President Kumaratunga's government in 2001 which led commentators to conclude that "(t)he balance of power is in the hands of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, the JVP..." (The Economist, June 30, 2001: 53). Still, the JVP encounters difficulties in attaining full-fledged accommodation to the political processes. The organization has recently been accused by the government of causing disorder in parliament and being associated with prison revolts which it rejected fiercely as a conspiracy (De Silva and Gamage, 2002: 1).

The Role of Public Opinion:

It is possible to argue that public attitude in the case of Sri Lanka failed to support conflict management initiatives and, hence, to contribute to the management of the unfolding conflict. This situation may be described in reference to a number of factors which may be listed as follows:

- The Sinhalese population has mostly condoned ethnic outbidding by allowing the two main parties to question each other's Sinhalese credentials,

- The Sri Lankan Tamils displayed reservations on the definition of political community whereas a campaign for imposing an increasing degree of convergence on communities as diverse as the northern Tamils, eastern Tamils, Indian Tamils, and Muslims has been undertaken,

- Particular groups holding the belief that they have been endowed with the mission of preserving Buddhism and the Sinhalese identity have continuously exerted a great impact on politics and have stimulated greater polarization by urging those endorsing a different identity to form their parallel organization.

The Sacreds of the Sinhalese?: Sinhalese nationalism and Buddhist identity

Analysts focusing on Ceylonese politics upon independence agree that elitism was the dominant character. Bose indeed draws attention at how "(u)nlike the vast majority of colonies, Ceylon had almost totally lacked a mass movement against colonial subjugation" (1997: 45). Yet, in time, erosion in the capacity of the state to control and shape the society took place with the rise of alternative centers of power such as the guerrillas, businessmen, and voluntary societies (Morrison, 2001: 187). (12) It is nevertheless not possible to argue that these alternative power centers have constructively contributed to conflict management. In that effort, the polarization and turmoil created by the ongoing conflict has surfaced as the major constraint. The fact

that these organizations mainly committed their resources to the protection and preservation of exclusively formulated identities has mostly made them a part of the problem. To point at another limitation, Morrison stresses that "(m)any of the new organizations focus their action in the 'out stations'- ...- and away from Colombo" and their "organizations' goals, resources, or markets are local or provincial" (2001: 197).

For some time, civil disobedience campaigns allowed for the peaceful expression of Tamil opinion. The campaign led by the FP following the abrogation of the Bandaranaike-Chelvayakam Pact which will be analyzed in the coming section provided one example. Yet, the bans on public rallies and the organization of strikes as well as the restrictions on the expression of opinion have been the governmental response in times of the intensification of the conflict. It can be confidently stated that integrating the youth into the political process has proved to be the major challenge which gave rise to radical and militant movements across the political spectrum such as the JVP and the LTTE. Hence, unconventional methods were resorted to in the articulation of demands.

Yet, although limited by the intensity of the conflict, calls for peace from the civil society organizations have recently taken place. Pointing at the exhaustion of the civil society in the north and the east, commentators underline the periodical flourishing of civil society activities in the south through "numerous rallies, peoples' peace delegations, grassroots awareness-raising campaigns, community-based conflict resolution workshops, and elections and human rights monitoring initiatives" and qualify that even these efforts become demoralized when tensions seem to be rising (Accord, 1998: 7). In December 1994, various civil society peace groups organized "a momentous march through the streets of Colombo and a rally at which

thousands of activists appealed to both the president and the LTTE to take the peace process forward" as the appeal was taken to Jaffna by Sinhalese activists who were the first delegation to visit the region since the LTTE took control in 1990 (Samuel, 1998: 1). The 'Sarvodaya movement' and the 'Sri Lanka First' organization together organized a Peace Day in support of the peace process in March 2002. While the former movement issued a statement stressing that "various religions and civil organizations and Sri Lankan citizens will join hands to 'reaffirm their commitment to a peaceful political solution to the ethnic conflict", the latter organization defined itself as "a non-political, non-religious, non-ethnic association formed by leading business organizations in the country" which aimed at peace and economic stability (Daily Mirror, March 15, 2002: 1). Liyanage also points at how "secular democrats, one or two small left-wing parties and a handful of trade union groups have consistently campaigned within the Sinhalese polity for a more moderate approach to the ethnic problem" (1998: 3). A 'Peace Initiative' has also been promoted by business and religious leaders. It is hence possible to argue that a constituency for peace has recently been formed, with certain civil society organizations deserving high credit in that effort.

Yet, a major factor that counteracted these efforts was related to the manipulation of public opinion by political parties. Competitive bidding by the parties for the support of the Sinhalese voters indeed sharpened the Sinhalese public stance on the conflict. It seemed as if every time one of the main parties took a progressive step in the direction of devising a solution to the conflict, it was urged to take a step backwards as the other main party presented these efforts as a sell-out. Hence, the commitment of the party taking the peace initiatives to the Sinhalese nation was placed under public scrutiny.

Hence, all the government proposals for accommodation encountered highly vocal opposition. In fact, Samuel attributes the limitations of the government proposals to the need for the government to appease the Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist camp who "views any proposals for regional autonomy as a prelude to separation" (1998: 8). In Tambiah's view, a social homogenization process was indeed underway which encompassed "large number of rural and urban people, many of whom are recent migrants, progressively losing their roots in traditional social forms, such as kin groups, village communities, and locality-based castes, and finding their compensation in an imagined collective Sinhala communal identity and in euphoric millenarian and ecstatic religious cults" (1986: 84-85). A common enemy seems to have been successfully construed for the purposes of consolidating the Sinhala-Buddhist identity. Coalitions of opponents to the government policies on the grounds that they were detrimental to the promotion of Sinhalese and Buddhist interests were rather easy to assemble. For one thing, the Buddhist monks, Sinhalese nationalists, the UNP, Tamil extremists, and the Ceylon Tamil Congress stood together in opposition to the Bandaranaike-Chelvayakam Pact which aimed to reach a compromise with the Tamils. It was, on the other hand, forces as diverse as the Buddhist clergy, Marxist parties, the SLFP, and other Sinhalese nationalists that opposed the Senanayake-Chelvayakam Pact which also aimed at reaching an accommodation with the Tamils. Similarly, the Sinhalese public "reacted, by and large, hysterically to the [Indo-Lanka] accord, which they perceived as a sell-out to the expansionists and their diabolical agents, the Tamil terrorists" (Bose, 1997: 151). The second attempted uprising by the JVP was indeed a direct result of that reaction. Yet, discontent among the Sinhalese public was most clearly reflected in the frequent

changes in government with the winning of consecutive elections remaining as a true challenge for every political party.

Another major factor that needs to be introduced relates to the central position accorded to the Buddhist monks and their organizations in Sri Lankan politics. Enrolling the active support of the organizations of Buddhist monks has become the key to governing the country. The popular constituencies mobilized by the Buddhist organizations have been perceived as a real stake by the main Sinhalese parties. Liyanage underlines that "Sinhalese politicians have often been calculating in their exploitation of 'the Buddhist card', and the Sangha [the Buddhist clergy] have been manipulated as much as they have been deferred to" (1998: 2). In his analysis on how the bhikkhu (i.e. Buddhist monk) became a social and political activist, Dharmadasa concludes that "(i)n the mid-1950s the triumphant campaign to establish Sinhala as the one national official language, and to ensure the primacy of Buddhism in the island polity, established the bhikkhu as an unmistakably legitimate opinion leader" (1992: 316). This influence over Sri Lankan politics seems to have remained intact until now.

Similarly, attachment to Buddhist identity was continuously fostered regardless of which party was then in government. Morrison argues that "both the SLFP and the UNP governments expanded state support and control of Buddhist institutions" whereas the constitutional amendments of the 1970s stated that "the Republic 'shall give to Buddhism the foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the state to protect and foster Buddhism while assuring to all religions the right guaranteed by section 18 (1)(d)' " (2001: 185-186). Hence, Buddhist influence over the political process was gradually expanded. Liyanage even argues that "a number of monks have become more engaged politically, associating themselves

openly with Marxist and Sinhala nationalist activism" (1998: 1). On issues such as official language or devolution, the Buddhist clergy actively revealed their position. The potential threats directed by the reforms to Buddhist supremacy were voiced as major concerns. Morrison particularly draws attention at the Buddhist oriented organizations the great majority of which "were formed in order to mobilize support of the monks and lay persons to protect the position of the Buddhists in the country, and to challenge Indian-imposed plans for the creation of a federal system" (2001: 197). The Eksath Bhikkhu Peramuna (EBP) was one such organization formed by the activist monks. As an example of the attempts of the Buddhist organizations to exert an influence over the political issues, Pfaffenberger refers to the Movement for the Defense of the Motherland (MSV) which was founded in 1986 and which organized demonstrations, rallies, and printed tracks in opposition to proposals for devolution and Tamil claims to a 'homeland' in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka (1994: 15).

Yet, many analysts point at a recent change in the positions held by various organizations and particularly those of the Buddhist clergy. Some Buddhist organizations endorsed a relatively moderate stance and began to extend support to government schemes for conflict management. For Liyanage, "(p)erhaps the most important indication of the erosion of hardline Sinhalese opinion, however, was the publication of the interim report of the Sinhala Commission in September 1997" considering the fact that "the surprise of the Interim Report was its tacit acceptance of the principles of the 13th amendment to the constitution which enacted the devolution provisions of the Indo-Lanka Accord" and that the Commission was made up of a huge number of Sinhalese nationalist organizations from across Sri Lanka (1998: 3 and 4). The Sinhala Commission had previously acted as the main opponent

of the peace packages and proposals put forward by the government. Displaying a sharp break from traditional attitudes was the fact that "(w)ith the publication of the PA government's peace package in 1997, a significant number of monks came out in favour of devolution" which resulted in unprecedented debates and disagreements among the Buddhist clergy (Accord, 1998: 8).

Hence, while the Buddhist clergy now seem to display less of a monolithic stance, expecting their pervasive influence to evaporate or to stage a sudden shift does not seem to be realistic. Indeed, well into year 2000 and on, the Buddhist clergy seem to retain their key position in the political process. DeVotta points at how "UNP's leader, Ranil Wickremasinghe, succumbed to the extremists and insisted that his party would never support any legislation without the approval of Buddhist religious authorities" in response to which the PA prime minister Wickremanayake "soon thereafter tried to outdo the UNP leader by stating, 'We will seek the views of the Mahanayake Theras [Buddhist leadership] on each and every paragraph of the draft constitution, so that they could correct us where we have gone wrong" (2002: 92).

It is essential to evaluate what the PA victory on a platform of commitment to peace may mean for the future direction of the Sinhalese opinion on the conflict. Various analysts regarded the electoral victories of the PA and President Kumaratunga as a landmark in which a mandate for peace was popularly granted (Liyanage, 1998: 6 and Samuel, 1998: 1). It was particularly significant that "large numbers of all ethnic groups, including Tamils in some of the conflict areas, had voted overwhelmingly for the president" (Samuel, 1998: 1). While no guarantees can be offered that there is no likelihood of a reversal of this shift in Sinhalese opinion towards greater endorsement of negotiations and peace, the current state of affairs

may indeed be the first step in the transformation of the role of the public into an asset for conflict management.

Tamil Opinion: An Increasingly Monolithic Bloc?

A high degree of alienation from Colombo stands as the basic characteristic of Tamil opinion across the north and the east. Allegiance to the political community also weakened during the fight between the LTTE and the government. Bose argues that popular acceptance and recognition of the state's authority "is something which is dangerously close to becoming extinct in the Ceylon Tamils' attitude towards Colombo" and adds that it makes little sense for the rising generation of Tamils that "they are still, formally speaking, citizens of a juridical state called Sri Lanka, which, apart from exercising no positive influence over their lives, intermittently bombs them from the air and tries to starve them into submission" (1997: 186).

Differences of opinion guided the relations between the component actors of the Tamil struggle for a long time. Harris states that while the politicians' attempts at creating a Ceylonese identity as opposed to the British one in the 1940s was highly skewed towards the Sinhalese, efforts of Tamil parties to come up with another distinction found no sympathetic echo among the Tamil population prior to 1956 (1990: 211). Elitism thus seemed to characterize Tamil politics at the initial stage. Nevertheless, radicalization and the upsurge of the eminence of caste and regional cleavages gradually became the major trends.

Firstly, radical factions were particularly critical of the established leaders and institutions and even condemned them as traitors. The credibility of the TULF leadership, for instance, was seriously questioned. Sivathamby claimed that "(i)n political terms, youth militancy arose as a reaction to what was seen as the all-too-conciliatory parliamentarism of the TULF, which in 1976 demanded a separate state

but, when it came to political negotiations, was always discussing 'district councils' "
(Bose, 1997: 79).

Other differences also seem to divide the Tamils. Currently, it is possible to argue that Jaffna Tamils have replaced the Colombo-Tamils in the frontline of the relations with various Sri Lankan governments. This is indeed another manifestation of the radicalization within the Tamil camp. Considering the fact that the battle between the government forces and the LTTE mainly took place in the north, the Jaffna Tamils expectedly were more radical in their demands and political discourse. Mc Gowan accounts for the variety of opinion among the Tamils by stating that "their political unity was fragmented by caste and class dynamics, as well as by religious and regional differences" mainly in the following ways: Jaffna Tamils disdained the lower-caste Indian Tamils, Hindu Tamils had a different stance than those who converted to Catholicism, Tamils "in the north were patriarchal and more orthodox in their caste traditions, and those in the east were matriarchal and had more flexible ideas on caste", and the Vellalas seemed to form the top caste in the north with a monopoly on landownership and political leadership (1992: 174 and 175). The caste has hence been a major source of division. Pointing at how the issues of caste discrimination threatened to tear Jaffna society apart in the late 1960s, Pfaffenberger states that "(w)hile interviewing Untouchable laborers in the Jaffna Peninsula during the 1970s, I was shocked to hear them refer to high-caste Vellalars using the term 'Tamils' " and adds that "neither they nor the Vellalars considered themselves to be Tamils in this sense" (1994: 24 and 19).

Regional differences are also of particular significance. De Silva claims that "Sri Lankan Tamils living outside the Tamil areas of the north and east of the island generally have distinct political outlooks of their own" which differs not only from

those of the Sinhalese majority but also of the Tamils in Jaffna (1999: 9). Even in the regions which are located at the core of Tamil nationalist claims, there is no uniformity of political opinion. Pfaffenberger argues that Sri Lankan Tamils of the east were concerned that they would suffer discrimination in a state dominated by the Jaffna Tamils (1994: 7) whereas Manogaran refers to the arguments that "the Tamils of this Eastern Province were more hostile toward the Jaffna-Tamil than toward the Sinhalese because of economic and social factors" (1994: 98). Hence, as far as the regional differences are concerned, the Colombo Tamils who initially "collaborated with Sinhala political parties, such as the United National Party, [and] came to be condemned as undependable", Jaffna Tamils of the north who increasingly acquired greater influence and Batticaloa Tamils of the eastern province who had been looked down on by other Tamils and felt greater isolation (Wilson, 1994: 126-130) may be enlisted as separate groups.

Yet, it seems possible to argue that with certain differences of approach remaining constant, the Tamils have progressively become more able to act as a monolithic bloc. Hence, Wilson concludes that while "Ceylon Tamils of the Eastern Province were more concerned about developing their constituencies by participating in the governments of 1947-1956", the east "became a frontline province against Sinhala inroads from the nineteen fifties and thereafter" (1994: 133 and 136). Wilson also adds that "by the time of the general election of 1977, the Ceylon Tamils of Jaffna and Batticaloa and with them those of the Northern and Eastern Provinces had reached the stage when the question of the two identities was no longer of any political relevance" (1994: 138 and 140). Differences of caste also became of lesser relevance in time. Bose in fact reiterates that " 'the major social achievement of Tamil youth militancy is that it has been able to break the rigidities of the caste-

system' ", reminding the readers of the leadership of Prabhakaran who belonged to a low-caste community (1997: 104). Although forming the Tamil group that has been excluded from the nationalist struggle for the longest period of time, certain developments signal that greater convergence of positions with Colombo Tamils has also been achieved. In fact, Mc Gowan concludes that "(e)ven the Tamils of Colombo, who had been relatively nonsectarian, began to talk about the inevitability of separatism" (1992: 181).

It is also essential to note that support for the Tamil cause transcended the boundaries of the Sri Lankan state. The huge number of Tamils who have fled Sri Lanka formed strong constituencies for Tamil objectives in their host countries. Tamil rallies around the world have urged the governments of these host countries to extend support to the Tamil goal of separation. Many analysts argue that the LTTE's resilience might also be accounted for by the huge pool of support extended to it by Tamils across the world. Furthermore, the state of Tamil Nadu in India has also provided support for the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka.

The extent of public support for the Tigers is a crucial variable in so far as it provides a clue as to the degree of commitment of the Tamils to the Sri Lankan political community. This is particularly so considering the fact that the LTTE has consistently advocated a separate state. There seem to be widespread agreement among the analysts that the LTTE is largely endorsed by the Tamil population. Bose indeed argues that "the movement led by the LTTE is significantly more broad-based, in terms of mass participation, than earlier organisational incarnations of Tamil nationalism" (1997: 83). In order to exemplify Tamil allegiance to the LTTE, Mc Gowan stresses that "(w)hen the Tigers called for a boycott of municipal elections in 1983, claiming they were a sham, they got nearly 95 percent

compliance" and underlines that "(r)egardless of Sinhalese propaganda, Tamil civilians spoke of the Tigers as 'the boys,' the only force capable of advancing their cause after nearly a decade of state repression" (1992: 181 and 187). Rajanayagam also argues that "(t)he parallel administration which [the LTTE] created before 1987 in Jaffna was eminently successful and was clearly supported by the local population" in its formation of people's committees, people's law courts and grassroots infrastructure (1994: 182). Bose in fact claims that the LTTE has been shielded by the Tamil population and refers to the fact "(t)he Tiger army grew from 4,000 to over 10,000 fighters between 1987 and 1990, despite high casualty-rates" in underlining the growing mass appeal of the organization (1997: 95 and 172). Nevertheless, the methods the LTTE resorted to in ensuring conformity with the Tamil demand for a separate state make it difficult to determine the extent to which popular support for the organization is voluntary.

While a greater degree of unity has been achieved in bridging the gap between Colombo, eastern, and northern Tamils of different castes, the two groups that proved reluctant to follow the same path with the Sri Lankan Tamils have been the Indian Tamils and the Muslims. These two largely pursued their own agenda through efforts at greater integration in the political processes of Sri Lanka.

A rift seems to characterize the relations between the Indian and Sri Lankan Tamils. The rigidities of the caste system and the physical separation have kept the two communities apart. The working-class origins of the Indian Tamils of the tea plantations and their 'low' caste status limited their interaction with the Sri Lankan Tamils. Furthermore, De Silva claims that, due partly to the geographical segregation of the Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils, the two do not seem to possess much in common aside from language (1999: 5). In the political realm, the citizenship and

franchise issues have stood as the major topics of contention between the two communities. Even some Sri Lankan Tamil political actors were recalled as having backed the disenfranchisement of Indian Tamils by cooperating with the Sinhalese parties. In response, "representatives of those Indian Tamils who had been allowed to become Sri Lankan nationals under the settlement with India remained supporters, or part, of the UNP governments in the late 1970s and 1980s which were engaged in a civil war with some of the Sri Lankan Tamils" (Harris, 1990: 212). Indian Tamils hence traditionally chose to cooperate with the UNP and later the PA governments. The main concerns of the Sri Lankan and the Indian Tamils also display marked variety. While the former's main objective is a separate Tamil state, the latter's immediate goals have been confined to economic and franchise issues. Indian Tamil trade unions have been the major actors in the pursuit of enhanced citizenship and economic rights. Hence, the Indian Tamils "have formed their own labor union, generated their own leadership, and made their own political deals with the Sinhalese majority government" (Tambiah, 1986: 67). While a greater degree of mutual understanding has been nurtured between Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils with the efforts of Chelvanayakam, it seems possible to argue that the support extended by the latter to the former fell short of endorsing the former's commitment to a separate state. Pfaffenberger points at that "(i)n the past two years, however, [Indian Tamil leader] Thondaman has supported the demands of the [LTTE] for regional autonomy for north and east except in respect of separate statehood" (1994: 7).

Aside from the fact that they are Tamil-speakers, the Muslim community of the Moors who are mainly concentrated in the eastern province do not seem to share any common objectives with the Tamils and too often find themselves to be actually confronting the Tamil groups. This stemmed mainly from their security concerns had

Tamil aspirations for a separate state in the north and the east materialized. De Silva stresses that "devolution of power to units larger than a district or a province is perceived as threatening the interests of the smaller group -the Muslims- in areas in which a larger minority- the Tamils- seem likely to dominate the affairs of a large territorial unit, a province or a regional unit linking provinces", with the SLMC "urging the creation of a separate administrative unit in the Eastern province in which the Muslims would constitute a majority" (1999: 36). While the Tamils tried to include Muslims in their own campaign by referring to their being Tamil speakers, Muslims have resolutely opposed Tamil objectives. It is essential to note that "the Muslims have had no ethnic political parties till the establishment of the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress in the late 1980s" (De Silva, 1999: 6). They rather opted for participation through the established mainstream political parties. Through those efforts, Muslims obtained certain concessions such as the formation of Muslim schools and the recognition of personal laws of Muslims.

Tensions between the Muslims and Tamil militants due to a lack of parallel objectives seem to endure with even greater intensity. News agencies report that, in protest of their vulnerability in the face of Tamil attacks, "(a)t a mass rally [in March 2002], similar to the Tamil cultural rallies, Muslims demanded recognition of their separate identity, culture and religious values and a fair share in the envisaged devolution of power" (Daily Mirror, March 29, 2002: 1).

Initiatives in Conflict Management:

A two-fold problem characterizes the drawing up of conflict management initiatives and their implementation in the case of Sri Lanka:

- Political calculations have motivated various governments to come up with discriminatory political, social, cultural, and economic mechanisms,

- Yet, even when innovative policy suggestions have been generated, coalitions to support these suggestions could not be mustered.

It hence seems possible to argue that while various mechanisms introduced clearly favored one group over the others, schemes that could possibly correct these injustices have always confronted broad opposition. While, for instance, previously ethnic outbidding between the UNP and the SLFP blocked such initiatives, many years later it is the rejection of the JVP or the eagerness of the UNP to push through its own suggestions that seemed to have become hurdles.

The Institutionalization of Sinhalese Domination:

The Colebrooke-Cameron reforms of 1829 defined the Sri Lankan state as a unitary state which was in conformity with the British objective of diminishing the power of the Kandyan chieftains" (Rajagopalan, 2000: 205). Sri Lanka inherited a highly centralized political system upon independence. This status has insistently been guarded throughout the Sri Lankan political history.

One of the first deeds of the Senanayake government upon independence was the passing of the Citizenship Act of 1948 as well as the Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act of 1949. These acts "disenfranchised and rendered stateless the entire 'Indian Tamil' population of the plantations, who were estimated to number in excess of one million at that time" (Bose, 1997: 53). The bulk of the Indian Tamils were thus denied citizenship rights. (13) With the Parliamentary

Elections (Amendment) Act of 1949, electoral franchise had also been denied to the Indian Tamils.

As regards language policies which also exerted an immense impact on educational and employment prospects, what is termed as the Sinhala Only Act has become highly contentious. In 1956, the Bill proposing the recognition of Sinhala as the sole official language of Sri Lanka was passed with 56 affirmative votes as opposed to 29 rejections. However, the Sinhala-Only Act was never fully implemented. The parity of status between Sinhala and Tamil languages evolved in time to be finally settled by the end of 1980s. It was with the Thirteenth Amendment of 1987 that Tamil received equality of status with Sinhala as an official language (Dharmadasa, 1992: 318). Nissan argues that "despite the efforts of the Official Languages Commission, government language policies have often not been implemented" and the Tamil-speakers still experience difficulties in dealing with the state and in commercial and business life outside the northeast (1998: 4).

In the socio-economic realm, the state-sponsored agricultural schemes settling thousands of Sinhalese peasants mainly in the eastern province has received a significant degree of criticism. These schemes have been perceived as aiming at the reduction of Tamil strength in the east which obviously was less of a Tamil stronghold in comparison to the north. While the government attempted to justify its policy of settling Sinhalese peasants in the north-east province "as a means of increasing food production and relieving population pressure in overcrowded regions in the Wet Zone", "Tamil leaders claim that the location of colonization schemes and the method of selecting allottees to these schemes have been contrived by the government to alter the ethnic composition of Tamil-majority districts" (Manogaran, 1994: 84-85). Manogaran indeed emphasizes that "the Sinhalese population in the

Eastern Province, as a whole, increased by 435 % while the Tamil population increased by a mere 145%" whereas in the northern province, "Sinhalese population increased by 137 %, while the Tamil population increased by only 92 %" between 1953 and 1981 (1994: 102). A formula was finally agreed on by the government and Tamil politicians in 1984 which stated that "state-owned land on major irrigation schemes would be distributed on a quota which reflected accurately the population profile of the island, with the Sinhalese getting 74 % and the Tamils, Muslims and Indians 12 %, 6.7% and 5% respectively" (De Silva, 1999: 26).

The pursuit by the Tamils of equal opportunities in admissions to universities through a standardized acceptance policy based on the merits of the applicants rather than quotas also proved to be a controversial topic. The fact that "in science education students from Sinhalese rural areas could not compete on equal terms with students from urban areas, especially those from Jaffna" led to the formulation of an official policy "whereby the average Tamil student would have to score substantially higher marks than the average Sinhalese student in qualifying entrance examinations in order to gain admission to university medicine and engineering courses" (Bose, 1997: 69). When this policy failed to provide the intended outcome, a new policy was introduced whereby the number of students to be admitted was linked to the proportion of a district to the total population with the sharpest consequence of an immense decline in Tamil students entering the universities (Bose, 1997: 70). Mc Gowan underlines that "(i)n 1970, Tamils accounted for 40 percent of all engineering and medical students, but by 1975, when the effects of affirmative action in favor of Sinhalese could be seen, their ranks had dwindled to 17 and 14 percent, respectively" (1992: 170). Finally, in early 1980s a policy mixing merit and district quotas was adopted.

Apart from these discriminatory practices, the lack of political will to proceed with the implementation of the formulated policies has surfaced as another major barrier to the management of the conflict. The most concrete examples of the reluctance of the political leaders to confront opposition in the pursuit of conflict management relate to the way in which the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact (B-C Pact) and Senanayake-Chelvanayakam Pact (S-C Pact) have been watered down. Bandaranaike's efforts upon being elected were directed at reaching an accommodation with the Tamils. The B-C Pact was concluded in 1957 as a result of negotiations with the FP leadership. The pact envisaged devolution to regional councils and decentralization for the north and the east. The 1956 pact specified the formation of regional councils with the north forming one province and the east being composed of more than one province. Devolution of powers to regional bodies in matters such as agriculture, irrigation, education, health, industries, roads, fisheries, housing, electricity, and social services was also envisaged. Taxation, borrowing, and allocation from the center were to constitute the major sources of finance for the regional authorities. Tamil was to be used as an official language including the conduct of administrative affairs in the north and the east. Yet, the B-C Pact was abrogated in 1958. Bandaranaike was compelled to abrogate the pact upon protests and in 1959 he was assassinated by a Buddhist monk who protested the compromises reached with the Tamils. Bose argues that "the pact had fallen prey to the very forces that Bandaranaike had himself unleashed and exploited in order to capture state power" as the UNP was now able to manipulate the pact in order to attract the Sinhalese voters (1997: 90).

There was another attempt in 1965 to arrive at a negotiated solution to the conflict. The S-C Pact was concluded between the UNP Prime Minister Senanayake

and Chelvanayakam. The formation of district councils in Tamil areas which would entail a degree of devolution was specified in the agreement. The pact also included proposals for the use of Tamil language in administrative affairs as was the case in the 1956 pact. As regards the settlement of Sinhalese population in Tamil areas by state-sponsored schemes, the agreement stated that lands in the northern and eastern provinces be granted firstly to the landless in the two, then to Tamil-speaking residents of the two provinces, and finally to other citizens of the island with a preference for the Tamil residents. The implementation of this pact also failed due to circumstances similar to those that surrounded the B-C Pact. The SLFP's uncompromising stance urged the UNP to withdraw the bill rather than confront a full-fledged SLFP attack on its Sinhalese credentials.

The failure of the pacts was followed by a period in which policies of a highly discriminatory nature were introduced. The new constitution drawn up by the SLFP government in 1972 was in fact a clear manifestation of that trend. In Bose's opinion "(t)his constitution, which replaced the Soulbury Constitution which had been in operation since 1947, practically amounted to a charter of Sinhalese-Buddhist supremacy" by granting recognition to Buddhism as the de facto state religion, reaffirming the pre-eminence of Sinhala language in all aspects of public life, and dismissing whatever formal safeguards for minorities were attempted in Soulbury Constitution including those on issues of higher education and state employment (1997: 68).

The Jayewardene period is of particular importance due to the undertaking of various reforms and initiatives. In 1978, two major institutional changes were introduced: the installation of a proportional representation (PR) system was accompanied by the introduction of a semi-presidential system modeled along the

French example. In Bose's opinion, the PR and the semi-presidential systems both "failed entirely to fulfill their central purpose of exercising a mitigating effect on the mushrooming Sinhalese-Tamil polarisation and violence" (1997: 76). As a Tamil scholar and one of the main architects of the 1978 constitution, Professor Wilson "states that originally there were high expectations that the Executive President would function as an 'impartial arbiter', relatively autonomous from the everyday political affray, and thus act as a defuser of ethnic tensions" (Bullion, 1995: 27). Yet, in practice, the holders of the presidential post were too often haunted by partisan concerns. In fact, this new form of legislative-executive relations basically increased the UNP's hold over power and led to greater centralization. These developments enhanced the SLFP's commitment to restoring the parliamentary system which was later upheld by the PA.

During Jayawardene's rule, the promotion of Tamil to the status of official language was undertaken although Sinhala was to retain its status as the official language in administrative affairs. Indirect talks were also conducted between President Jayewardene and the TULF based on the specific proposals over district development councils. The proposal for a referendum in the east on the merger with the north was indeed aired by Jayawardene. Harris argues that "(t)he referendum qualification to the merger proposal robbed it of any value, for two-thirds of the population of the east was non-Tamil and expected to vote firmly against rule by the Tamils of the north" (1990: 219).

The 1987 peace accord entailed the formation of provincial councils (PCs) and envisaged elections for a northeastern provincial council with a proposed plebiscite to be held in the eastern province after a year. The vote would be on whether the two provinces should be permanently merged. Tamil was to be

recognized as an official language, and Indian troops were to be stationed in the troubled parts of the north and east. Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was to be stationed in Sri Lanka to preside over the handing over of weapons and the cessation of hostilities.

Yet, the Thirteenth Amendment which aimed to implement the details of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord was perceived to be diluting the provisions of the latter. Rajanayagam points at the arguments that "the Thirteenth Amendment subverted and canceled the implementation of real autonomy by placing, in an appendix, wide-ranging powers to the President over the PCs" and argues with regard to the matters such as finance, legislative powers, land distribution, law, and order that "certain provisions in the Thirteenth Amendment practically takes away everything that was granted to the Tamils under the terms of the Accord" (1994: 194 and 197).

The unit of devolution has always been a highly contentious topic in Sri Lankan politics. In fact, Rajagopalan points at the failure to reach an agreement on whether the district or another level of government should be the main unit and whether the unitary nature of the state would be affected by the outcome (2000: 208). Debates over administrative decentralization are not indeed of recent origin. De Silva stresses that proposals for district councils were aired in the national legislature by the late 1930s (1999: 28). In fact, the Kandyan representatives called for a federal state structure whereas it was in 1925 that S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike put forward schemes for a federal government. Following the failure to implement the provincial councils scheme in the 1940s in spite of the parliamentary approval, proposals for provincial level councils were later waged in 1957 to be followed by those for district level councils in 1968.

The District Development Councils Act of 1980 was succeeded by the Provincial Councils Act of 1987. The establishment of district development councils (DDCs) across Sri Lanka with the intention of transferring powers to the local level could not halt greater centralization. The opposition and the suspicion of the Sinhalese political actors indeed remained intact. Nissan argues that "(o)nce the DDCs were elected, however, they found themselves insufficiently funded, inadequately empowered, and subject to central government interference" (1998: 8). The scheme for Provincial Councils, on the other hand, was agreed upon by the UNP government and the TULF. It was to be implemented by the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord and the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Confronted by a period of initial opposition to the scheme, the Councils started accumulating greater powers and resources through transfers by the government. Yet, it is yet essential to add that, certain powers and resources were denied to the provincial councils at the stage of implementation. This fact curtailed the ability of the councils to exert serious impact. In Edrisinha's opinion, "(p)erhaps the greatest obstacle to practical devolution was the first phrase of the Reserved List which provided for 'National Policy on all Subjects and Functions' to be determined by the Parliament" as "(s)ince the inauguration of the 13th amendment, Parliament has used this rubric often to encroach into the provincial sphere" (1998: 2). Edrisinha also lists the problems with the Thirteenth Amendment and the Provincial Councils Act: "(t)he exact division of power between the centre and the provinces is not made clear; (t)he powers of the provincial councils can be controlled, reduced or abolished by the central government acting unilaterally; (t)here is no subject over which a provincial council can claim to exercise exclusive competence or jurisdiction" (1998: 2). Similarly, Bose argues that the referendum contingency of the north-east merger, immense

authorities left with the central government, central control over the flow of finances to the provincial councils, and the veto right granted to the provincial governor stood as the major flaws of the accord if it was to present a meaningful attempt at devolution (1997: 155).

Negotiations and the War: A Dual Strategy

Carrying on with the negotiations despite the massive opposition remains to be the most serious challenge for the Sri Lankan governments. The first difficulty relates to the bridging of the gap between the government and the LTTE positions whereas a second complication pertains to the need to form a constituency that extends support to the government efforts. Differences of approach dominate the talks between the government and the LTTE. Samuel, for instance, points at how "(t)he government wanted to negotiate simultaneously guidelines for a formal ceasefire, a programme of reconstruction and rehabilitation for the war-ravaged north and east and a political package to solve the ethnic conflict" whereas "(t)he LTTE, meanwhile, required a step-by-step process which included a formal ceasefire and the 'normalisation' of civilian life in the north and east before political negotiations could commence" (1998: 2).

Negotiations which were embarked on in 1994 by the government and the LTTE broke down in 1995. Kellas indeed argues that the devolution proposals from 1981 to 1995 have been attacked by Sinhalese militants and the Tamil Tigers alike as the 1995 proposals for merger of two Tamil provinces were rejected by the LTTE, Sinhalese nationalists and the Buddhist clergy simultaneously (1998: 159-160). From then on, the president's approach has shifted to one of completely defeating the LTTE. A full-fledged attack on Jaffna was launched with the aim of re-imposing government control there. From 1995 on and outside the framework of the failed

negotiations, the government came up with proposals for regional autonomy which involved the transfer of powers to the regional councils. In that context, the PA government published three draft proposals for devolution. The PA's 1995 devolution proposals were actually envisaging a Union of Regions. It is usually argued that the 1995 proposals were more progressive than the draft constitution which indeed aimed to dilute their impact.

Despite the fact that the 1995 proposals were perceived to be far-reaching in their addressing the Tamil discontent, opposition to them by the Sinhalese political actors and the narrow majority of the government led to the modification of the draft. Although greater revenue raising powers were granted to the regional councils and a clear demarcation of the role of the provincial governors appointed by the president was attempted in the legal draft of 1996, Edrisinha claims that "(p)erhaps the most regressive feature of the legal draft, however, was that it fortified Sinhala Buddhist majoritarianism" by proposing the establishment of a Supreme Council intended to voice Buddhist clergy interests in policy-making (1998: 7). In the draft constitution of 1997, the Supreme Council was retained with lower powers and the president's power of dissolving regional councils was subjected to the adjudication of a tribunal. The regions were also granted the right to veto certain constitutional amendments. Furthermore, the draft constitution of 1997 proposed by the government suggested that "the mixed-ethnicity Trincomalee and Tamil-majority Batticaloa districts of eastern Sri Lanka would decide by public referendum whether they wished to remain merged with the districts of the north" and "(i)f they decided yes, the mixed-ethnicity 'muslim homeland' of southeastern Ampara district would separate from the eastern province and decide by a further referendum whether it would become an

autonomous region or else merge with the Sinhala-majority Uva Province" (Samuel, 1998: 7).

Building up support for the negotiations was another integral part of the PA's strategy. In its efforts at reaching a settlement, the PA government also initiated the campaigns of Sudu Nellum (White Lotus) Movement which entailed district seminars, discussions, meetings, and workshops in drawing up government proposals and Sama Thavalama (Caravan for Peace) which carried the message that Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society through street theatre, floats, posters and photographic exhibitions (Samuel, 1998: 5). Samuel concludes that these campaigns basically aimed at forming a peace constituency in the south and yet, "(b)y 1998, in the context of the stalemated political package and the continued war effort, both campaigns appeared spent and ineffectual" (1998: 5).

Securing consensus on any of these texts proved to be troublesome. The UNP as the main opposition party then preferred to come up with its own scheme rather than support the draft. Edrisinha concludes that "(t)heir proposals released to date, however, contain only marginal improvements on the existing constitutional arrangements" (1998: 9). The UNP was the critical actor in that its support was essential to obtaining the two-thirds majority for the approval of the drafts. The UNP retains its position even today, this time as the governing party entrusted with the task of conducting peace negotiations since the ceasefire on February 23, 2002. Currently, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe insists that any agreement would only be implemented following its approval in a countrywide referendum (Parameswaran, 2002: 1). The President also extended support to negotiations by calling on the government and the LTTE to make use of the months without bloodshed and to start direct talks for a permanent solution (Karunaratne and Rodrigo, 2002: 1). Yet, the

PA and the UNP are not the only actors whose positions need to be accommodated. To cite one example, the TULF rejected proposals agreed upon by the government and the UNP in 2000 arguing that they basically entailed a unitary state and did not include any new offer to the LTTE. As far as the current situation is concerned, the LTTE revealed in November 2003 a response to the government proposal on an Interim Administration for the north and the east upon which the resumption of peace talks was expected. The proposal is believed to entail a Provincial Administrative Council with a wide range of powers whose majority of members will be nominated by the Tigers. It is also essential to add that several extensive development projects were also launched by the government during peace negotiations.

Amidst the discussions over political initiatives, the Sri Lankan governments also continued the war against Tamil separatism. It is hence possible to argue that the military component of conflict management was carried on unabated. As was stated in the section on 'violence potential', the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) of 1979 was one of the major tools of the military strategy. One of the most important aspects of the PTA was that it "defines 'unlawful acts' as speaking or writing words intended 'to cause religious, social or communal disharmony, or feelings of ill will or hostility between communities or racial or religious groups" (Morrison, 2001: 184). Particularly striking for Morrison was how these provisions were later manipulated by the security forces and how they "were put in place before the outbreak of systematic violence by the groups promoting Tamil Eelam- an independent Tamil state- in 1983" (2001: 184).

Hence, Sri Lankan governments have recently adopted a dual strategy of pursuing reforms while containing armed conflict. In Liyanage's opinion, reflecting the popular dichotomy based on suspicion of the division of the country, "Sinhala

politicians in the south now argue about the appropriate degree of devolution while, in the north and east, the military execute war on the LTTE with ever-increasing vigour" (1998: 4). Samuel terms this strategy followed by Kumaratunga as 'war for peace', denoting the president's conviction that "a political solution was necessary to redress the grievances of Sri Lanka's minorities" while "the LTTE had to be weakened militarily and dislodged from its stronghold in Jaffna" (1998: 3). Restrictions were placed on the Tiger activity. The LTTE was indeed banned again in the wake of the Temple bombing of 1998.

The military initiative does not seem to have completely succeeded either with the Tamil militants functioning as a de facto state authority especially in the Jaffna peninsula. The government forces thus so far failed in their efforts at defeating the Tigers. The enduring violence is likely to make the conflict particularly intractable. Bose indeed quotes that "a [purely] military solution to the conflict is unlikely to succeed" as the LTTE "are too organized and have far too much grassroots support to be wiped out" and adds that "the militant Tamils cannot win this war either" (1997: 188).

Allocating the Scarce Resources:

The tragedy caused by the conflict in Sri Lanka is well exemplified by the fact that "(a)t the time it became independent, Sri Lanka's standard of living was the highest in South Asia- as it still is- and was ahead of most of Southeast and East Asia with the exception of Japan and Malaya-Singapore" (De Silva, 1997: 104). Yet, the failure of the economy to grow gradually became the most pressing problem. The conflict seems to have consumed the dynamism of the Sri Lankan economy and the resources on which it was based.

It was in growing income disparities and rising unemployment that these economic problems were reflected in the lives of the ordinary people. Tambiah lists the unevenness of economic development and pauperization of lower income groups as a major dislocation leading to violence (1986: 34). Every community seemed to fabricate a list of possible explanations for this hardship. While the Sinhalese came to believe that superior opportunities enjoyed by the Tamils aggravated the difficulties they faced, the Tamils were convinced that the discriminatory policies of the governments left them no chance but to develop a plan for separate survival. In the inauguration of his party in 1949, Chelvanayakam indeed stressed that "proper and just development of these [Tamil] areas cannot be expected except under a government of the Tamil speaking people" (Wilson, 1994: 135). Yet, official reports rejected the ethnic basis of economic inequalities. The report by the Committee for Rational Development indeed recognized that "disparities exist within each ethnic group- disparities which are far greater than those which exist between ethnic communities" (Tambiah, 1986: 148).

The provision of job opportunities proved to be a major realm where the government failed to take the initiative. Such initiatives were essential considering the fact that the commitment by the Tamil militants to a more just and egalitarian society seemed to have empowered them by expanding their base of support. Promises of social transformation could easily find their way into the hearts and the minds of the Tamils. In fact, "(t)he economic resources of the Northern province are severely limited and as early as the last quarter of the 19th century it was evident that the increasing population of the region could not be accommodated in the traditional occupations based on land" which accounts for why the Tamils sought employment mainly in state sector (De Silva, 1999: 20).

Crucial to the course of the conflict was the fact that "(i)n the 30 years from the mid-1940s, successive governments took measures to reduce the disproportionate number of Tamils in the professions and the public sector" (Wilson and Chandrakanthan, 1998: 2). Unemployment thus surfaced as the major problem with a broad reach. Even the Sinhalese population was confronted by the same risk due to the low level of economic growth. The emergence of the JVP surfaced as a clear manifestation. (14) Yet, the precarious nature of the situation has deteriorated due to the way in which the various communities came to regard the expansion of economic opportunities as a zero-sum game. In fact, every measure aimed at correcting the imbalances faced the prospect of producing other sources of grievance. Hettige, for instance, points at how "(s)ome of the steps taken by the then government to pacify the upwardly mobile, restless rural Sinhalese youth, such as the standardisation of university admissions, further aggrieved the Tamil youth in the North" (2000: 4).

Economic problems that have fuelled the conflict have in turn been aggravated by the conflict. Pradhan in fact lists the direct economic costs of the conflict as budgetary commitments for military expenditures, infrastructure losses, and pension payments, and enumerates the indirect costs as lower domestic and foreign investments, disruptions in trade and commerce, lower revenues from tourism, and adverse impact on health such as insanitary living conditions in refugee camps, widespread injuries, diseases as well as malnutrition (2001: 4-5 and 6). The diversion of resources into the defense budget has become an evident manifestation of the burden imposed by the conflict. Harris points at how "(b)etween 1978 and 1987, defence spending increased fifteen times over" (1990: 216). Destruction of property and disruption of economic activity has been another major casualty of the conflict. Following the 1983 riots, for instance, The Guardian is quoted to have

stated that "aside from Tamil homes, there was systematic destruction of shops and commercial and industrial establishments, many of which employed Sinhalese labor, and which were an essential arm of the UNP government's policy of economic development" (Tambiah, 1986: 22). The north was particularly ravaged by the conflict as most of the fighting took place in that region. Pradhan stresses that the size of the economy in the north of Sri Lanka "shrank from $ 350 million to $ 250 million between 1990 and 1995, representing a negative annual average growth of 6.2% per year" as the national economy grew at about 5.5 % in the same period (2001: 2).

Failure of the government to remedy the unemployment problem, to provide for economic growth while carrying on the fight against militant groups of various persuasion, and to alleviate the conditions in the north and the east (15) have indeed produced adverse effects on the course of the conflict. Analysts even argue that "(i)n the south, as in the north and east, support for peace rests in part on a potential economic dividend" and underline that trouble lies ahead if the economy fails to pick up (The Economist, February 1, 2003: 51).

Conclusion: Democratic Consolidation at Risk?

Various developments that weakened the prospects for democratic consolidation have taken place with increasing frequency since independence in the case of Sri Lanka. The fact that the tenure of the UNP government was prolonged for six more years by reference to the state of emergency and through a simple majority in the referendum, the preoccupation of the Jayewardene period with weakening political opposition through acts such as the suspension of Sirimavo Bandaranaike's right of running for office and the initiation of legal proceedings against numerous SLFP members, the increasing centralization of power in the hands of the president and his party through different periods, the holding of elections in an environment of violence and intimidation and amidst increasing charges of fraud and misconduct in the electoral process as was the case in October 2000 and December 2001 elections, and restrictions on civil liberties and human rights through martial law or curfews imposed to halt separatism all seem to stand as evidences. (16) While the formal mechanisms of democratic politics are still retained, a drop in the quality of democratic performance of the Sri Lankan political system can be taken as a fact.

The major factors that come to the forefront in an analysis of prospects for democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict in the Sri Lankan case may be listed as follows:

- a multitude of actors have been locked in violent conflict which also assumed communal characteristics and resulted in high casualties,

- a high degree of polarization characterized the relations between different communities with the organizations representing these communities enjoying unparallel access to policy-making processes,

- the political parties are mainly organized along communal lines with each appealing to a defined constituency and ethnic outbidding leading to the marginalization of moderate political actors,

- discriminatory practices as well as the lack of political will to secure consent on schemes for managing the conflict have led to a context where political initiatives have been hard to agree on, economic and social initiatives have not been forthcoming, and cultural initiatives have assumed an exclusionary character.

It is hence possible to argue that Sri Lanka's performance with respect to the outlined variables seems to place it at a disadvantageous position in coping with the conflict. It is then plausible to claim that an improvement has to be affected in a number of these key variables for the odds of democratic consolidation to be enhanced. The cessation of violence, responsible attitudes from the political parties such as discarding ethnic outbidding, willingness on the part of the public to make a commitment to a multiethnic society and to the renunciation of violence or the development of an integrated strategy to accompany the military component of conflict management strategy may all be alternative ways of bolstering the prospects for democratic consolidation. It is from this perspective that the current ceasefire and the negotiations for a settlement need to be carefully monitored.

Nevertheless, the Sri Lankan case also testifies to the intractable nature of such conflicts in a variety of ways. The difficulty of mustering cross-party and public support for conflict management initiatives remains to be an enduring aspect of Sri Lankan politics. Marked differences between the UNP and the presidential strategy for negotiations have already initiated a controversy. Deliberations on the most explosive issues are delayed for the time being as mutual suspicions still run high. The Norwegian-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission reports which reveal that

recruitment activities are still undertaken by the LTTE while disarmament issues are far from being settled cause concerns among the Sinhalese political actors. Yet, it is particularly significant that both of the parties express commitment to negotiations. The chief negotiator for the LTTE in Thailand talks is quoted to have stated that the Tigers were seeking regional autonomy whereas the government declared explicitly that it was ready to negotiate any proposals except for the ones centering on independence (The Economist, September 21, 2002: 58). In this process, other grievances also need to be accommodated. The Muslim-Tamil conflict has assumed disturbing proportions with the SLMC threatening to counter Tamil violence and advocating the creation of a separate administrative unit for the Muslims in the east to avoid Tamil domination in the case of greater devolution.

TABLE 5:

Actors and Attitudes Affecting Conflict Management in the Sri Lankan Case

The Actors	Attitudes Displayed
Political parties	- Major Sinhalese parties do not perceive a stake in extensively organizing in the Tamil-dominated regions, - Ethnic outbidding has been particularly set in by the establishment of the SLFP which intended to challenge the 'elitist' base of the UNP. Elections have been transformed by the mainstream parties into a single-issue contest on the promotion of Sinhalese nationalism. Even the parties of the left proved no more compromising on Sinhalese interests, - The relevance of the Sri Lankan Tamil parties is minimal with no channels for them to exert coalition or blackmail potential, - Pluralism within the Tamil nationalist camp has been exterminated by the LTTE, - Radicalism triumphed in both of the camps. Failure to obtain the desired concessions substantially lowered support for the TULF which was increasingly condemned as a pliant actor.
Convergence among the political elite and in the party system	- Conflict rather than convergence characterizes the party attitudes on the proper unit for devolution, the rejection of violence, and the negotiations and the pacts concluded with the Sri Lankan Tamils, - The only convergence between the mainstream parties has been on allowing the Buddhist organizations to exert a disproportionate influence over the political process, - The recent integration of the former militant groups in the political process seems to be a promising sign. Provincial councils have provided the main channels for the incorporation of these groups, - In a rare incident of cooperation, and only recently, have various parties gathered under the banner of the PA and obtained SLMC support for a campaign for peace.
The public	- Exclusive identities have been formulated based on ethnic origin, religious commitment, language, regional identity and a defined mission, - While the public has traditionally condoned ethnic outbidding, the recent shift towards greater endorsement of negotiations as is evidenced by the upsurge in support for Kumaratunga may be transformed into an asset for conflict management, - Differences revolving around caste, class or region have been reduced to lesser significance by the increasing dominance of the Jaffna-Tamils, - Deep polarization with the formation of a dense network of parallel organizations, - Unequal access for various organizations enabled the Buddhist and Sinhalese organizations to make significant inroads into the policy-making process, - The public is entrapped in the spiral of violence with communal clashes surfacing as major manifestations of the conflict, - Attempts at the creation of a constituency for peace are still underway.

NOTES:

(1) Manogaran indeed attributes high significance to the Pali chronicles as "the only source on which the pre-modern history of the island is based" (1994: 86).

(2) Mc Gowan also adds that "(a)ccording to Tamils, they were the chosen people of South Asia, the heirs of an old and ancient civilization that had its roots in the mythical Dravidian civilizations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa" as the Tamils believe that "(o)nce they dominated most of the Indian subcontinent" and still held superiority in terms of language, culture, religion over the other people of the subcontinent (1992: 172-173). Similarly, Rajanayagam confirms that of the three Tamil kingdoms that existed, it was Cholas that stood for the capture of all Sri Lanka and the flourishing of Tamil culture, language and Hinduism (1994: 173) in which the Tamils took extreme pride.

(3) Yet, Tambiah argues that "Sinhalese chauvinists have always exaggerated the level of Tamil participation and their 'privileged' position" and adds that "Sinhalese employment in the public sector and Sinhalese participation in higher education have now become greater than their population size would ordinarily warrant" (1986: 78). Tambiah also presents the Report of the Committee for Rational Development prepared in 1983 in Appendix 3 which presents figures on employment in state sector, unemployment levels, income levels, educational attainment and government spending (1986: 147-165) to back up his argument that popular perceptions as to the overrepresentation of the Tamils are not mostly sustained by the objective figures.

(4) The group calls itself 'Tigers' basically because tiger was a part of "the royal emblem of the Chola kings under whom Tamil language, Hinduism, Tamil culture, and the vast Tamil kingdom flourished" which leads Rajanayagam to conclude that

"the true power base of the LTTE is not Marxist ideology, but the ancient glory of a people and a race" (1994: 173).

(5) Prabakaran also preaches a lifestyle to the people he claims to be fighting for. Rajanayagam for instance states that he "is married, with two children, fiercely faithful, practicing and exacting strict discipline by shunning alcohol, tobacco, and forbidding his men and women from having extra- or pre-marital affairs" (1994: 172).

(6) The only group tolerated by the LTTE has been the EROS based on the fact that it "furnishes the LTTE with the much needed know-how on the use of the latest technology of devices and explosives with which to confront its enemies" and has acted as a mediator between the LTTE and the other groups (Rajanayagam, 1994: 172 and 176).

(7) Bose refers to an Indian diplomat's statements that "it was no accident that RAW [India's external intelligence agency] chose TELO which was politically unsophisticated and had a large criminal element" to extend its support (1997: 141).

(8) Bose states that the Prevention of Terrorism Act "together with an even more infamous amendment known as Regulation 15(A), passed in 1983, effectively legalised the following: 'terrorist' suspects could be held for upto 18 months without trial; any premises could be searched at any time without a warrant; confessions obtained during 'interrogation' (an euphemism, in Sri Lanka, for torture) would be admissible as legal evidence; and 'security forces' were empowered to dispose of any corpse in their possession without an autopsy, inquest or other form of enquiry into the cause of death" (1997: 74-75).

(9) The Sri Lankan government is believed to have supported the LTTE's battle against the IPKF with transfers of money and arms (see Edrisinha, 1998).

(10) Horowitz, for instance, states that "(u)nder first-past-the-post elections, if Sinhalese compromise 70-95 per cent of the voters, as they did in a large number of constituencies, and the two main Sinhalese parties compete for these votes, there is hardly any restraint on anti-Tamil positions that can be taken" as "(t)he 1-2 per cent of Tamil votes in such constituencies can offer nothing to the party that is more moderate on ethnic issues" (Bose, 1997: 64).

(11) To examine how DeVotta presents a detailed analysis of how the parties took one position in discourse only to depart from it in the policies they pursued, see (2002, 86-88). In pointing at what he regards to be 'a type of outbidding tactic that both parties thereafter resorted to eagerly', DeVotta reveals how in 1960 the SLFP "intimated that it would accommodate the Tamils' grievances once in power, and the FP encouraged Tamils outside the northeast to vote for the SLFP in the July election" in response to which "(t)he UNP retaliated by charging that the SLFP and FP had made a secret deal to partition the country" (2002: 88). Prior to the 2001 elections, it was this time PA's turn to claim that "the UNP had cut a secret deal with the LTTE to dismember the country" (DeVotta, 2002: 95).

(12) The major trend identified by Morrison is that "(t)here has been a proliferation of nongovernmental voluntary organizations, which now eclipse in numbers the government-sponsored local organizations" as evidenced by the newspaper reports that there were over 5,000 registered non-governmental organizations of all types (2001: 196).

(13) In the figures presented by Harris, "(t)wo subsequent agreements with India on the issue resulted finally in 600,000 being expelled and 400,000 or so being recognized as Sri Lankan" (1990: 212).

(14) In accounting for the grievances of such anti-systemic movements, Hettige states that "(t)hese politically conscious youth, most of whom were monolingual, having received their education in Swabasha, subscribed to the theory that the adoption of Sinhalese as the official language had not dislodged the Westernised elite from their privileged position and that the latter continued to dominate national politics, the business world and the higher echelons of bureaucracy" (2000: 4).

(15) It is claimed that "(t)he government refused to allocate certain scarce resources to Tamil areas and sometimes even shelved internationally sponsored development projects in these regions" during the period of Bandaranaike rule in 1960-65 and 1970-77 (DeVotta, 2002: 89).

(16) De Votta presents a detailed account of the declining performance of democratic mechanisms in Sri Lanka. For the October 2000 elections, De Votta states that "(a)lthough the elections commissioner himself acknowledged that the elections were not free and fair, he still noted that 'the allegations of vote-rigging have to be seen in the context of electoral systems in the developing world in general and the subcontinent in particular" (2002: 93). DeVotta further claims that "(e)lections held under the Kumaratunga regime have been terribly flawed; the legal system, which was severely compromised under Jayewardene, has been further politicized; and the freedoms of expression and assembly have been opportunistically curtailed" (2002: 96).

The Nigerian Case: Failure to Establish a Stable Democratic System

The continuous alternation of civilian and military rule in Nigeria reveals that although the country has attempted to restore democratic political mechanisms various times, the problems in the operation of these mechanisms have led to intervals. It is the objective of this study to analyze the role of ethnic, religious, and regional conflicts in accounting for how democracy failed to take root in the Nigerian case. It is thus essential to note that the overlapping ethnic, religious and regional enmities have hampered the efforts at the formation of a sustainable democratic political system. These conflicts have rather contributed to the reversals experienced by democratic regimes in direct or indirect ways. The recent revival of democracy is also confronted by the challenge of survival in a context of intensified violence as well as intense religious and ethnic polarization.

The Setting:

Nigerian Experience With Democracy: Trials and Disruptions

From their inception on, democratic mechanisms encountered various challenges in their operation in the case of Nigeria. Diamond indeed argues that upon independence, Nigeria "was a semi-democracy struggling to establish fully democratic government" (1995: 424). A major challenge was exerted by the dominance of ethnic discourses in the conduct of politics.

Ethnic clashes may indeed be highlighted as a direct cause for the collapse of the First Republic. There seems to be widespread agreement among the analysts on the primacy that should be accorded to ethnic tensions in accounting for the collapse of the First Republic. While Ohaegbulam argues that "(r)ivalries among the major ethnic groups- first between the Igbo and Yoruba, and later between these two ethnic groups and the Hausa-Fulani - over the distribution of power and national resources

were a major cause of political instability and breakdown of the civilian administration of the First Federal Republic of Nigeria in January 1966" (2000: 423-424), Agbaje similarly claims that the demise of the First Republic in 1966 "was largely made possible by inter- and intra-party rivalries which spilled over into ethnic and regional clashes" (1997: 372). The coup that ended the First Republic was also regarded as a sectional enterprise in that while the leaders of the 1966 coup as well as the leader it placed at the top of the new military government were Igbos from the east, this was perceived by other groups and particularly the northerners as an attempt to impose domination of one group over the others. A similar yet unsuccessful attempt was also made with sectional concerns years later. It was in 1990 that a group of Christian military officers from the south attempted to ousted Babangida and excise five Muslim states from the Nigerian federation. Suberu indeed points at their declared mission to liberate the 'marginalized, oppressed and enslaved people of the Middle-Belt and the South' from the 'feudalistic and autocratic domination' of the far North" (1997(a): 409).

Ethnic and regional conflicts did indeed threaten Nigeria's existence as a unified state from the early years of its independence on. Nigeria already experienced a secessionist war in the Biafra region as the dismantling of the four-region structure for a 12-state one on May 28, 1967 was followed by the declaration of the eastern region as an independent state on May 30, 1967. The creation of 12 states meant that the east was being divided into three states. Furthermore, as the governor and military commander of the Eastern Region refused to recognize the authority of the Gowon regime which toppled the Christian-dominated group that came to power as a result of the coup, the stage was set for a secessionist conflict. Gowon was himself a member of a Christian minority ethnic group from the north. The government forces

were able to defeat the secessionists by 1970. The brutality with which the war was waged resulted in many casualties and the fleeing of the Igbo in different parts of Nigeria to their homeland in the east in search for security. The legacy of this conflict was greater and enduring polarization among the major ethnic groups.

More recently, another event came to be perceived as the manifestation of the direct impact of ethnic and regional polarization on democratic processes. The Babangida administration annulled the results of the 1993 elections in which only the parties created by this administration contested upon the suspicion that the Yoruba candidate Abiola's neared victory with a 58.5 percent majority of the votes counted. While the annulment was based on allegations of electoral rigging, it was regarded by the southerners as an indication that a southerner would not ever be allowed to rule the country. The event resulted in a new round of clash of identities with widespread protests being staged all across Nigeria.

The operation of democracy has also been affected by the conflict between the groups in less direct ways. Mutual suspicions, charges of fraud waged by groups against each other and violence accompanying every election contributed to the failure to establish democratic stability. Political thuggery, communal riots, and massive electoral fraud mainly functioned to destabilize the operation of democratic mechanisms.

In such a context, civilian politics has been difficult to sustain with periods of military rule succeeding. Military leaders all declared their commitment to a timetable for transition to democracy. Yet, they mostly declined from supporting a quick transition and further centralized power in their hands for extensive periods of time. Babangida who initially was perceived to have made the highest level of commitment to end the cycle of military coups by installing in a permanent

democratic regime postponed this transfer for three consecutive times during his rule. Hence, prolonged periods of authoritarian revival have been witnessed frequently.

The crises of the 1960s had the direct result of installing in a military government. A period of military rule from 1966 until the establishment of the Second Republic in 1979 was embarked on. It was in 1975 that the Gowon regime was toppled by another coup which installed General Murtala Muhammad into power who was himself assassinated in an attempted coup a year later as he was planning a return to civilian rule. General Obasanjo who was a member of General Murtala Muhammad's team then succeeded with an agenda of transition to civilian rule which culminated in the Second Republic. Power was transferred to a civilian administration under Shagari. This second experience with democracy culminated in another military coup in 1983. (1) Uninterrupted military rule then followed with distinct periods under Buhari (1983-1985), Babangida (1985-93), and then Abacha (1993-98) administrations. Babangida indeed overthrew the Buhari administration. In 1993, Abacha removed the interim government installed by the departing Babangida and declared his leadership which lasted until his death in 1998. General Abubakar was to succeed him, pledging a swift transition to civilian rule. He immediately began negotiations with Abiola on his release. Abiola's death further intensified the pressure on the military government to withdraw. Elections were organized in which two former prisoners, Obasanjo who led the transition to civilian rule in late 1970s and was then imprisoned in 1990s on charges of plotting against the government and Olu Falae who was formerly a finance minister, were allowed to contest. It was in May 1999 that Obasanjo was inaugurated as the president of the new republic. The 2003 parliamentary, presidential and state governor elections proved to be a serious test for the Nigerian democracy. The fact that they have been undertaken relatively

successfully in spite of a number of familiar problems has been remarkable. Similar to the previous campaigns, ethnic violence and allegations of electoral rigging particularly at the state level accompanied the electoral process.

The Ethnic, Regional and Religious Divide:

An immense degree of diversity characterizes the Nigerian society. Onwukike argues that any current examination of Nigeria reveals that "everything which we see bears the frightful aspect of a dichotomy: the north/south dichotomy, the east/west dichotomy, majority/minority dichotomy, muslim/christian dichotomy, military/politician dichotomy, socialist/capitalist dichotomy, urban/rural dichotomy, the traditional/modern dichotomy..." (1997: 194-195). Three dominant ethnic groups as well as a huge number of minorities constitute the components of the Nigerian population. The Hausa-Fulani, the Igbo, and the Yoruba form the major ethnic groups and are believed together to constitute two-thirds of the total population. (2) It is essential to note that, though two different groups, the Hausa and the Fulani have become tightly integrated politically as well as culturally. Islam has served as a major unifying factor among the two in addition to their convergence around the Hausa language. It was as a result of the fact that the Fulani initiated a holy war from their center in Sokoto in 1804 that Hausaland came under the control of the Sultan of Sokoto.

Various numbers are cited to denote the huge diversity displayed by the minority ethnic groups in addition to the three major groups. All the records seem to converge on that the number of ethnic groups in Nigeria exceeds 200. Afolayan claims that "(e)stimates of the country's ethnic groups have ranged from 200 to 400, depending on the criteria of differentiation" (1997: 48). Yet, the political significance of this demographic situation seems to stem from a different factor. It is particularly

significant that of these groups "many comprise larger numbers of people than the total populations of Africa's smallest states" (Wiseman, 1990: 92). The politicization of ethnic differences also complicated the efforts at determining the exact figures. The census results have always been controversial due to their significance in determining office and resource allocation. In the 1962 census, when it was concluded that the rate of population increase in the west and the east surpassed that in the north and threatened the latter's political dominance, the northern authorities declared that they have found some 8.5 million people who have until then been unaccounted for. The 1962 census results were cancelled amidst immense controversies and a new census was called for 1963. This second attempt proved to be no less controversial with the northern majority being rejected by the east. Similarly, the census effort in the 1970s failed again amidst charges of ethnically motivated fraud and the results were not officially endorsed. In the coming decades, various efforts were made to reduce the controversies. Rephrasing the questions directed at the respondents in such a way as to curtail the role of ethnic variables was attempted. Yet, Suberu states that "(t)he provisional 1991 results, however, indicate a continuing northern demographic majority of 53 percent" (1993: 44).

The extent to which ethnic, regional and religious cleavages overlap surfaces as a central question. The Hausa-Fulani are Muslims whereas the Igbo are mainly Christians and Yorubas could be of either religion. Despite the fact that no official figures were produced to that end, the "estimates are that 50 % of all Nigerians are Muslim, while 40 % are Christian" (Morris-Hale, 1997: 212). Hence, "(w)ith the exception of the Middle Belt, the north is dominantly Islamic, Christianity predominates in the east, while the west is nearly uniformly divided between the two religions" (Afolayan, 1997: 50). Traditional religions also have followers across

Nigeria. Yet, Ibrahim argues that the traditional African religions have not featured in religious conflicts as "(t)he diversity in conception as well as practice of African religions has made it difficult for the adherents of these religions to have a high degree of unity of purpose" (1997: 434). The fact that the Christian missionaries engaged in extensive activities in all parts of what is today termed Nigeria except for the north meant that a major cleavage was instituted mainly between the north and the south. These cleavages then all seem to reinforce the impact of each other. Suberu, for instance, argues that "(a) striking feature of recent religious tensions in Nigeria is the considerable degree to which they have reinforced, and have in turn been sustained by, the dynamics of ethnoregional competition for power and privilege in the country" (1997(a): 407).

While Nigeria was divided into northern, eastern and western regions in the colonial period, the further division of these regions into an increasing number of states did not function to alter the pattern that the Hausa-Fulani were mainly concentrated in the north, the Igbos were chiefly located in the south-east and the Yoruba in the south-west. Each major ethnic group was hence associated with a specific region. Yet, none of these regions have been monolithic in terms of the ethnic origins or religious creed of their population. Even the northern region displays substantial diversity. Afolayan for instance claims that "(t)he traditional rivalries between the Kanuri-dominated northeast and the Fulani-dominated northwest, which dates to the nineteenth century jihad wars, remain salient in northern and national politics" (1997: 58). The mobility of the population as well as the existence of numerous minorities further complicates the picture. To cite a single example, Christian population living in the north has been at substantial levels whereas the Hausas living in the south reached significant numbers. It has been

mainly the middle belt and the distant southeast that held the densest concentration of the minority groups. In line with the fact that no ethnic group or religion dominates in the middle belt, Hauss argues that "that region has been spared some of the worst aspects of ethnic politics and has produced some of its most nationally oriented leaders" (2000: 5). Furthermore, the capital city was moved from Lagos to the middle-belt city of Abuja in 1980s as a sign of commitment to unity. While drawing attention at the fact that the Nigerian middle-belt has become the main recruitment area for the Nigerian military, Blunt argues that the army "generally maintained its reputation as Nigeria's first truly national institution" (2001: 1).

Colonial policies of maintaining the separate existence of major ethnic groups were believed to have perpetuated the differences between the communities. Nigeria became a single country in 1914, with the unification of the colony of Lagos, and the protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria under a centralized British administration. The colony of Lagos and the protectorate in the south were merged initially in 1906. The north later joined them due to an economic necessity since the north failed to meet the revenue requirements for their administration (Ohaegbulam, 2000: 417). In 1939, the Southern Region was decomposed into Western Region and Eastern Region with Lagos becoming a separate colony. Onwukike outlines that, prior to unification, Kingdom of Bornu, the Fulani Empire, kingdoms of Ife and Benin, the Yoruba Empire of Oyo, city states of Niger Delta, the Igbos and the tribes of the east have interacted in a context where "sporadic commercial and social contracts had, for centuries long, been in existence, though politically and culturally, each group had remained distinct and separate" (1997: 111). Yet, all these different groups and territories were now summoned mainly due to the administrative concerns of the major colonial actor.

Despite the amalgamation, however, these regions were administered separately. Diamond argues that the British ruled Nigeria as two countries in that "(i)n the North, a native authority system was constructed to rule indirectly through the centralized and steeply hierarchical structures of traditional authority in the Muslim emirates" whereas "(i)n the south, where power was more dispersed and there was more accountability of rulers to ruled, indirect rule worked poorly and even broke down in places" (1995: 420). Traditional structures and existing political institutions were utilized in the context of indirect rule. In the north, the emirs represented Sultan's authority in the provinces with the extensive powers assigned to them. The Igbos, on the other hand, traditionally lived under decentralized structures prior to independence. As the east lacked centralization and powerful traditional leaders, the village representative assemblies were the prime instruments of governance among the Igbo. Traditionally, limitations on the power of ruling groups were also immense in the Yoruba system. The Yoruba regions were ruled under a kingdom by the end of the eighteenth century. Onwukike argues that "(l)ike the Hausaland, the Yorubaland boasted of a vast well-organized kingdom - embracing some centralized kingdoms, each with an Oba as the paramount ruler- with a complex monarchical system over which the Alafin of Oyo (with his very elaborate court of priests, officials and eunuchs) was the supreme monarch" (1997: 113 and 114).

Various grievances were voiced by each ethnic group, religious community and region. There was the widespread perception that while political power was concentrated in the north, the socioeconomic power of the south was unparalleled. The Yoruba are indeed resented for their high concentration in public service and their economic power by the other ethnic communities. There was always a demand

in the north for skilled labor which was in short supply. Hence, skilled labor was flowing from the south. As regards the debates on power-sharing, for instance, the Hausa-Fulani pointed at "continuing southern, especially Yoruba, educational, economic and, possibly, bureaucratic domination: an imbalance that has not been rectified by various policies that enforce the 'federal character' and/or state equality quotas in education, the bureaucracy, and government-owned enterprises" (Suberu, 1997(b): 346). Economic and educational disadvantages suffered by the northerners made them particularly keen on guarding their political dominance.

The political power and domination in the administration of the state enjoyed by the northerners were in turn resented by the other communities. (3) In 1961, for instance, the government decided that 50 percent of the military cadres should come from the north. Bach emphasizes that "(f)rom the end of the civil war, quota policies were progressively extended so as to cover a widening array of federal responsibilities" ranging from civil service to statutory corporations, public enterprises, parastatal organizations, various federal institutions in the field of education, judiciary, cabinet executives, and lawmaking organs (1997: 339). The southerners as well as the minority groups regarded these initiatives as efforts to preserve and bolster northern power.

The polarization between the north and the south seemed further to be strengthened by the religious clashes. Suberu lists issues that were central to Southern politics as "the struggle by Christians and the intelligentsia to defend and advance a secular concept of the Nigerian state; the crystallization of ethnoreligious grievances over the distribution of power and privilege in the country; the continuing, if increasingly ambivalent, moderation of Yoruba Muslims in religious matters; and the general dissatisfaction with government's role in the management of

religious pluralism" and the opposition by various southern organizations to governmental intervention in religious affairs (1997(a): 401 and 406). Hence, to all the tensions relating to the sharing of power and resources between the north and the south was added the Muslim-Christian controversy.

The grievances of the variety of minority groups increasingly assume a central role in Nigerian politics. Various such groups declare that they have been excluded and discriminated against in every realm of public life. Hauss indeed underlines that the three major groups of the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and the Igbo "have produced most of [Nigeria's] leading politicians, and served as the basis for all the political parties during the independence struggle and the three republics" (2000: 5). It is also essential to note that the major impact of the minority groups on Nigerian politics materialized through their insistence on the creation of local and state governments which they believed would empower them. In pointing at the significant role that might be assumed by the minorities, Afolayan underlines that "(i)n the west, the resentment of the Edo and other ethnic minorities of Yoruba domination created agitation that provided the background for the creation of the mid-western Region in 1963" whereas "(i)n the east, the several ethnic minorities in the Delta and south-eastern sections of the region have remained resentful of Igbo dominance, explaining their reluctance to follow the secessionist cause in 1967" (1997: 59). A more recent grievance by the ethnic minorities is concentrated in the regions where oil is extracted. Complaining about the failure to address the problems caused by environmental pollution and believing that they have been denied a fair access to the dividends from the oil extracted from their region, various minority groups in the Niger Delta increasingly began to embrace the principle of self-determination.

Recently, of all these cleavages, religious tensions seem to have come to the forefront. Ibrahim indeed argues that "religion has in the last dozen or so years outdone all the traditional causes of political instability by the frequency with which it has threatened the security and stability of the Nigerian nation" (1997: 427). A number of religious issues have acquired a controversial nature in Nigerian political history. President Shagari's suggestion on establishing an advisory board on Islamic affairs in the presidential office, Buhari administration's domination by Muslim northerners, transition from an observer status to official membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference, the 1989 cabinet reshuffle in which many Christian and high-ranking officials were replaced by Muslims, and the initial draft of the 1979 Constitution calling for a Federal Shari'a Court of Appeal to replace the Northern Regional Shari'a Court of Appeal (Suberu, 1997(a): 403-408) were some of the major controversies. These issues turned into explosive divisions with the Christians being vocal in their objection on the grounds that the secular nature of the Nigerian state was under attack. Most recently, however, the debates over the introduction of Sharia law in a number of northern states and the scope of the jurisdiction of Sharia courts have surfaced as highly contentious topics. Zamfara was the first state to adopt Sharia in October 1999. In due course, twelve Sharia states began to function in the north. Communal polarization and riots between the Christians and the Muslims then followed. (4) Year 2000 also witnessed the declaration by five eastern governors that greater devolution would become the major condition for their continued membership of Nigeria (McGreal, February 8, 2000: 1). Separatism seems to have been fuelled by the introduction of Sharia in some northern states.

Domestic peace and violence potential:

Violence became a factor that was rather difficult to contain in the Nigerian case as:

- it assumed a communal nature,

- resort to it was undertaken by a variety of actors with differing motives ranging from the acquisition of political power and resources to the perpetuation of identities centering around religious beliefs and ethnicity,

- and the state security forces proved to be ineffective.

From Politics and Distributive Issues to Religion and Ethnicity: The Multiple Sources of Violent Conflict

There have been various sources of violence ranging from religious and ethnic conflict to land disputes, political clashes and disagreement on access to resources and revenues. Incidents of politically motivated violence were witnessed such as the ones in 1981 in Kaduna and Kano where the conflict between the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) -dominated legislature and People's Redemption Party (PRP) -member governors degenerated into violence particularly in the latter. Violent clashes intensified prior to 1983 elections between rival parties and rival candidates. Economically motivated violence has also been an aspect of life in the cities such as the case with protests directed at the austerity programs. Furthermore, those who considered themselves to be the indigenous population of a certain area fought against those they regarded to be new settlers. Peace has been difficult to attain among the minority groups waging conflicting claims to land. To cite a single example, access to land has led to clashes between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups in central Nigeria.

Yet, ethnically and religiously motivated violence seems to be more enduring, pervasive, and threatening as far as the fabric of Nigerian society is concerned. An initial instance of an ethnically motivated escalation of violence came about in the 1960s. The Igbo military leader Ironsi's announcement in 1966 that a centralized constitution would be instituted terrified the north where the concern that the coup was a means of imposing Igbo dominance on the north was widespread. The Igbos then became the targets of attacks particularly in the north of Nigeria. In the 1960s, thousands of Igbos were slaughtered in the north which led to the fleeing of over a million to the east. The almost three years of civil war that embittered Biafra resulted in an estimated casualty exceeding a million people. The bitter memories that characterized the period still find their way in the political discourse.

The recent upsurge in militant regional organizations also seems to be remarkable. The Oodua People's Congress (OPC) founded in 1990s as a Yoruba organization demanding the eradication of northern influence in their region advocated eventual separation had measures towards enhanced self-government similar to the arrangement during the First Republic not been affected. This organization was held responsible for the recently intensified killings of Hausa-Fulanis and Igbos in the western region. While it was proscribed in 2000, troops were deployed in and around Lagos to halt its activities. Retaliation followed in a number of ways and mainly in the form of revenge attacks on the Yoruba people in the other regions and the formation of alternative militant organizations. Arewa People's Congress (APC) was one such organization advocating northern interests, territorial integrity of Nigeria, and resistance to what they perceived to be the OPC's intention of 'the balkanisation of the country' (McGreal, September 15, 2000: 1). Oodua Republic Front currently calls for a sovereign state for the Yoruba whereas

Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra is advocating the secession of eastern Nigeria. Such organizations allegedly offer security to their communities and are supported by various political party members.

Religious violence also poses a harsh experience for Nigeria. Onwukike cites the riots in Kano (1980), Maiduguri (1982), Kaduna (1983), Yola (1984), Gombe (1985), and again in Kaduna (1987) as instances of religious disturbances between Muslims and Christians (1997: 200-201). Ibrahim stresses that "(o)n 30 October 1982, the first serious threat to harmonious co-existence between Muslims and Christians in Kano was experienced" with a wave of destruction particularly of the churches following disagreements over the building of a bigger church on the premises of a smaller church located in front of a mosque (1997: 429). In 1987, a campus conflict between the Muslim and the Christian students erupted into communal violence with the Christian majority in Kafanchan attacking the Muslims, their property and mosques in retaliation to which attacks on Christians by the Muslim population of Daura, Funtua, Kaduna, Katsina, Kankiya, and Zaria of the Kaduna state were undertaken (Ibrahim, 1997: 432). Religious rioting intensified particularly in northern cities. In 1991, deadly clashes erupted among the Muslims and Christians following a Christian revival meeting in Kano. Religious riots resumed in Katsina and Bauchi in 1991, to be followed by similar violent outbreaks in Kaduna in 1992. The riots in Katsina began in protest of a publication that dealt with the private lives of Prophet Muhammad and Jesus. Clashes in Bauchi, on the other hand, resulted from revenge attacks by Hausas in return for a local dispute in Tafawa Balewa between non-Muslim natives and the Hausa-Fulani. In the course of all these clashes, lives were lost on both sides and property and holy sites were destroyed. For the communities constituting a numerical minority in Muslim-

dominated or Christian-dominated areas, displacement was a serious risk. To sum up, in Suberu's view, "the political mobilization of religious identities has continued to feature prominently in those parts of the Middle-Belt, including southern Kaduna and southern Bauchi, where the Christian-Muslim divide is built into the identification and differentiation of contiguous ethnic communities and where Christians and Muslims have continued to confront each other violently" (1997(a): 420).

The circumstances created by intense religious violence became particularly alarming from 1990s on. The north has been the major ground of communal violence whereas the south has occasionally been subject to eruptions. In terms of the escalation of violence, the introduction of Sharia in some northern states was a landmark event. As the largest Muslim Nigerian state with the highest concentration of Christian population, Kano has become a major scene of violent religious clashes. The imposition of Sharia in this state also heightened the concerns that religious violence would further escalate. Following the introduction of the Sharia law, almost 1000 people were killed in Muslim-Christian clashes in Bauchi in July 2001. The proposal to introduce Sharia in Kaduna has ignited violent clashes in which over 2000 people died in year 2000. Attacks of revenge then ensued in the east with about 450 further people losing their lives. In the overwhelmingly Christian city of Jos in September 2001, Muslim-Christian clashes led to around 1000 casualties. Most recently, the Miss World 2002 contest that was supposed to be organized in Nigeria as well as certain newspaper comments on it have angered the Muslims and instigated further waves of violence. Isaacs indeed argues that "(f)ar more people have died in communal clashes during the last few years of civilian rule than under any previous military regime" and estimates that figure to exceed ten thousand people [(2002, January 11: 1) and (2002, February 6: 1)]. Similarly, The Economist

of March 2003 sets the figure that "(s)ince democracy returned to Nigeria in 1999, some 10,000 people have died in tribal and religious riots" (The Economist, March 1, 2003: 14). The extension of the scope of Sharia law from its confinement to the civil courts to cover criminal law issues seems to have further aggravated mutual suspicions.

The pace with which local disturbances could spread was a major factor in accounting for how the events became so destructive. The fact that the clashes revolved around the highly valued allegiances of the people meant that the spiral of violence could immediately gain a broad reach. Hauss stresses that "it was just a matter of time until the violence that had been primarily orchestrated by the elites started breaking out spontaneously among an increasingly embittered public" (2000: 27). Religious clashes indeed spread across the whole society. The universities became one major arena for violent battles. Writing in the early 1990s, Diamond stresses that "(c)urrently, the aggressively fundamentalist Muslim Students Society is the most powerful and dynamic force on many campuses in the Islamic north, and has repeatedly been involved in violent religious confrontations" whereas "Christian fundamentalism is growing in the south and becoming dangerously mixed with politics, while violent and extremist secret cults have spread terror on several post-secondary and university campuses" (1991: 68).

Militants in alleged pursuit of the preservation of a particular identity were too often confronted by the state security forces. From 1980s until the major confrontation in 1993, the Maitatsine movement led by the preacher named Muhammadu Marwa violently clashed with the state security forces as a result of which there were over a thousand casualties. Drawing attention at their strength particularly in Kano, Diamond presents the movement as one being "led by a self-

styled prophet named Maititsine who rejected both traditional Islam and the materialism of the West" (1991: 68). It is particularly significant that "(b)y the time the army succeeded in defeating Maitatsine and finally killing Muhammadu Marwa, more than 5,000 lives had been lost, 1,652 families displaced, 401 houses completely destroyed, 168 houses badly damaged, and 417 shops and commercial houses destroyed" (Ibrahim, 1997: 429). Following the defeat, Marwa's followers instigated violent clashes in Kaduna in 1982, Yola in 1984, Bulumkutu in 1982, and Bauchi in 1985.

Resource distribution seems to be another basic motive underlying clashes which have degenerated into widespread violence. Niger Delta has recently never been free of violent clashes. The clashes between the Ijaw and Itsekeri were of particular significance. Hauss terms their confrontation centering on ethnic differences as well as access to oil wealth as 'near-civil war' (2000: 29). The Ijaw community which forms the largest ethnic group in the region seems to be located at the forefront of the struggle for greater rights. In fact, violence perpetuated by them led to a delay of the parliamentary poll in April 2003 in the oil-producing town of Warri. Since the Ijaw as the largest tribe in the region claim that the electoral boundaries are drawn to prevent their domination of the local government, the relatively better educated and politically dominant Itsekeri minority group continues to be their major target (The Economist, April 19, 2003: 35). Hence, controlling the local government has been among the chief objectives of various tribes in Niger Delta. Violence, sabotage, and other acts disrupting the activities of the oil companies in the Niger Delta hence became daily occurrences. The militant activists occasionally find themselves battling against the companies as well as the Nigerian police and the military. Vidal states that "oil companies, rights activists and

environmental organizations report a rapidly disintegrating society plagued by summary executions, shootouts, inter-ethnic violence, pollution, riots, occupations of oil facilities and demonstrations" (1999: 1). High level of unemployment and the difficulties related to access to state services encountered by the residents of the region led to an upsurge of militancy mainly among the youth with the oil companies such as Shell or Chevron and their installations becoming the major targets.

The Ogoni people complain that the operations of major corporations left their region with immense pollution, there have been next to no investment in terms of infrastructure, and the profits were mainly exchanged between the Shell company, state officers and political leaders. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was formed in the 1990s to advocate the Ogoni right to self-determination. Increasingly militant activities of the Ogoni people were met by extensive repression by the security forces. Their uprising in early 1993 led to the execution of nine Ogoni activist leaders in November 1995. The 1994 killing of four pro-government chiefs in the region that was allegedly carried out by MOSOP members resulted in the charges brought against Saro-Wiwa and other activists. Suberu in fact claims that "(g)overnment's response to the agitation by the Ogoni and other oil-producing communities has included the proscription of ethnic minority (and related) associations, the announcement of a treasonable offences law for ethnic minority activists, the military invasion and repression of restive oil-producing communities, and the harassment, detention and arbitrary prosecution of crusading ethnic minority elites, including the noted Ogoni leader and writer Ken Saro-Wiwa" (1997(b): 353).

It hence seems plausible to end this part of the analysis by stating that no organization or actor exerts a monopoly over resort to violence in the case of Nigeria.

Due particularly to the recent emergence of militant groups advocating the rights of particular communities, a multiplicity of actors have become entrapped in the spiral of violence. The failure of the state authorities in containing violence surfaces as a major cause of the current problem. The fact that communal hatred solidifies due to the communal nature of the ongoing violence complicates the prospects for conflict management by aggravating polarization among different groups in Nigerian society.

The Party System:

It seems possible to argue that ethnoregional polarization of party competition proved to be a major characteristic of the Nigerian political system. Ethnic, regional, and religious cleavages are reflected in the formation of political parties as well as their bases of support. Other significant aspects of the party system seem to be:

- the willingness of the political actors to manipulate ethnic, religious and regional allegiances,

- the political actors' perception of politics as a struggle for survival in which defeat has to be ruthlessly resisted,

- and periodic bans on the political actors which were countered by constant attempts at resurrection in line with the newly formulated conditions of political competition.

Relentless Competition and Manipulation of Identities:

Manipulation of ethnic, regional or religious attachments seemed to be a major theme of Nigerian election campaigns from their inception on. The bulk of the civilian political elite have not attempted to reduce the salience of ethnic, religious or regional identities. Ethnic, religious and regional affiliations rather than ideological or socio-economic positions have rather posed the political parties against each other. The public, on the other hand, has been prone to manipulation by the political elite. Commenting on the First Republic, Afolayan states that "the use of English language as the principal medium of national politics and education has created and sharpened the cleavage between the elites and the majority of the population, whose lack of western education has continued to keep them divided, largely uninformed and vulnerable to intra- and inter-elite manipulations" (1997: 47 and 49).

It seems possible to argue that the political actors have most often failed to bridge the cleavages in a myriad of ways. In Ogaegbulam's opinion, the political elites in Nigeria "have been, and still remain, divided along ethnic, regional and religious identifications" and "employ such divisions as tools to mobilize masses of Nigerians to facilitate their access to state power and thereby to accumulate personal wealth" (2000: 433). The retention of power has been the major objective of the political leaders whereas the manipulation of differences of ethnic, religious, and regional kind has become the major tool to that end. This pattern characterizing the political scene seemed to remain much the same regardless of whether the military or the civilians were in power. Ohaegbulam confirms that the military indeed "became infected by the same ethnic, regional, and religious divisiveness that crippled civilian rule" (2000: 434). Indeed, even the issue of who controlled the military was a controversial one with coups and counter-coups following in sequence.

Examples as to how the deeds of political actors have served to sharpen existing divisions abound. Bach, for instance, points at how in the Constituent Assembly of the period 1977-1978, prospective politicians complained about discrimination inflicted due to one's state of origin yet failed to suggest a revision of the definition of indigeneity by latently appreciating "that their territorial bases for power, accumulation, and enrichment should be insulated from nonindigenous competition" (1997: 339-340). (5) Failure of the political actors to converge around the objective of sustaining civilian democratic rule at all cost also merits scrutiny. Suberu, for instance, points at "the failure of the politicians to unite behind the [Social Democratic Party] SDP and Moshood Abiola in the wake of Babangida's June 1993 assault on the democratic process" (1993: 53). Too often, political actors seemed to prefer military intrusions into the political process rather than seeing their

rivals gain greater ground. Failure of political actors to display unity of purpose or respect for each other was manifested in other ways. In Wiseman's opinion, "(t)he consolidation of regional control by the different parties was reinforced by their willingness to use a high level of violence against parties from another region" as "(i)n the north, for example, the level of thuggery and obstruction was such that few candidates from outside the region were even able to lodge their nomination papers for elections" (1990: 95). From 1950s on, repression of opposition political actors was evident across various regions.

Other cleavages have been slow to take root in the party system. Indeed, cross-cutting cleavages seem difficult to foster. Hauss claims that "(h)ad economic issues become more important in defining basic values and assumptions about politics, Nigeria might have found itself in a better position" as "(r)eactions against that common poverty might have cut across ethnic, religious, and regional lines" (2000: 27). It is only in one form that what resembles an ideological cleavage seems to surface. An alternative cleavage to those of ethnicity, religion and the region is believed to have featured significantly in the Nigerian political spectrum. Diamond claims that "(s)ince the early 1960s, Nigeria has had one broad plane of cleavage that cuts across ethnicity, uniting more 'progressive' forces north and south against a loose, northern-based coalition of traditionalists, conservatives, and certain ethnic minorities" (1991: 58). To back up his claim with some evidence, Diamond cites the polarization between the grand coalitions when the progressive and anti-regionalist forces were joined around the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) as opposed to the conservative and regionalist forces in the NNA (1995: 426). Similarly, Uwazurike argues that the 'progressive' forces such as the early nationalists Nigerian Youth Movement and the pre-1950 National Council of Nigeria

and the Cameroons (NCNC) leadership whose basic "issue was an attempt to build a mass party akin to the Indian Congress of Gandhi and Nehru" were confronted by the conservative regionalism of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) (1997: 333). It seems plausible to argue then that these might be regarded as rare examples signaling an ideological demarcation. Still, it might also be argued that underlying these neat divisions into broad blocs were the ethnic and regional factors.

The concentration of power and resources at the center has made the control of the center the biggest stake in Nigerian politics. Considering the fact that the dominance of a single party has been established in each of the regions, the real competition thus seemed to be for the federal offices. Yet, guaranteed offices were provided at the state level due mainly to the make-up of the population. In line with that, Bach argues that "(d)ue to the revenue-allocation formula and the Federal Character principle, the division of a state, far from victimizing its elites, increases their capacity for accumulation while improving their position and guarantees of representation at the federal level" which accounts for why the elites became the main claimants to the creation of new states (1997: 344). Minority groups also extended support to state creation efforts.

Developing truly national parties that appeal across various ethnic and religious groups has always been a major challenge in Nigerian political scene. It was only after experiencing the costs of bans and prohibitions that the politicians engaged in partial attempts at deserting their sectional appeals. When designers of the new regimes urged the political parties and their leadership to appeal across the various communities, efforts were made to that end. The attempt of the Third Republic to discard the political actors of the first two republics and to socialize into political context new political actors who lacked experience in the political process

was remarkable in that sense. The federal government also financed these new parties with the declared objective of ensuring that they would not be patronized by corrupt and financially strong actors. Hence, errors, disruptions and the installation of new regimes urged the political actors to adopt a more inclusive political discourse.

Indeed, political parties and leaders felt the urge to change their rhetoric, owing mainly to the requirement that the parties be more broad-based and display a wider reach in appeal. The condition that in order to win the election, the presidential candidate has to obtain cross-regional support with a specified percentage of the vote in a specified minimum number of states compelled all the political actors to moderate their stances. Morris-Hale finds it particularly important that, of the two presidential candidates, "Mr.Abiola, who comes from the mostly urban southwest, which is dominated by the Yoruba ethnic group, traveled extensively in the North" whereas "Mr.Tofa, whose natural base is the North, which is mostly Hausa-Fulani, spent much of his time in the South" (1997: 213). Furthermore, commenting on this two-party period, Suberu argues that "(a)lthough ethnic, regional, and religious influences are discernible in the patterns of local electoral support for the parties, the demonstrable success of each party in enlisting influential elites from all sections of the Federation has meant that interethnic competition has been rechanneled so that it is more intense within the parties than it is between them" (Suberu, 1993: 47). (6) In the final analysis, both candidates managed to obtain a remarkable level of support across the regions of Nigeria. (7) Abiola did indeed obtain more votes in the north than his rival who was a northerner, including in the latter's home state of Kano. The level of support obtained by Abiola from the north, the Christian population in general and the Yoruba west was hence remarkable. A degree of political

engineering indeed seemed to modify some established and explosive patterns of Nigerian politics.

Still, considering the variety of demands voiced by different groups, Nigerian governments are constantly subject to a number of conflicting pressures which they find difficult to address simultaneously. To cite a simple example, McGreal points at how under the presidency of Obasanjo, "(t)he north complains his government has too many Yorubas; the south-west protests that he constantly bows to northern pressure on issues such as Sharia" (March 30, 2000: 1). The fact that the Obasanjo administration initially refrained from intervening in the Sharia debate and then declared that they have secured guarantees from the governors in Sharia states against the implementation of the Sharia law in full resulted in various protests by mainly the non-Muslims. Hence, satisfying a large pool of claimants of various origins and persuasions poses a major challenge for all Nigerian governments.

The Parties Since Independence: Resilience Under Bans and Continuous Shuffle

Nigerian party system is best characterized as fluid and unstable. One major reason for this is that too often the party system has been subject to harsh intrusions. Not only the parties were banned, but political leaders associated with them were not allowed to compete in the elections for a specified period of time. Yet, continuing their covert operation even under these circumstances, the parties too often managed to stage a comeback. Still, due to the constant imposition and lifting of the bans, the political parties were allowed only a brief period of time in which to get organized by establishing a network of local and state branches. Such constraints faced in building a proper organization partially account for why a number of established party organizations continuously resurfaced. In fact, they were the sole actors with the essential level of institutionalization from which to launch a new effort. Hence,

organizations representing certain consolidated interests proved to be particularly resilient. Hauss indeed stresses that during the Second Republic, "only the surviving politicians had well-established networks that would allow them to put together even the appearance of a national organization in so short a period" (2000: 21).

Constituting the largest component of the total Nigerian population, the northern region has become the dominant force in Nigerian politics. Allegations of exclusion from political processes were waged by a variety of groups. Suberu points at that "two previous Nigerian Republics were led by northern Muslims, while northerners generally have headed the federal government for 29 of the 33 years since independence" (1993: 44). Writing in 1999, Joseph, for instance, points at that "(s)ince 1983, Nigeria has had a succession of northern military leaders: Mohammadu Buhari (1983-85); Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993); Sani Abacha (1993-1998); and Abdulsalam Abubaker (since 1998)" to which he adds the elected president Shagari from the north in the period 1979-1983 (1999: 361). To many particularly in the south, all these were proof of the exclusive nature of Nigerian politics.

Until 1938 a single party, the Lagos-based Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) dominated Nigerian politics. In Hauss' opinion, the NNDP was the 'first purely Nigerian political movement' which obtained support from small groups of western-educated lawyers, teachers and merchants and which was led by Macauley who was seen as the founder of Nigerian nationalism (2000: 13). From 1938 on, however, the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) began dominating the political scene by obtaining huge support in Lagos in the 1938 elections. Splits from the NYM led to the creation of the NCNC in 1944. The new party basically entailed a "coalition of 'the growing community of non-Yoruba - mainly Ibo - settlers in

Lagos', the rising class of westernized, predominantly Christian, cosmopolitan Yoruba from the provinces, and the largely detribalized Lagos working class" that would "take on the increasingly traditional, predominantly Muslim Lagos indigenes of the [National Nigerian Democratic Party]NNDP" (Agbaje, 1997: 370 and 367). The party soon turned into an Igbo-dominated platform. Thus, the initial splits across ethnic lines were surfacing. There were other smaller parties such as those of the minorities. United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) was a party of the minorities and Christians in the north. The United National Party, on the other hand, seemed to represent the ethnic minority groups in the East. Yet, these parties' room for maneuver was limited by the sheer percentage of the population constituted by the minority groups.

Even by 1951 regional elections, a new pattern was evident whereby the Igbo-based NCNC solely was able to win in the Eastern Region, the Yoruba-dominated Action Group (AG) signaled that it would be the dominant political force in the Western region, and the NPC began to assume a role as the key defender of the northern interests. Hence, the NPC was believed to have a large pool of support among the Hausa-Fulani, the AG to be dominant among the Yoruba, and the NCNC among the Igbo. Yet, it is essential to note that the radical Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) also began to exert an impact on politics in the north prior to independence. (8) Hence, "(t)he NPC represented the response of conservative northerners to the good electoral performance of the more radical Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) organized around northern talakawa (commoners) by Malam Aminu Kano and associates during the early stages of the voting" (Agbaje, 1997: 370-371).

Led by traditional northern leaders, the NPC was the major party at the center. It could indeed become the most dominant actor in the whole political spectrum by dominating in the north. The relations between the center and the west have been particularly tense. The AG was torn apart by a split which seemed to have marginalized the impact the Yoruba could exert on national politics. The split within the AG was quick to affect the AG as its leader Awolowo who was heading the opposition in Lagos began to confront the regional government in the west led by Akintola of the AG which culminated in a vote of no confidence for the latter. The federal government then intervened by declaring a state of emergency and re-installing Akintola. This was perceived by many in the west as an unfair intrusion by the center into the politics of their region. Among the consequences of the conflict in the AG, Diamond lists that "a fourth region (the Mid-Western) had been created out of the Western Region, Chief Awolowo and his close associates had been convicted of treason and sentenced to prison, and the AG had been destroyed as a national political force" (1995: 425). In 1965, the AG and the NNDP contested in the regional election in which the latter was the winner. The results of this election came as a shock to the Yoruba population who perceived the NNDP's policies as a sell-out to the north. The gradual marginalization of the AG even within its own region undermined the legitimacy of the regime in the eyes of the Yoruba. It is also argued that the contentious 1965 election result was a major factor in accounting for the 1966 coup. (9)

Hence, the experiences with the First Republic reveal that coalitions between these widely divergent groups were inevitable at times. The NCNC which succeeded in winning the 1954 federal election in the west managed to rule Nigeria in coalition with the NPC. The NCNC and NPC both found it more acceptable to build a

coalition as the NCNC wished to bridge the divide between the north and the south and both parties resented the AG's efforts at mobilizing the minority groups in the west and the north (Diamond, 1995: 423). At other times, grand coalitions were drawn up in a temporary unity of purpose. Prior to the 1964-1965 parliamentary and regional elections and particularly from the census crisis on, two opposing coalitions seemed to emerge. The UPGA was composed of the NCNC, Awolowo fraction of the AG, NEPU, and a minority party of the Christians in the north and was opposed by NNDP made up of NPC, the Akintola fraction and smaller southern minority parties. Agbaje argues that the grand alliances formed toward the end of the First and Second Republics had the sole purpose "of acquiring or retaining power at the risk of deepening the polarization of civil society into north and south" (1997: 374).

The parties banned with the collapse of the First Republic were allowed to operate in 1978. Yet, only five were declared to be meeting the criteria. There seemed to be a widespread consensus among the observers that the parties of the Second Republic mainly entailed the resurrection of those of the First Republic. Ohaegbulam states that "(t)he political parties that emerged to contest power in the Second Republic 'bore strong resemblance to the parties of the First Republic, in part because of significant continuities in their leadership and [their] regional basis' " and adds that "they tend to retreat 'into convenient and familiar ethnic alignments,' and to produce 'a sad level of regional and [ethnic] correlation in voting behavior" (2000: 427). Agbaje states that "(o)f the five parties that dominated the Second Republic, for instance, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was perceived as a reincarnation of the NPC; the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) as the new face of the NCNC; the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) as a reincarnation of the AG; and the People's Redemption Party (PRP) as the new face of NEPU" (1997: 371). The PRP came about as a result

of a split in the NPN. (10) Similar to its predecessor, the PRP was a party that was rather relatively radical and left-wing. Indeed, Hauss argues that only the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP) did not have clear roots in the parties of the First Republic (2000: 21). In line with this fact, politics in the Second Republic displayed great resemblance to politics in the First Republic as political personnel, party affiliations and the regional basis of support remained to be enduring.

The NPN represented the northern influence in Nigerian politics in the context of the Second Republic. It also represented a limited effort to come up with a more broad-based structure. (11) The NPN obtained 37.8 percent and 37.4 percent of the seats in the two chambers of the legislative whereas its presidential candidate Shagari won 33.8 percent of the votes in 1979 elections. Although a controversy followed the elections in association with the requirement that the president obtain at least a specified percentage of the vote in over two-thirds of the 19 states, Shagari still managed to obtain widespread support dispersed around the country. The election results indeed led many observers to conclude that things were changing. For many analysts, the 1979 elections revealed that the NPN came closest to being branded as a national party (Wiseman, 1990: 107 and Suberu, 1993: 47). Indeed, the party did not experience confinement to a regional base as it became the first or the second party in all states except the Lagos state (Wiseman, 1990: 107). (12) Yet, this development may be linked to the conscious effort by the designers of the republic to minimize the impact of ethnic polarization. It is particularly significant that a precondition for registration as a political party in the Second Republic was the provision of a broad basis for the representation of ethnic groups. Another significant point was that ideological commitments also seemed to figure, though in a highly limited manner. Diamond argues that "(w)hile the UPN and PRP were more

regionally based, they were the sharpest and least parochial in their substantive programs, seeking to build national constituencies around social democratic and socialist ideologies respectively" and adds that the polarization between the NPN government and the UPN-led opposition during the Second Republic relied less on ethnicity and regionalism since class and ideology began to pose a more vital role in line with expanding education and communication as well as the oil boom (1995: 433 and 435).

Still, it is also essential to emphasize that as was the case with the previous experiences in which grand coalitions of temporary convergence could occur, during the Second Republic, polarization was witnessed between the UPN, GNPP, and the PRP on the one hand and the NPN and the NPP on the other hand. Furthermore, reminding one of the previous pattern, appeals to ethnic and regional identities by the political parties in pursuit of sectional interests continued under the Second Republic despite the fact that prior to 1979 elections, sectional appeals for support were outlawed.

The civilian rule continued from the 1979 elections until the succeeding ones in 1983. In the 1983 elections, the five parties that competed in the 1979 elections were accompanied by the National Advance Party (NAP). The NPN was again the victor of the 1983 elections. Yet, it was in 1986 that the Babangida government banned all Second Republic politicians from membership in the political parties as well as participation in other political activities for ten years. These bans were progressively enlarged to cover all officials who held public office and who were convicted of corruption and misconduct. When the lifting of the ban on political parties was announced by the Babangida administration in 1989, thirteen organizations officially applied for running in the elections. The insistence by the

Babangida administration on allowing new candidates and political organizations to compete led various contenders to change the names of their organizations and to try to disassociate themselves from the earlier parties in their bid for securing recognition from the new regime.

Despite all the applications, however, Babangida administration has in the end constructed a two-party system. As none of the existing parties managed to obtain the administration's approval, two new parties were crafted by the regime. (13) In fact, Babangida declared his intention to create one party 'a little to the left' and another one 'a little to the right'. The National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were the two newly created parties, with the former being defined as center-right and the latter as center-left. It was only these two parties that could compete in local, state and federal elections. The two parties were to be organized along the similar structural guidelines. Yet, a degree of continuity from the earlier republics was also evident. The members of the groups that have not been allowed to contest under the Babangida administration all tried to fit into the existing two-party structure. While the members of the NNC (Nigeria National Congress), LC (Liberal Convention) and RPN joined the NRC, those in PSP (People's Solidarity Party), PFN (People's Front of Nigeria) and LP chose to participate in the SDP, revealing that old parties and their personnel have still survived to take part in the new institutions (Badejo, 1997: 184). In Agbaje's opinion, the NRC "designed by the military regime to have an ideological orientation a little right of center, was associated with interests that dominated the NPC of the First Republic and the NPN of the Second; while the Social Democratic Party (SDP), designed to be left of center, was identified with interests that had earlier formed around the UPN, NPP, PRP as well as the AG, NCNC and NEPU, among others"

(1997: 376). Yet, a remarkable effort was made by both parties to construct broad-based and representative party structures. The 'zoning' efforts which aimed to reserve certain posts for all ethnic and regional groups was, for instance, a common policy choice by both parties.

Of all the Nigerian elections, the 1993 presidential elections were regarded as the most controversial. A Muslim from the north was nominated by the NRC whereas a Yoruba Muslim from the south was the candidate of the SDP. With a 30 percent turnout, the elections were relatively free of violence and rather orderly. Yet, Babangida annulled the results of the presidential elections on charges of their being rigged upon the realization that Abiola has won the election. Diamond argues that "(a)s a leader of Yoruba opinion and holder of a prominent traditional title, but also an active and serious Muslim, Abiola was able to bridge the country's regional and religious divides more effectively than any other candidate" (1995: 456).

The decision to annul the results of the election was a landmark in that it seemed to undermine the legitimacy of the then existing order especially among the Yoruba. The suspicion among the Yoruba that a southerner would not be allowed to rule Nigeria grew. The protests by Abiola and his supporters finally culminated in his arrest. A previous pattern of disillusionment seemed to be aggravated by the 1993 events. The fact that during the factional struggle within the AG, Awolowo was imprisoned by the government has produced Yoruba discontent which only seemed to be reinforced by the fate of Abiola.

Both the NRC and the SDP were dismissed immediately by the Abacha government together with the two-party system. The 1996 local elections were contested on a no-party basis. In the same year, five out of the fifteen applicant organizations were allowed to compete in the elections. Joseph indeed underlines

that "(t)he five parties that were eventually granted legal status in 1996 sought to outdo one another in their submissiveness to the junta, going so far as to all nominating Abacha as their presidential candidate in 1998" (1999: 364).

The creation of new political parties was allowed following Abacha's death in 1998. Hauss particularly underlines that "(u)nlike the parties created along with the second republic, the parties that sprang to live in late 1998 had little in common with earlier institutions" (2000: 30). Although nine parties were granted legal recognition, only three performed well enough in state and local elections to contest in the 1999 legislative and presidential elections. Thus, dissolving the parties that were allowed to operate under the Abacha's rule, Abubakar allowed only the People's Democratic Party (PDP), All Peoples Party (APP), and Alliance for Democracy (AD) to function as legal political parties.

In 1999 elections, the relations with the military as well as the sides taken in the Abacha-Obasanjo debate determined the stances of the parties. Obasanjo and other opponents of the Abacha regime formed the PDP whereas supporters of Abacha organized mainly in APP. These two parties were accompanied by the AD of the Yoruba from the south-west which was arguably led by Abiola supporters. The APP proved to be strongest in the north, the AD was popular in the south-west and the PDP managed to obtain a wider range of support than the two across the regions. Hauss also refers to the allegations that "the PDP has close ties to the military, especially to supporters of former President Babangida who is said to have donated as much as $18 million to the party's coffers" (2000: 30). Although Babangida is no more an active participant in Nigerian politics, his influence is still felt in the recent years. Pro-Babangida groups have been calling on him not to desert the political scene. His supporters formed the National Solidarity Association. The Association

for a Better Nigeria also backed Babangida. As regards the relations between the military and the PDP, it is significant that Obasanjo who himself is of military background has people who served under previous military governments in his own team. That factor also led to the arguments that he proved out to be the candidate most acceptable to the military.

In the 1999 elections, the PDP obtained 57.1 and 56.4 percent of the votes in the House of Representatives and Senate respectively. While the APP was able to acquire 30.6 and 31.2 percent, the AD obtained 12.4 percent of the vote in both chambers. It was upon these results that the APP and AD decided to run Ole Falae as their joint candidate against Obasanjo in the presidential elections. Obasanjo obtained 62.8 percent of the vote whereas Ole Falae obtained 37.2 percent. While both Obasanjo and Ole Falae are Christians from the west, the former mainly dominated in the north whereas the west proved to be the latter's stronghold. It is essential to note that being the first military ruler that strictly fulfilled his commitment to a return to civilian regime in the 1970s, Obasanjo also built up his reputation as the head of the Transparency International which operated as an NGO fighting against corruption.

State, parliamentary and presidential elections of 2003 came as a major test for the Nigerian democracy. PDP successes in the parliamentary poll were protested by the All Nigeria People's Party leader Buhari. Similarly, Buhari signaled that his supporters would be challenging the presidential election results through legal action and massive protests. A particularly explosive situation is created by the fact that Islamic scholars openly declared the election of Obasanjo as fraudulent which threatens further religious tensions. Buhari was dominantly supported in the north as he explicitly backed the adoption of the Sharia law in the northern states. Hence,

religion has preserved its centrality even during the 2003 campaign. Indeed, the choice of Buhari as a political counterweight to Obasanjo was interpreted as the "response of the northern military/civilian elite to what they perceived as Obasanjo's insensitivity to their interests" (Obayiuwana, 2003: 1). While Buhari accused Obasanjo for corruption, Buhari's lack of commitment to democracy was a major theme of Obasanjo's campaign (The Economist, April 19, 2003: 36). Yet, the extent to which Obasanjo could enroll northern support as a Yoruba despite his intense competition with a Hausa-Fulani candidate is remarkable. Pointing out that "even in the smallest hamlet, there is often a brand-new mud hut, which is the local PDP office" as "(i)n the cities, the PDP operates out of large new buildings- illustrating that the ruling party has no shortage of money", Winter underlines how "(t)his organization network gives it a huge advantage at election time" (Winter, 2003: 2-3). A third major competitor in the presidential elections was Ojukwu who led the Biafran bid for independence and was backed by the Igbo in the presidential competition.

TABLE 6:

2003 Nigerian Parliamentary Election Results

	House of Representatives	House of Representatives	Senate	Senate
Parties	Percentage of Votes	Number of Seats	Percentage of Votes	Number of Seats
People's Democratic Party	54.5	213	53.7	73
All Nigeria People's Party	27.4	95	27.9	28
Alliance for Democracy	9.3	31	9.7	6

To sum up, the functioning parties mostly failed to qualify as truly national institutions. Most of the time they were formed by a group advocating a particular identity and drew almost exclusive support from the groups claiming to hold the same identity. Addressing regional demands seemed to be the dominating concern for the bulk of the parties. National objectives seemed to be of lower significance. (14) Still, the party system has been subject to continuous crafting undertaken with the objective of minimizing the manipulation of particular identities. Yet, ethnic, religious and regional differences too often resurfaced as factors guiding political actors and their discourse.

The Role of Public Opinion:

It is essential to embark on any analysis of the role of public opinion in the case

of Nigeria by stating that:

- allegiance to the political community has been rather difficult to foster which even

    leads some analysts to question the rationale behind Nigerian unity,

- the survival of civil society and its operation as a major organized force with an

    agenda of its own has been subject to continuous disruptions,

- and thus societal initiatives intended to bridge the gap between different groups

    and foster a sense of national unity have not been forthcoming.

Popular Perceptions on the Nigerian Nation:

There seems to be a consensus among analysts on that national identity

formation has been a rather complicated effort in the Nigerian case. Hauss agrees

that "there is at most a limited and grudging sense of national identity or integration"

as "(t)he values that matter most to most people lead them to define who they are

politically on the basis of where they stand on those sub-national, overlapping, and

polarizing cleavages" (2000: 28). Morris-Hale similarly points at the "failure of the

country's leaders and its peoples to engender, within themselves, a sense of national

identity and national unity" (1997: 193). (15) Tribe seems to remain the main unit the

people turn to in their search for services, security and allegiance. (16)

A sense of common cause seems to be lacking among the variety of existing

groups. Even the Constitution Drafting Committee of 1976 declared "the State shall

foster a feeling of belonging and of involvement among the various sections of the

country to the end that loyalty to the nation shall override sectional loyalties"

(Joseph, 1999: 367). That project still seems to be far from complete.

Underemphasizing the peculiar characteristics of various groups was then attempted

by the Nigerian authorities. As ethnicity became more of a divisive factor, Nigerian authorities even avoided asking questions relating to ethnic, religious or tribal identity in census efforts. Yet, multiple identities seem to have retained their dominance over a single and all-encompassing Nigerian identity. The fact that sectional allegiances proved to be stronger than the national ones has begun to complicate the task of preserving Nigerian national unity. Suberu points at what is perceived as "growing cynicism and scepticism regarding the political legitimacy and structural viability of the very idea of a single Nigerian federal state" (1997(b): 359). For those with grievances, Nigerian unity has increasingly become less relevant. Joseph, for instance, stresses that "(s)ince 1993, the sentiment that Nigeria should not continue to exist as one entity is no longer an extremist notion, but one that has increasing appeal to southern intellectuals" who complain of northern domination and their alleged marginalization (1999: 361).

A major factor that seemed to weaken allegiance to a Nigerian nation and a sense of shared destiny is the 'indigeneity' principle. It seems possible to argue that Nigerians could enjoy full citizenship rights only in their own state. A major discrepancy seemed to characterize the rights an individual could enjoy in his home state and in other parts of Nigeria. Bach reaches the conclusion that "discrimination against nonindigenes was building up as a growing impediment to the development of migration and contacts outside one's state of origin" with a decline in mobility since "Nigerian citizens have no right to indigeneity outside the state ascribed to them on the sole basis of genetic antecedents" (1997: 341 and 337). (17) The claim to political rights, right to land or right to property were all determined by whether one was defined as indigenous to a state or not.

It is essential to stress that one can not rightfully talk about a monolithic political opinion among the Nigerian public. The north-south divide which was also reflected in the organization of the political scene turned out to be a major reference point for the population in identifying themselves. The north was always perceived as a bastion of conservatism and strong attachment to traditional structures as opposed to the modernizing south. There were high concerns among the northerners that southern culture and ways of life would dilute their own. Joseph indeed refers to a six-zone model of political culture in Nigeria composed of northern states, Borno and its environs in the northeast, minorities in the middle-belt, southwest Yoruba states, southeast Igbo states, and minorities in the south (1999: 365).

Yet, various organizations representing different sections of the population revealed highly consolidated stances. Christian organizations have been the major ones. They have indeed become highly vocal in challenging the northern dominance of the system. Suberu points at how "the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has been in the forefront of those complaining about northern-Muslim predominance in Babangida's administration, while the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos has sought openly to identify with demands that the first president of the Third Republic be a southerner" in a context where the CAN even threatened a boycott of the 1993 presidential elections when Muslim northerners won the primaries of the two existing parties (1993: 43). As was stated in the analysis of violence in the Nigerian case, religious polarization among the youth has become aggravated. Radicalization seems to have affected particularly the Muslim and Christian university students and has led to clashes between the two on university campuses.

Lack of monolithic stances even within communities was also apparent. To cite a single example, Muslim stances in Yorubaland diverge from those in the north

on a variety of issues. Muslims in Yoruba-dominated states were mainly discontented with their socio-economic, political, and educational standing in comparison to the Christians in the same region. Education in one's own language was the major topic of disagreement among Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland. In fact, the threat perceptions and the concerns of Muslims living in different regions of Nigeria displayed remarkable divergence. (18)

Survival Under Complete Assault: Military Rule and the Civil Initiative

The continuous spiral of military intervention has to be outlined as a major factor affecting the development of civil society. The military coups have made the operation of civil society rather difficult as numerous restrictions were erected. Hauss argues that "the long history of military rule has neither provided many outlets for protesting participation nor created widespread expectations that mass involvement of any sort can accomplish much" (2000: 29). Civil liberties have been heavily breached. The Buhari regime, for instance, actually ruled through decrees which allowed for the arrest of those who were perceived as posing a security risk as well as through bans on publications or broadcasting that criticized government policies and officials. Increasing repression was witnessed during the Buhari regime. Various interest groups were banned and political discussions were not allowed. Investigations and trials have become daily occurrences. While the Babangida regime initially released various journalists and politicians, repression soon followed. During Babangida's rule, the repression on the civil society seemed to continue as the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) were banned with human rights organizations operating under strict restrictions.

In addition to clamping down on the civil society organizations, the creation of pro-government organizations was stimulated by the military governments. During Babangida's term, there were attempts to revitalize the civil society through government-led efforts. A Directorate for Social Mobilisation (MAMSER) was established in 1987 which aimed to mobilize the masses "(t)hrough 'political awareness' rallies, community lectures, musical messages, radio advertisements and discussions, touring drama troupes, visits to primary and secondary schools, development of special curricula for the schools, and specialized programs for groups like the military and trade unions..." whereas the Centre for Democratic Studies (CDS) was formed with the objective of training the local politicians in line with the requirements for the operation of a democratic framework (Diamond, 1991: 60). In MAMSER's opinion, "(i)f you want democratic government to be sustained over time, then the people have to be enlightened, mobilized, and properly educated" (Hauss, 2000: 37). Similarly, the military has aided the creation of such organizations as the National Youth Movement or the Fourth Force during its tenure in the hope of building a reservoir of support for themselves. Association for a Better Nigeria, for instance, has been formed to extend support to Babangida and has derived benefits during his tenure in office. Abacha followed the same pattern by creating youth organizations for building up support for his regime.

In line with their disillusionment, a degree of apathy towards the political process was also discernible among the Nigerian population. Underlining the fact that about two-thirds of Nigerians still live in the countryside, Hauss argues that "rural residents rarely get deeply involved in national politics on their own" and rather "tend either to follow the initiatives of their local patrons or be swayed by the outsiders who appear during crises or election campaigns" (2000: 27). Widespread

nature of the corrupt practices has shaken the confidence of the Nigerian public in the system and the political actors. Voter turnout figures have been particularly low in the Nigerian case, pointing at the low level of sense of political efficacy. In the 1993 presidential elections the turnout rate was 35 percent whereas in 1999 local elections that figure could only jump to 47 percent.

Wiseman states that "available evidence suggests that, far from being a misunderstood alien import, competitive democracy has widespread popular support among the Nigerian population at all levels of society" (1990: 100). Yet, the Nigerian public has mostly perceived military rule as an opportunity to rid the system of corruption and misconduct that has completely permeated civilian governments. The promises by the military leaders to end corruption and provide for the efficient use of the resources of the Nigerian economy have been endorsed by the population. Military takeovers have thus been hailed with great optimism at times. Celebrations following the 1983 coup were in no way less striking than the ones following the coup in the 1960s. Still, these high hopes have been disappointed shortly. Diamond points at how the public initially extended support to the 1983 coup which promised an end to corruption and waste, yet then withdrew its support when the Buhari government targeted civil society and basic freedoms (1991: 56). (19) This reversal of attitude was due to the fact that public criticism was one thing that the new regime could not tolerate as the major objective seemed to be the stifling of the associations, the press, and all potential channels of opposition. A similar course was adopted by the Babangida administration which "rode to power in August 1985 on a wave of popular revulsion over the unprecedented repression unleashed by his military colleague, General Muhammadu Buhari" (Diamond, 1991: 54-55). While Babangida's promises of the restoration of civilian rule expanded support for him, his

constant attempts at delaying this transition seemed to have shaken public confidence in him. Hence, Babangida eroded his own base of support by increasingly placing restrictions on liberties and continuously distancing himself from the commitment to a prompt transition to democracy. Yet, the belief that the corruption and ineptitude of civilian rule might be redressed by the military gradually lost its popular appeal. Popular distaste for the annulment of Abiola's victory and the protests amidst which Babangida was urged to leave office following this decision provided the clearest examples. (20)

In spite of all these constraints, however, various civil society organizations could flourish across the Nigerian political scene. Different groups expressing support for democratization and reforms have surfaced. University students had an agenda of their own. The press, professional associations, trade unions, and human rights organizations proved particularly resilient. The belief among the commentators in the potential of the Nigerian civil society is quite remarkable. Joseph indeed points at how "the vigor of civil society with its modern institutions, professional groups, and an independent press militated against the consolidation of dictatorial rule" (1999: 362). In a similar vein, Ohaegbulam claims that Nigerians' "indigenous political cultures and autonomous interest groups and associations, which survived British imperial rule, have tended to prevent absolute rule and to limit, although not prevent, authoritarian rule" (2000: 436). Yet, a variety of limitations of the Nigerian civil society can also be enumerated. It is usually argued that civil society organizations are mainly concentrated in certain parts of the country. Hence surfaces the confinement of their scope and reach. (21) Similarly, the fact that disruptive cleavages are also reflected in civil society organizations seems to pose a major

weakness. Polarization has indeed permeated the structure and operation of such groupings.

Sectional organizations have indeed managed to survive. Ibrahim's analysis strikingly reveals that before long, the Shari'a debate "had spread to the universities, churches, mosques, the pages of newspapers, the radio, and television, seriously polarizing the Nigerian society along religious lines" (1997: 428). Polarization was increasingly traced across various institutions ranging from the departments in the universities to youth organizations such as the Lagos-based Nigerian Muslim Council, the Yoruba Muslim Students Society or the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations of Nigeria and other civil society associations such as the League of Imams and Alfas in the Yoruba states or the Federation of Muslim Women Associations of Nigeria which actually advocated the introduction of Sharia (Suberu, 1997(a): 410 and 411). (22) A variety of Christian groups similarly became active pressure groups. The Secretary-General of the Christian Association of Nigeria is quoted to have warned recently that "...nobody should blame us if we decide to defend ourselves vigorously and relentlessly" (McGreal, March 30, 2001: 1).

It is hence essential to conclude by stating that despite the fact that civil society has been stifled too often through intimidation and repression, it has yet managed to preserve its resilience in the face of almost impossible conditions. A degree of deliberate crafting has also been attempted by the various regimes with certain organizations being formed to mobilize public support. Still, a further qualification relates to the failure to foster an all-encompassing Nigerian identity. The dominance of sectional identities and limitations on the reach of civil society

organizations have worked to sharpen polarization among the different segments of the population.

Initiatives in Conflict Management:

In dealing with ethnic conflict, Nigerian authorities have engaged in various efforts which brought mixed results as:

- territorial as well as economic initiatives and measures intended to enhance the representativeness of the electoral outcomes have been undertaken,

- and these efforts sometimes produced unintended consequences.

Territorial and Political Initiatives: Bolstering Autonomy and Cross-Sectional Support

It is essential to embark on any analysis of the Nigerian case by stating that various efforts at managing the conflict have been undertaken by different governments. In Suberu's opinion, "Nigeria, in spite of its cyclical institutional crises and internecine political conflicts, retains enormous promise as an important African experiment in the creative management of diversity through more or less accommodative or consensual policies and practices" (1997(b): 341).

The creation of states and local governments was one policy upheld by various governments. This was intended to devolve power to various units, break up the three regions that seemed to function as exclusive monolithic blocs, reflect the diversity within each part of the country, and enroll the support of minority groups for Nigerian unity by granting them greater rights. During colonial rule, a system was instituted in which Nigeria was divided into three regions with each region being dominated by one of the major three ethnic groups. Such a structure seemed to pose the risk of reinforcing the existing cleavages. Continuous debates over the design of the federal system in fact characterize the Nigerian experience. The demarcation of units has indeed become the most controversial topic. The insistence of the variety of ethnic minority groups that their rights would be better protected in smaller units as

well as power and resource-based calculations of sectional interests seem to account for that.

Federal, state, and local governments were thus created to satisfy a variety of demands. Even prior to independence, transferring a progressively greater degree of power to the regions was envisaged. The Richards Constitution of 1946 basically entailed the formation of regional councils which would serve mainly advisory functions in the north, east and west whereas the MacPherson Constitution of 1951 transformed the councils into complete political and governmental systems with executive councils and legislative assemblies (Morris-Hale, 1997: 207-208). The region thus became the main administrative unit. The Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 which was regarded as Nigeria's first federal constitution in turn "de-emphasized a strong central government and emphasized regional guarantees against central government encroachment" with an attached list of powers reserved for the central government and concurrent powers (Morris-Hale, 1997: 203). Regional and ethnic differences were retained and even bolstered in this structure. The 1954 design instituted a truly federal structure made up of three regions in the north, the east and the west respectively, with each being dominated by one of the three main ethnic groups. A fourth component was introduced in 1963 with the creation of a 'midwest' region out of the western region following a disagreement in the ranks of the ruling AG. This move had the practical result of addressing the grievances of the minority ethnic groups in the western component of the federation. The major criticism directed against the structure envisaged by the First Republic was that "(i)nstead of complicating and crosscutting the centralized character of the ethnic structure, the federal structure heightened it by making the Yoruba, the Igbo, and the Hausa-Fulani, in effect, governmental as well as ethnic categories" (Diamond, 1995: 466).

This was by no means the final shape of the federal design. The fact that the creation of every state or local government brought with it advantages such as the creation of offices or a greater share of the allocation of resources meant that the claimants to further state or local government grew enormously. The number of the constituent states was first raised to 12 in 1967 and then to 19 in the period of military rule succeeding the collapse of the First Republic. The number of states jumped to 21 in 1987 and to 30 in 1991 as local government areas climbed up to 301, 449, and 589 in 1984, 1989, and 1991 respectively. Six more states were created by the Abacha government in 1996 with a current total of 36. The main intention was to enhance the representation and to boast the resources of the groups other than the major three. Moderation of political stances was expected to follow. In outlining the outcomes of the state creation process, Horowitz lists that Northern heterogeneity could now be more accurately represented, groups which used to be represented by parties constituting minorities in the three-regional structure could now control one or more states and have a voice at the centre, competition between ethnic groups could now be replaced by competition between states, and interethnic cooperation could now be fostered (2000: 606-607 and 612). (23)

Nigerian experience with federalism is usually perceived as a centralizing one. The center is always retained to be strong. Agbaje, for instance, states that "prolonged military rule has also led to a highly centralized federal state which is now described as an essentially unitary system in federal disguise" (1997: 376). The power of the centre seems to stem from the fact that there exists "a system in which federal petroleum taxes and mining rents and royalties comprise more than four-fifths of all public revenues at every level of government" (Suberu, 1993: 42). The collection and allocation of oil revenues by the federal government is hence of

particular significance. Thus, the concentration of resources in the hands of the federal government also led to the concentration of political power.

The Second Republic seems to be a landmark as regards the initiatives undertaken in managing the conflict. Diamond claims that the Second Republic actually envisaged a "concern for generating crosscutting cleavages" and adds that it "demonstrated that deep ethnic divisions can be managed by democratic institutional designs that provide opportunities to crosscut and incentives to accommodate ethnic differences" (1995: 431 and 469). The 1979 Constitution, by placing utmost emphasis on allegiance to the 'federal character', aimed to institute a highly centralizing federal structure. This commitment was retained in the 1992 constitutional revision. The 'federal character' principle was defined as "the need to ensure that 'there shall be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government [of the federation] or in any of its agencies" and was perceived to be relevant to the "formation of political parties, the electoral process, the composition of the presidential cabinet, the presidential appointments, the composition of the officer corps and other ranks of the armed forces, and recruitment to the public service and federal institutions" (Bach, 1997: 335).

Similarly, the parties were placed under the obligation to refrain from organizing along ethnic lines. The 1979 constitution instituted a presidential system based on the observation of the 'federal character' principle in the election of the president and the composition of his cabinet. The President had to obtain simple plurality and a quarter of the votes in at least two-thirds of the states to win office. Hence, obtaining the highest number of votes was not sufficient and had to be accompanied by additional criteria. Another requirement was that the President had

to choose one member from each state in forming his cabinet. Section 135 (3) of the 1979 constitution states that "the President shall appoint at least one Minister from each State, who shall be an indigene of such state" whereas Section 203 (2) b states that executive committee or other governing bodies of parties have to "reflect that their members should belong to different States not being less than two-thirds of all the States comprising the Federation" (Bach, 1997: 337).

This requirement for widespread support for the President was further extended in the following years. The 1989 constitution of the Third Republic required the President to be elected even on a wider basis by obtaining the majority and a third of votes in two-thirds of the states. Provided that none of the candidates could meet these requirements, a second election was to be held in which a third of the votes in a majority of the states would suffice. Failure in meeting this criterion in turn brought the requirement of the election of the president by a simple majority of the votes in an electoral college made up of all members of state and national legislatures. While the presidential system is currently retained, the House of Representatives elected from single-member districts and the Senate made up of three members from each state and one member from the capital Abuja also remain intact.

There were also attempts at shaping the party system. The decision to form a two-party system during Babangida's term was one such effort. The condition that the parties appeal across ethnic groups, regions, and religions was frequently imposed, particularly in response to the experiences of the First Republic. Cross-sectional parties in structure, appeal, and choice of candidates were thus encouraged.

In contrast to the other cases examined in this study, language did not prove to be a controversial issue in Nigeria. Hauss underlines that "(t)he overwhelming

majority of Nigerians only speak their 'home' language, and if they learn another, it is invariably English and not one of the other indigenous tongues" and adds that while the elites from different groups communicate through English which stands as the official language of the government, the poorly educated members of the different groups interact through a language that combines simple terms in English with African grammatical structures (2000: 26 and 5). The most striking factor is indeed that there seems to exist neither a Nigerian culture nor a concerted effort to invent one. Such is the level of cultural diversity that English has become the lingua franca with no indigenous language being spoken across Nigeria.

Managing religious conflict has become a major challenge for the Nigerian state. In spite of the commitment of the state to a secular structure, debates have centered on the imposition of the Sharia law. The controversy over a federal level Sharia court ended with a compromise which allowed every state to come up with a Sharia Court of Appeal if they so wished. Suberu underlines the fact that while "(u)nder the 1978 compromise on the Sharia issue, the jurisdiction of a state Sharia Court of Appeal was limited to 'civil proceedings involving questions of Islamic personal law", "(u)nder Decree No.26 of 1986 and the Reviewed Constitution of 1988, however, the jurisdiction of the Sharia Court was expanded to embrace all civil proceedings involving questions of Islamic law" (1997(a): 405). Hence, the 1989 constitution retained the Sharia courts of appeal option for the states and expanded their jurisdiction to non-personal civil proceedings on matters pertaining to Islamic law. The guarantee extended to the Christian population was that non-Muslims were not subject to Sharia yet could submit themselves to its jurisdiction by voluntarily declaring so in writing.

In addition to the controversy surrounding the implementation of the Sharia law, power-sharing principles as well as the consociational model have recently become contested topics. Bach argues that "(w)hereas Federal Character was the hope of the 1980s, zoning and rotational presidency seem to be that of the 1990s on the basis of the definition of new lines of partition (cluster of states)" (1997: 343). Zoning is defined by Badejo as "the distribution of party and elective offices among geographical divisions of the country" (1997: 185). A commitment to power-sharing was undertaken by the Abacha plan of 1995 for a transition to civilian rule according to which all levels of government would be subjected to rotational power-sharing with the identification of six zones and six political offices for a period of 30 years. The 1995 constitution thus envisaged power rotationality. The country was divided into six geopolitical zones of the northeast, northwest, southwest, southeast, middle belt and the southern minority regions. Six top posts were listed as the offices of President, Vice President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. State and local governments were also required to operate on similar principles of rotationality. A Federal Character Commission was to monitor and ensure equitable and fair distribution of offices and posts. The Commission formed in 1996 also reiterated that the dominance of a few states, ethnic or other sectional groups in government agencies would be unacceptable.

In this context, the manipulation of the institutions and mechanisms installed with the objective of managing the conflict surfaced as the major problem. The priority attached by the political actors, whether military or civilian, to accumulation of wealth and power led to the abuse of institutions and policies. More specifically, Bach underlines that the Federal Character principle appears to have sharpened lines

and sources of cleavages and points at its disruption of "the emergence of national elites, which had been growing gradually, beginning with the Yakubu Gowon years" (1997: 342). Other unintended consequences also followed. Suberu argues that the creation of states and localities has turned into an extremely divisive experience as each unit has been carved through military fiat rather than popular preferences and each state or locality has begun defining a new set of non-indigenes who then were discriminated against (1997(b): 355). (24) Hence, the exclusive nature of the creation of state and local governments could not be avoided. Hauss also confirms how ethnicity has been reinforced as a disruptive force in Nigerian politics as areas of 'home rules' have been provided for main ethnic groups and ethnic identity has been utilized as a stepping-stone to political power (2000: 35). Rather than supporting the initiatives at conflict management, the parties and the society at large have attempted to bend the institutions and policies to their own favor.

Furthermore, it is the chief argument of this study that the major flaw in all these designs revolves around the issue of indigeneity. Bach underlines that discriminatory practices were given the ground to flourish with the principle of 'indigeneity' as "(i)n some states, the implementation of party programs on free education, access to health, and cheap housing schemes excluded nonindigenes, although they equally paid their tax; in others, 'entry forms into federal institutions like the armed forces, the Nigerian Defense Academy, Federal Government Colleges, as well as federal scholarships...went only to their indigenes' " (1997: 340). The principle hence functions in a rather disintegrative and discriminatory manner.

The Major Issue of Contention: Formulas on the Allocation of Resources

Regional economic imbalances plague Nigeria. Southern and particularly Yoruba socioeconomic dominance has been resented by the northerners. Most

important of all, Nigerian state has been unable to improve the conditions under which its largely impoverished population lives. Ohaegbulam points at how "(t)he World Bank ranked Nigeria among the 20 poorest countries of the world in 1993" (2000: 413). Gasoline shortages in an oil-rich economy are a typical example of mismanagement.

Unemployment proved to be a major problem even for the university graduates. Nigeria has a very young population and an immense rate of population growth. Hauss states that "(d)uring most of the 1980s it averaged a bit over 3 percent per year and has dipped just below that figure for most of the 1990s" and refers to the estimates that place the unemployment level at 30 percent at least (2000: 4 and 43). Religious violence was occasionally attributed to such economic factors. In Ibrahim's opinion, the return to Kano of the Igbos that fled the north following the civil war, reclaiming the jobs and services taken over by the Hausa-Fulani upon their departure, served to strengthen feelings of marginalization by the Hausa-Fulani (1997: 437-438).

With the country being a major supplier of oil, Nigerian economy has been highly sensitive to fluctuations in world market prices. (25) To exemplify that pattern of dependence, Hauss points at how "(i)n the second half of the 1980s alone, plummeting oil prices led to more than 80 percent fall in GNP" (2000: 41). A major failure is hence the inability to diversify the country's economic base. Criminalization of the Nigerian economy was another main problem. Corruption and the manipulation of state offices for personal enrichment have served to undermine the stability of the political as well as the economic system.

The sharing of resources has always been a highly controversial topic. (26) Conflict over oil revenues and their allocation has been particularly intense.

Redistribution of federally collected revenues has been the major issue with increasing charges of the politicization of the revenue-allocation process.

Ethnic minority groups located in oil-rich Niger Delta vocally engaged in protests and demanded a greater share of revenues. They also advocated better conditions for their region such as in response to environmental degradation. The Ogoni people have been among the most vocal groups. Ecological problems and the denial of a favored status in line with their greater burden in the extraction of oil have disappointed the Ogoni. They have started advocating variety of reforms such as "the amendment of the Nigerian constitution to make mining and minerals a joint federal-state, rather than exclusively federal, responsibility; the vesting of mineral land rents, and perhaps oil royalties, in the communities or states of derivation, rather than in the federal government; the payment of a significant proportion of federally-collected petroleum profits tax to the oil-producing regions in consonance with the principle of derivation; the establishment of appropriate institutional and financial arrangements by which the oil-producing communities may be compensated for, or protected against, the ecological problems and risks of oil exploration and exploitation; the establishment of appropriate legislation to compel the state-backed multinational oil companies to protect the environmental rights, and identify with the developmental aspirations, of their host (oil-producing) communities; and the recasting of Nigeria's defective federal system along genuinely federal, or even ethnoconfederal, lines in order to afford greater autonomy and security to ethnic minority communities" (Suberu, 1997(b): 352). The fact that the communities that inhabit the areas where oil was being extracted were not offered any assistance in their regional development on matters such as environmental degradation, lack of

employment or lack of access to health and welfare services proved to be the major point of contention. (27)

Equality of states, population balances, social development factor, internal revenue generational effort, land mass and/or terrain, and population density have all been employed as criteria for revenue allocation from 1970 on and at varying weight (Suberu, 1997(b): 350). During the Gowon period, equality criterion as well as that of relative population have been initiated in determining the level of allocations to the sub-federal units. Yet the former criterion seems to have inflated the demands for state creation whereas the latter served to make the population counts and census attempts rather explosive issues that could easily degenerate into conflict. Bach perceives the year 1970 as a watershed "with the change operated in the revenue-allocation formula that, ever since, has emphasized the principles of equality and demography at the expense of derivation" and adds that "(s)ince the 1970 reform, Nigeria's federal revenue-allocation mechanisms represent a self-sustaining incentive for creating new states or local governments; once established, they are guaranteed statutory revenues proportionally higher than those previously received by the area from which they were carved out" (1997: 334 and 344).

The revenue-sharing formula on the basis of which the financial resources would be allocated was highly contested especially with respect to the extent to which the criteria of inter-unit equality and population-based distribution would be taken into consideration. The level of the federal revenue going to the states has also been subject to disagreement. These discussions have been quite interrelated with the inflation of the number of existing states. Furthermore, the local governments also pressed for, and actually obtained, a greater share of revenues. Equality principle which guaranteed a certain level of revenues to all states and local governments was

a basic drive that stimulated the claimants to state and local government creation. Furthermore, the abandonment of the derivation principle which entailed favorable returns to regions deriving huge resources from exported commodities or oil deposits proved to be a highly contentious deed especially for the minority groups from whose land oil was extracted.

Conclusion: Democratic Stability at Risk

Alternation of military and civilian rule has become the major characteristic of the Nigerian political scene. Diamond indeed reveals this fact most strikingly in stating that "if (military) authoritarianism cannot endure and legitimate itself in pure form, neither, apparently, can democracy" (1995: 472). Elections have periodically been characterized by violence and fraud. Rioting, corruption, and suspensions have become ordinary occurrences. While experiences with civilian rule have continuously come to a halt with a continuous decline in the quality of the operation of democratic mechanisms, authoritarian reversals soon followed. Hence is aggravated the lack of stability and certainty associated with the Nigerian political system.

A degree of arbitrariness seemed to characterize the conduct of elections. The true motives in the annulment of the properly conducted 1993 elections were questioned. On the other hand, charges of fraud were made by a variety of observers even for the 1999 elections. Amidst the allegations that the number of votes cast exceeded the number of registered voters, opposition candidate Ole Falae rejected the results all together. The results of the 2003 elections are also contested by the opposition leaders as allegations of misconduct are highly widespread. The preservation rather than the improvement of the quality of the functioning of democratic mechanisms has hence been the major challenge.

The challenges facing the Obasanjo administration and the ways in which the current administration attempts to tackle them seems to be a major test for odds of democratization in Nigeria. The current polarization along religious, ethnic and regional lines is highly relevant in that sense. The major factors that come to the

forefront in an analysis of prospects for democratic stability and consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict in the Nigerian case may be listed as follows:

- violence especially in its communal form has completely permeated the Nigerian society in its politically, ethnically and religiously-motivated manifestations,

- the political community has come under questioning from a variety of different actors with the fostering of a civilian initiative for the management of the conflict being a difficult effort considering the repression experienced under the continuous cycle of civilian and military rule and the high level of polarization between organizations representing particular groups,

- while political parties are mainly organized in line with sectional allegiances and intend to mobilize particular groups, their tendency to view the competition among themselves as a matter of survival also eliminates any contribution they might make to the management of the conflict,

- yet, various efforts have been made in devising an integrated strategy of conflict management with a particular emphasis on territorial and political initiatives despite the fact that the chosen mechanisms have produced unintended consequences through occasionally exacerbating the conflict.

It is hence possible to argue that Nigeria's standing in relation to the variables considered as relevant to the current analysis places it at a difficult position in coping with the conflict. It may thus be argued that an improvement is essential in a number of these variables for the survival of a stable democratic political system. The Nigerian case thus presents a clear example of a context where policies and institutions for managing the conflict do not guarantee the confinement of the conflict. The contribution of other affirmative factors is also needed to assist the gains that could be scored by instituting mechanisms of conflict management. The

elimination or confinement of violence, the development of political parties which intend to appeal to the whole society as well as a free network of civil society organizations intent on bolstering support for the political community may then be of great assistance. The current experience with democratic mechanisms stands as a critical landmark with respect to whether and how these factors might be erected. It hence seems possible to conclude that despite the devising of initiatives in conflict management, the failure of the parties as well as the society to assist these initiatives and large-scale violence have jointly complicated the prospects for democratic consolidation.

Nevertheless, the Nigerian case also testifies to the intractable nature of such conflicts due to a number of reasons. The rise of a variety of militant regional organizations, the intensification of religious violence, and the continuation of sectional appeals by the candidates as evidenced even by the 2003 elections seem to signal that the conflict is likely to endure.

TABLE 7 :

Actors and Attitudes Complicating Conflict Management in the Nigerian Case

Political parties	- Parties mainly perceive a stake in extensively organizing in the regions where the groups they intend to appeal to constitute the majority of the population. While ruling at the national level necessitates the building up of coalitions, the winners of regional competition are mostly pre-determined due to the ethnic and regional basis of party support, - The requirements placed on party organization and competition by the respective regimes weakened the resort to ethnic, regional and religious themes to a certain extent. Yet, developing truly national party structures proved to be a major challenge, - Parties representing minority groups declare their perception of being excluded from the political process.
Convergence among the political elite and in the party system	- The search for consensus was confined to fulfilling the requirements imposed by various regimes, - The zero-sum perception of political competition by the political elite is particularly apparent. The control of the center and, hence, the resources has become the main stake for the parties which led them to occupy uncompromising stances. Charges of fraud, misconduct, and rigging are waged by different political actors against each other, - Failure to converge around sustaining democratic mechanisms at all costs and shunning away from reducing the salience of ethnic, religious and regional identities in politics has been remarkable. - Grand coalitions have been formed but these have also reflected a 'progressive-conservative' polarization.
The public	- Nigerian identity has been rather weakly rooted among the population. - Recently increasing parallel organization of Christian and Muslim groups particularly aggravated communal violence. Religious polarization has been particularly rampant among the youth with the spread of Sharia debates to universities, mosques, churches, or newspapers. - More vocal advocacy of the rights of minority groups is also remarkable. - Restrictions on the organization of groups and the creation of pro-government organizations have further bolstered polarization.

NOTES:

(1) Wiseman argues that "(u)nlike earlier Nigerian coups, the one in 1983 is difficult to portray as resulting from ethnic-regional tensions: a northern-led civilian government was overthrown by a northern-led coup, but neither exhibited the homogeneity of 1966" (1990: 117).

(2) In Ohaegbulam's estimates the Hausa constitute the 21 percent of the population whereas the Yoruba, Igbo and the Fulani respectively account for 20, 19, and 9 percent (2000: 416).

(3) It is usually argued that the British administrations revealed a favoritism for the north as Onwukike, for instance, argues that "it was obvious that Lugard centralized the treasury to enable him 'divert revenue that earlier had been properly the South's to balance the northern deficit…[and] even hoped to shift his government headquarters from South to the North which was his spiritual home" (1997: 195).

(4) Yet, for many analysts, these religious conflicts are a reflection of deeper and older conflicts such as competition for power, influence and resources. Commentators argue that some of the religious crises such as the one in Bauchi in 1991 may be accounted for by the demands for self-determination of those who have witnessed the expansion of the emirs' authority to their own lands under the British colonial rule. Ibrahim, for instance, underlines that "most of the religious crises in the North have erupted on the fringes of the emirates (the traditional kingdoms of the Muslim North), such as Kafanchan, Tafawa Balewa, and other areas generally defined as the Middle-Belt" (1997: 440). This argument indeed provides support for the belief that the current religious riots have something to do with the imposition of Hausa-Fulani rule on the people who were rather alien to it as "(i)n the absence of any political or economic power with which to reverse the situation, religion became

a ready tool in the hands of the indigenes to rally against the aliens" (Ibrahim, 1997: 441).

(5) While it is possible to duplicate such examples, it is particularly striking that "during the 1983 presidential campaign, one of the presidential candidates told the people of his home state not to vote for his leading opponent who, apart from being an infidel, could not speak to them in their own indigenous language, but only in an alien language through an interpreter" (Afolayan, 1997: 56).

(6) A zoning exercise was indeed undertaken by both parties to ensure broad representation. The practical result of zoning was that the SDP reserved the key seats for 6 defined groups in 6 different zones ranging from the northeast and the Yoruba west to southern minorities, middle belt, Christian north, Igbo east, northwest whereas the NRC "zoned its presidential nomination to the Muslim far north, the vice-presidential candidacy to the former Eastern region, the party chairmanship to the old Western region, and the post of party secretary to the Middle Belt" (Suberu, 1993: 48).

(7) Diamond points at the 'national spread of victories' by referring to the fact that the areas of SDP domination were the Yoruba west, southern delta states, ethnic minorities in the north and the northern states which used to back the PRP during the Second Republic whereas the NRC secured its main support from the north, Igbo east and minorities in the south (1995: 453-454).

(8) In fact, a new generation of political actors surfaced in the north. Diamond refers to the emergence of radical youth groups who have traditionally fallen out of the emirate structures and gathered under the NEPU (1995: 422). In accounting for the divergence of opinion within the north, Diamond points at the "widening class cleavage in the far north, as a new generation of radical intellectuals and

professionals sought to mobilize the peasantry in a struggle to dismantle the entire structure of traditional class privilege and power, based on land and the emirate system" (1995: 435).

(9) Ohaegbulam presents an account of how the two events could indeed be associated (2000: 426).

(10) Yet, a split in the leadership of the PRP which appealed to the radicals in the north came through the approach of the elected governors of Kano and Kaduna who aimed to intensify their links with the opposition governors which was rejected by their party.

(11) In analyzing the NPN, Diamond claims that "(a)lthough party power was based on the aristocratic and modern technocratic elites of the Muslim upper north, Yoruba, Igbo, and minority political and business elites played strategic roles in the party's formation, and the NPN showed signs of becoming the predominant party of an increasingly integrated and cohesive Nigerian bourgeoisie" (1995: 433).

(12) Wiseman also qualifies that "the national support for the party reflected perceptions of it being a Kano party rather than having much to do with its ideological orientations" (1990: 106).

(13) It was highly significant that electoral commission "based on its investigations, concluded that the associations were weak organizationally, depended largely on a few wealthy individuals, were thin on ideas, exhibited little difference if any in ideology, and suffered from a personalization of politics that had led to intense factionalism" and "found that most of the parties were merely reincarnations of defunct parties and were being 'teleguided' by banned politicians" (Badejo, 1997: 178-179). The President then declared that the military decided to create two new political parties. He even likened the political parties seeking registration to

'yesterday's food in glittering new dishes' and 'old political wolves in new-breed sheep skins' (Badejo, 1997: 181-182).

(14) To cite a major example, it seems to be particularly striking that Ahmadu Bello who was the most powerful and prominent political figure in the north opted out for serving as the premier of the north and encouraged his deputy to serve as the prime minister of the federal government instead.

(15) Pointing at what he perceives to be "the very shallow sense of nationhood among the Nigerian populace", Ohaegbulam confirms that "Nigerians have yet to develop a deep sense of loyalty to a multinational Nigerian state, which transcends their loyalty to their traditional states based on ethnicity" (2000: 415).

(16) For some analysts kinship affiliations predominate over any other attachment. Afolayan argues that "(i)n the rural areas, communal loyalty, at the level of the village or lineage communities, is primary and paramount" and adds that "(f)or the mass of the rural population, kinship connections usually command absolute and unquestioned commitment, far above loyalty to region or ethnic group" (1997: 49).

(17) While stressing that "many are the 'nonindigenous' Nigerians who, particularly in Northern Nigeria have come to be considered as indigenes by the village chief or local government officials despite the clearly established 'non-indigenous' origin of these individuals", Bach confirms that "(t)hese instances are, however, becoming fewer as the size of the states is reduced and access to (scarcer) resources becomes more precisely codified" (1997: 341-342).

(18) Muslim groups found it particularly difficult to organize around a common cause. The Tijjaniyya and Qadriyya sects of Tariqah brotherhoods, for instance, clashed with each other. Modernist versus traditionalist interpretations of the true meaning of Islam were also widespread. Ibrahim points at how the radical Izala

society which had the chief objective of purifying Islam has opposed the Tarigah brotherhood as a result of which waves of violence in the mosques in major cities of the north were witnessed throughout the 1970s and in early 1980s (1997: 435). Afolayan in turn refers to Aminu Kano's "use of an Islamic ideology of liberation to mobilize and catalyze into popular revolution the disenchantment of the talakawa Hausa peasantry against the opposition and feudalistic domination of the Fulani ruling aristocracy" (1997: 58). This period was succeeded by one where the efforts at achieving a degree of unity among the various Islamic groups for the benefit of the Islamic cause intensified. Ibrahim indeed confirms that "during the late 1980s and early 1990s, intrareligious conflict among Muslims decreased significantly" (1997: 443).

(19) While prior to the 1983 coup, students were seen as taking "to the streets in several cities, carrying signs calling for the return of the military", Diamond stated that his "own preelection survey in Kano state, the largest and most volatile in the country, showed a majority of the state's electorate and two-thirds of the voters in Kano city favoring a military government" (1995: 437 and 438).

(20) Agbaje indeed presents a breaking point in the popular perceptions of the role of the military in arguing that "(f)rom the late 1980s, however, a new consensus has gradually emerged to the effect that 'the armed forces have compounded Nigeria's political and economic problems,' leading in turn to concerted attempts by groups in civil society to achieve the military's withdrawal from public life" (1997: 377).

(21) Commenting on the state of the Nigerian civil society, Agbaje voices the reservation that "a source of weakness remained its elitist nature and its concentration in urban centers and in the Yoruba speaking west" (1997: 377). Similarly, Diamond points at the limited scope and reach of the Nigerian civil society

in stating that "(t)he human rights groups in particular remain largely southern and urban operations, and, as a result of developmental disparities as much as ethnic and regional frictions, the professional associations are also much more strongly based in the south than in the north" (1995: 479).

(22) As was stated in the previous parts of the analysis, clashes between the students from different communities were of particular significance. In 1989 in the Bayero University in Kano, for instance, university's Muslim Students Society (MSS) actually confronted the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) over the use of the University Lecture Theatre whereas school uniform debates have led to clashes between Muslim and Christian students in Queen Amina College of Kaduna in 1987 (Ibrahim, 1997: 431).

(23) In analyzing the affirmative aspects of the federal structure, Hauss outlines that "the creation of smaller states has made local politics less and less a part of the all-or-nothing nature of national competition" (2000: 35). Hauss also argues that "it was hoped that creating relatively homogeneous state and local governments and holding elections at those levels first would smooth the way to peaceful democratic politics at the national level as well" (2000: 35).

(24) Suberu also adds that territorial arrangements in Nigeria "have served more to satisfy the distributive ambitions of the three ethnic majority formations of Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo, than to assuage the fears of politically vulnerable ethnic minority communities" as "while each of the three majority groups has been divided into no less than four states, the over two hundred ethnic minority communities have been squeezed into a little over ten states" (1997(b): 355).

(25) Hauss claims that 82 percent of Nigerian state revenue "comes from either the sale of oil or taxes on the profits of the operations of the multinational petroleum companies" (2000:32).

(26) Suberu points at the fact that "Nigeria's revenue sharing debates have revolved basically around three issues, namely, (i) the relative proportions of federally collected revenues in the 'Federation Account' that should be assigned to the center, the states, the localities and the so-called 'Special Funds' (vertical revenue-sharing); (ii) the appropriate formulae for the distribution of centrally devolved revenues among the states and among the localities (horizontal revenue sharing) and; (iii) the percentage of federally-collected mineral revenues that should be returned to the oil-producing states and communities on account of the principle of derivation and as compensation for the ecological risks of oil production" (1997(b): 349).

(27) Pointing at the creation in 1992 of the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) which aimed at ecological rehabilitation and economic development, Suberu argues that various policies to that end were far from being implemented in full due to the 'murky administrative politics' of OMPADEC (1997(b): 353).

Democratic Consolidation and Ethnic Conflict: What Do the Cases Reveal?

The case studies confirm that ethnic conflict surfaces as a major problem that has to be tackled in the course of the search for democratic development and stability. Yet, the practical cases examined so far also reveal that sustaining democratic political systems, and even consolidating them, is possible under conditions of ethnic conflict. While such conflicts have a role in determining the direction and pace of democratic development across a variety of political systems, it seems possible to argue that political systems that have managed to confine the effects of the conflict through efforts at conflict management and the operation of certain supporting conditions have achieved more stable outcomes in relation to democratic consolidation.

Democratic consolidation has been firmly erected in Canada and Spain in spite of the conditions created by the conflict. On the other hand, Nigeria has fallen victim to intervals in democratic development and Sri Lanka has suffered from the suspension of certain democratic mechanisms as well as a continuous degeneration in their operation. Still, while a level of uncertainty characterizes all these political systems confronted by ethnic conflict, the situation in the latter two is more precarious mainly with respect to the fact that the challenge of survival and stability in those political systems is real. On the contrary, in the case of Spain and Canada, the uncertainty accompanying the conflict falls short of threatening the regime stability.

Integrated strategy of conflict management and the 'supporting conditions':

Acknowledging that democratic consolidation is not ruled out by the mere existence of ethnic conflict in a certain political system, the main question then boils

down to whether any of the contextual variables that this study underlines is of greater significance than the others in accounting for the potential impact of ethnic conflict on prospects for democratic consolidation. For many authors, the ultimate conclusion is that resort to various democratic mechanisms ensures conflict management (Diamond, 1993; Ross, 1998; Grofman and Stockwell, 2001; Cohen, 1997). The search for an equitable distribution of power and resources through democratic means has indeed been displayed as the only route to conflict management. De Nevers, for instance, argues that "democratization can prevent or dampen ethnic conflicts if the forces pushing for democratization, first, recognize and acknowledge the ethnic differences that exist within the state and, second, if they can accommodate the interests of different groups in a way that is perceived to be fair and evenhanded" (1993: 61).

Yet, this study claims that even when democratic mechanisms are implemented, political systems experiencing intense ethnic conflict are faced with the risk of embarking on the process of democratic development as low quality / intensity democracies. Hence, electoral democracies, semi-democracies or facade democracies may well be the outcomes. It is the chief premise of this study that an integrated strategy of conflict management has to be combined with an affirmative standing in some of the other variables examined in this study for democratic consolidation to become possible. Thus, with a change in the affirmative direction in every single variable placed at the focus of this study, democratic consolidation is more likely to be attained.

It has to be confirmed that 'an integrated strategy of conflict management' is located at the centre of the analysis undertaken here. Conflicts of the type analyzed here need to be addressed by an integrated strategy of conflict management if they

are to be managed and the prospects for democratic consolidation are to be enhanced. Yet, performance in the other three variables stands as the key to the whole debate. Hence, these three variables will be termed as the 'supporting conditions'.

It is thus the chief premise of this study that the major reason why the use of democratic mechanisms does not necessarily guarantee conflict management is that the supporting conditions of an integrated strategy of conflict management may fail to accompany the initiatives undertaken. It is vital to note that while the devising of an integrated strategy of conflict management is the essential step, it has to be assisted by certain other factors if democracy is to be consolidated. Failure of the political parties and the public to assist conflict management and to contribute to the confinement of violence may block the consideration of the initiatives, their implementation or their capability of bringing about the intended effect. Based on the examination of the cases undertaken so far, this study argues that democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict is possible only when affirmative progress in the supporting conditions accompanies an integrated strategy of conflict management. An integrated strategy of conflict management thus has to be joined by:

- a context where violence is eliminated or is removed from posing a threat to the political system,

- intense public support for conflict management and a clear public stance on welding together the political community as well as in condemnation of violence,

- the representation of the grievances of the discontented groups by moderate and non-violent political parties, the effective organization of nationwide political parties throughout the political system by perceiving a stake at each level of political competition, and convergence around broadly shared understandings by all the political parties.

The significance of the supporting conditions stems from one major source. Przeworski et al. claim that "it would be hazardous to center attention exclusively on the legal framework delimiting the powers of institutions and the rights of citizens as the hallmark of democratic consolidation" as "(m)odern democracies are bound to be constitutional, but the processes of selection, access, participation, competition, accountability, and responsiveness are simply too multiple and mutable to be definitively codified" (1995: 51-52). It is indeed in the unfolding of these processes that political parties and the public influence the drawing up as well as the implementation of the initiatives. The confinement of violence is also likely to assist the formulation and implementation of initiatives by fostering support for them. To the extent that supporting conditions accompany the initiatives in conflict management, the capacity of the conflict to delimit the prospects for democratic consolidation is kept at minimum. Yet, failure to devise the essential strategy or to marry the initiatives with supportive conditions maximizes the extent to which the conflict actually delimits the prospects for democratic consolidation. Under such circumstances, there remains the possibility of descending into a low quality / intensity democracy. This still has to be nurtured by steps towards improving performance in the three supporting conditions and marrying these conditions with the essential strategy of conflict management in order to avoid the risk of democratic breakdown.

In this context, each of the cases scrutinized here have clarified certain points as:

- the Nigerian case reveals that initiatives in conflict management do not suffice on their own and need to be accompanied by other supportive conditions in order to bring about the intended effect,

- the Spanish case displays that two affirmative conditions accompanying the initiatives produce a context where in spite of the ongoing violence, the parties and the public assume supportive roles in sustaining a consolidated democracy,

- the Sri Lankan case exemplifies the impossibility of democratic consolidation when a political system fails to display the political will to implement initiatives for conflict management and when this situation is reinforced by unfavorable standing in all of the three supporting conditions,

- and the Canadian example seems to function as the closest approximation to the ideal setting for conflict management and maintenance of a consolidated democracy with the initiatives being supported by the parties and the public in a context where violence is no longer a factor.

It is also essential to note that divergent standing in each of the variables is accompanied by different levels of democratic performance across political systems.

TABLE 8:

Democratic Performance in Relation to the Four Variables

			VARIABLES		
CASES	Domestic Peace	Political Party Role	Public Involvement	Integrated Strategy	Democratic Performance
Canada	Affirmative	Affirmative	Affirmative	Affirmative	Consolidated Democracy
Spain	Negative	Affirmative	Affirmative	Affirmative	Consolidated Democracy
Nigeria	Negative	Negative	Negative	Affirmative	Interrupted Electoral Democracy
Sri Lanka	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative (the formulated initiatives have not been implemented)	Electoral Democracy

The central step: An integrated strategy of conflict management

<u>What does the drawing up of an 'integrated' strategy entail?:</u>

It is evident from the cases examined that resort to political, cultural, socio-economic and even military mechanisms stands as a central component of the attempt at delimiting the impact of the conflict on democratic development. An integrated strategy of conflict management is thus expected to encompass political, socioeconomic, cultural, and even military mechanisms. Richardson and Wang claim that " 'conflict resolution' through military victory is likely to be an uncertain, costly, destructive and time consuming process" (1993: 188). Hence, military component of conflict management strategy assumes significance solely as the part of a whole.

The political component, on the other hand, may include institutional and territorial arrangements. The former may entail measures pertaining to electoral system designs or reserved offices for certain groups. As far as the territorial arrangements are concerned, centralism, regionalism, federalism, confederalism, and asymmetrical devolution are identified as the potential mechanisms for addressing conflicts (Coakley, 1993: 12). It is completely essential here to underline that the utility of such territorial arrangements are largely dependent on demographic factors such as the extent to which the territory under consideration is ethnically cohesive and the group under consideration is territorially concentrated. Quebec, for instance, is defined as a separate province as it is estimated that "while 85 percent of Canada's francophones are concentrated in Quebec, 82 percent of the inhabitants of Quebec are francophones" (Laponce, 1993: 37). The discussions pertaining to the territorial organization of the state prove more controversial in the case of Sri Lanka due also to the demographic criteria. Wilson particularly underlines that 27.4 per cent of the Ceylon Tamils live outside the northern and eastern provinces (1993: 145) whereas

the 1981 census reveals that in the northern province Sri Lankan Tamils constitute 50.7 per cent of the population while they make up just the 21.2 per cent of the eastern province where the Sri Lankan Moor constitute the largest share of the population with 30.4 per cent (De Silva, 2001: 284).

As another mechanism for conflict management, cultural autonomy may translate into educational and broadcasting rights for a group language and even the granting of official status to that language at the national or local level. In fact, the determination of which mechanisms to resort to is a rather context-specific enterprise. Coakley argues that the group type in terms of the group's distinguishing features, demographic characteristics, location in cultural division of labor, state tradition in terms of the granting of individual and group rights, and state autonomy in the international system are the factors that have to be taken into account in the selection of conflict management strategies (1992: 352). Indeed, the extent to which any proposed model offers a general conflict management strategy that would be applicable to a variety of political systems surfaces as a controversial topic. (1)

Esman stresses that the long-term goals pursued by governments in conflict management might be enumerated as " 1) to depluralize their society so that it becomes increasingly homogeneous; 2) to legitimate, maintain, and even foster existing patterns of pluralism; and 3) to reduce the political salience of ethnic solidarity while accepting social pluralism as a continuing reality" (1994: 41). The extent to which these proposed paths may be considered democratic is subject to extensive debate. (2) A variety of democratic mechanisms have indeed been advocated for conflict management. Sisk sums up conflict-regulating practices under two broad categories of the consociational approach (involving the granting of autonomy and the creation of confederal arrangements, the creation of a

polycommunal federation, adoption of PR and consensus rules in executive, legislative, and administrative decision making, adoption of a highly proportional electoral system, and acknowledgment of group rights and corporate federalism) and the integrative approach (entailing the creation of a mixed or noncommunal federal structure, the establishment of a single inclusive unitary state, the adoption of majoritarian but integrated executive, legislative, and administrative decision making, adoption of a semimajoritarian or semi-proportional electoral system, and the adoption of ethnicity-blind public policies) (1996: 70). Similarly, Grofman and Stockwell produce a typology of institutional approaches to fostering stable democracy in plural societies as encompassing 1) mass-oriented and communal institutions (perpetuating the vitality of ethnicity) involving separate legal systems, specific provisions for group rights, separate school systems, ethnically-based allocative rules for jobs within the understanding of proportional representation, 2) elite-based and communal institutions entailing ethnically rooted federalism, mono-ethnic electoral constituencies, elite power sharing mechanisms, electoral rules fostering centralized elite control, parliamentary system, 3) mass-oriented and integrative institutions (seeking to minimize importance of ethnicity and bolster multi-ethnic character) involving a legal system emphasizing individual rights, political distribution not relating to ethnicity, commitment to single common language or multilingualism forbidding certain markers of group distinctiveness, 4) elite-based and integrative institutions entailing non-ethnically defined federalism, STV in multi-ethnic constituencies, and the alternative vote in such constituencies (2001: 7). While, for instance, there was an effort in the Spanish state of autonomies at packaging the scheme as one drawn up with an administrative concern, the Nigerian emphasis on indigeneity principle, federal character principle or different

legal systems displayed by the implementation of the Shari'a in the north reinforced ethnic and regional differences.

In line with these major approaches, federalism and regional autonomy have often been advocated for conflict management (Diamond, 1993: 105; Schmitter and Karl, 1993: 43; Esman, 1994: 257; Horowitz, 2000: 601-680). The consociational model has also found advocates among the analysts (Schmitter and Karl, 1993: 43; Ross, 1998: 40). Lijphart indeed states that in addition to 'government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the plural society', three basic elements of consociational democracy may be identified as "(1) the mutual veto or 'concurrent majority' rule, which serves as an additional protection of vital minority interests, (2) proportionality as the principal standard of political representation, civil service appointments, and allocation of public funds, and (3) a high degree of autonomy for each segment to run its own internal affairs" (1977: 25). Particularly conducive to the operation of consociational methods are "a multiple balance of power, small size of the country involved, overarching loyalties, segmental isolation, prior traditions of elite accommodation, and - ...- the presence of crosscutting cleavages" as well as moderate multipartism where all the parties are not too unequal in size (Lijphart, 1977: 54 and 64). Electoral system design has also been presented as a mechanism for conflict management. Employing a linear regression analysis, Cohen concludes that federalism and electoral PR both stifle high-level ethnic conflict, rebellion and violent protest (1997: 626 and 627). As far as the decision-making procedures are concerned, a mutual veto has been advocated by Nordlinger (Richardson and Wang, 1993: 178) and Lijphart's consociational model. Ross rather proposes 'procedures (such as cumulative voting and supermajorities) to strengthen minority voices and cross-group cooperation' (1998: 40). Electoral

coalitions and systems of power sharing (Esman, 1994: 257) as well as 'rotation of power, in particular through coalition arrangements at the center' (Diamond, 1993: 105) have also been suggested. Yet, tempering with majoritarian forms of decision-making stands as the main common theme across these different proposals.

Various guidelines for the distribution of resources, power and offices were also outlined as potential conflict management mechanisms. Proportionality in the distribution of resources, power and offices was advocated (Diamond, 1993: 105) in addition to suggestions on preferential policies aimed at reducing disparities between groups in realms such as education, business or employment (Horowitz, 2000: 601-680). Thus, affirmative action policies were also proposed. Another major controversy relates to whether conflict management should be attempted on the basis of individual or group rights. Two conflicting models are indeed encountered by Ross' proposal for human and group cultural rights (1998: 40) and Grofman and Stockwell's suggestion of individual rights under mass-oriented and integrative institutions (2001: 7).

Discrimination, state ineptitude and institutional failure:

It is essential to consider an effective and just state as well as such public policies as the key requirements for conflict management. State actions and policies that are regarded as unjust and biased or state ineptitude in responding to a conflict are hence likely to aggravate ethnic conflicts. Such policies largely deemed to be unjust indeed surface as major factors in accounting for the eruption of the conflict. Discrimination in representation, educational or employment opportunities as well as in allocation of resources or promotion of culture and life-style set the stage for the conflicts.

Przeworski et al. argue that "(i)f people within a polity emphasize their cultural differences and engage in ethnic outbidding, it is more likely a consequence of institutional failure rather than a cause of it" and add that "institutional failure at the center provides a context in which regionally based nationalists can effectively mobilize to promote an autonomy movement" (1995: 21 and 22). To cite one basic example, state policies in relation to employment opportunities surfaced as a major determinant of the intensity of conflicts. State failure to provide for employment opportunities was a major reason for the JVP agitation in Sri Lanka as well as the extension of intense support from the Tamil youth to the LTTE. Similarly, in the Nigerian case, "the extremely high unemployment, estimated at 90 percent among youths in the Delta, is a major factor in the current volatile situation" (Agbese, 2001: 144). Hence, the drawing up of initiatives for conflict management surfaces as an essential step.

<u>The display of political will by political authorities and support by the public:</u>

The implementation of the drawn up initiatives follows as an equally central requirement. The political will and determination by the political authorities to work for the management of the conflict acquire prominence if the initiatives are to bring about the intended effect. Hence, the search for an ultimate solution is not exhausted by the introduction of an integrated strategy of conflict management. Thus, major initiatives- however bold and innovative- may not suffice on their own. In fact, when on their own, they may even produce unintended consequences. This indeed seems to be the case in the Nigerian political system. Przeworski et al. argue that political institutions in Nigeria " are notable in their ability to frame national conflicts in non-zero-sum bargaining games" (1995: 22). Yet, the impact of crafting and engineering was confined in the Nigerian case due mainly to widespread communal violence,

resilience of ethno-religious discourse across the party system and extreme polarization within the society at large. Hence, failure to marry the initiatives with affirmative development in the two other variables in a context of intense violence seems to have blocked the initiatives from bringing about the intended outcomes.

Under the circumstances in which integrated strategies of conflict management are not accompanied by the supporting conditions, the extent to which the political system under consideration may consolidate its democratic credentials is also subject to delimitation. This need for a number of variables accompanying each other testifies to the fact that the efforts by a state at conflict management are not effective on their own and need to be assisted by the moves of other major actors. Managing ethnic conflicts thus necessitates responsible behavior on the part of a variety of actors ranging from political parties and elites whether in government or not to the public at large and the civil society organizations (particularly in their opposition to violence).

To sum up, failure to foster the essential initiatives through an integrated strategy of conflict management stands out to be the major barrier to democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict. Yet, for these initiatives to be implemented and to bring about the intended effects, political parties as well as the public should assume supportive roles. Provided that this support is forthcoming, even ongoing violence might fall short of blocking democratic consolidation.

The timing of the initiatives: redressing or avoiding the disruptive consequences?

It is essential to note that the initiatives may take time to exert their impact. Reilly, for instance, introduces the highly valuable qualification that "(s)tructural incentives need to be kept constant over several elections before the effects of any electoral package can be judged" (2002: 167). It would thus be implausible to expect

most of these mechanisms to bring about immediate outcomes upon implementation. The timing of the initiatives is also perceived as a major determinant of their performance. Horowitz, for instance, argues that "(t)hat innovations to foster democracy and reduce conflict tend to be adopted after the disruptive consequences of conflict have become all too apparent greatly increases the risk that the innovations will sweep too narrowly or come too late" (2000: 683).

It is indeed possible to state that in each of the political systems analyzed in this study, political, socio-economic, cultural and military initiatives have been drawn up. Territorial arrangements have also been a major focus of attention, with systems of federal or regional variety being implemented and prospects for devolution being discussed. Yet, almost all the cases reveal that initiatives are more likely to produce the intended outcome when accompanied by supportive conditions. The distortions caused by factors relating to the party system (such as ethnic outbidding), the public opinion (such as extreme polarization and a lack of political determination to maintain the political community) and the scope of violence (in the form of failure to contain it) complicate the prospects for democratic consolidation. Hence, the less the concurrence of affirmative progress in variables, the greater the likelihood of the initiatives to be blocked or to produce unintended consequences. The exploration of the cases indeed seems to display these regularities.

Different actors were critical in setting the limits of the acceptable initiatives. Failures in implementation and unintended consequences mainly flow from the actions of these actors. The public was central in turning down some of the initiatives through the popular referenda in the case of Canada. Bargaining between the regional authorities and the national government determined the content of the strategy of conflict management in Spain. In the case of Sri Lanka, political parties and

particularly the Buddhist organizations have been critical in blocking the implementation of the initiatives. The designs undertaken by the respective regimes have been the major determinants as far as the Nigerian case is concerned.

TABLE 9:

Canadian Strategy of Conflict Management

Political / Territorial	Cultural	Socio-Economic	Military	Failures in implementation and unintended consequences
Federal settlement from the British North America Act on.	Recognition of French as an official language through the Official Languages Act	Regional development programs directed particularly at Atlantic Canada and Quebec	Fight against the FLQ	The Constitution Act of 1982 and Charter of Rights and Freedoms were endorsed without Quebec assent
Promulgation of multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971 followed by the Multiculturalism Act of 1988	Publicly funded education in both official languages	Department of Regional Economic Expansion undertook federal funding in the provinces		The Meech Lake and the Charlottetown accords have failed to obtain public and provincial endorsement
Constant deliberations over and promises of constitutional reform	Bill 101 bolstered the position of French in Quebec	In conjunction with federal transfers, equalization transfers entailing payments from richer provinces have been undertaken		
The schemes for a 'distinct society' status for Quebec being advanced and put to popular and provincial approval	Respect for the preservation and promotion of a variety of cultures in line with the official commitment to multiculturalism	"Quebec's dependence on the Ontario market, on federal oil and health subsidies and pension supplements, and on spending in Quebec above Quebec's tax contributions were all stressed in the anti-separatist campaign" (Horowitz, 2000: 627).		
The notwithstanding clause the Quebec Charter allowed for and the federal government's obligation to consult the provinces on matters affecting them.				
Quebec's- even disproportionate- representation in Senate and in the judiciary; francophone proportional representation in Cabinet and the civil service (Newman, 1996: 139-140)				

TABLE 12:

Nigerian Strategy of Conflict Management

Political/Territorial	Cultural	Socio-Economic	Military	Failure to implement and unintended consequences
Debates over the design of the federal system: continuous creation of states and local governments to secure the allegiance of the minorities	Huge and unparalleled linguistic diversity	Failure to provide for job opportunities	State inefficacy in halting communal violence	Indigeneity principle conflicted the understanding of a common Nigerian citizenship with equal rights and opportunities and excluded many on grounds that they did not meet the criteria of parental and ethnic descent
Emphasis on the 'federal character'	No effort at inventing a Nigerian culture or language	Failure to halt criminalization of the economy and corruption		Controversies surrounding the introduction of Shari'a law
Presidential system from 1979 on and the requirement (elaborated gradually) that the president obtain cross-sectional support		The debate over sharing of resources and the search for the most appropriate formula for an equitable sharing among states		The inflation in sectional demands following state creation: "The solutions themselves have acted to produce more ethnic consciousness and demands than before" (Stavenhagen, 1996: 262).
Experiments in building cross-sectional parties in structure, choice of candidates and appeal		Establishment of commissions to assist certain communities in terms of infrastructural facilities and development		
A secular state structure defended by sections 17 and 35 of the 1979 constitution		The federal government declared full ownership of petroleum to avoid inequity and to share revenues equally among ethnic sections of the country (Ejobowah, 2000: 14).		
Bicameral legislature formed to enhance representation				
Principle of rotationality in federal, state, and local governments				
Continuous deliberation on institutional reform (3)				

TABLE 11:

Sri Lankan Strategy of Conflict Management

Political/Territorial	Cultural	Socio-Economic	Military	Failures in implementation and unintended consequences
Various pacts granting certain rights to the Tamils were concluded	Sinhala Only Act of 1956: Tamil language rights were periodically granted and denied	Failure to devise policies to combat unemployment	Combating the LTTE while negotiating with them	Lack of political will on the part of the political elite to implement the pacts
PR system introduced in 1978 to bolster proportionality in representation	The 13th Amendment (1987): Tamil received equality of status with Sinhala	Resources mainly flowing to the defense budget	'War for Peace' policy of Kumaratunga	Discriminatory policies in state-sponsored agricultural schemes or in admission into universities
Semi-presidential system was installed in the expectation that the president would function as an impartial arbiter		Changes in university admissions policy: a system was adopted which allocated 70 % of university places by standardized marks based on medium of instruction and 30 % by district quotas whereas a new formula admitting 30 % of students on raw marks, 55 % on district population quotas, and 15 % for educationally backward districts was later upheld (Horowitz, 2000: 665).	The Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979	Failure to implement the adopted policies such as was the case with language policies
Jayewardene's efforts at reversing discrimination in employment preferences, recruitment to the armed forces and the police, and language policies				Limitations on the operation of mechanisms such as was the case with the Provincial Councils Act
District Development Councils Act (1980) and Provincial Councils Act (1987)				Exclusionary nature of certain initiatives such as the Indo-Lanka Accord
Draft proposals for devolution in 1990s				
Ceasefire followed by talks with the LTTE				

TABLE 10:

Spanish Strategy of Conflict Management

Political/Territorial	Cultural	Socio-Economic	Military	Failures in implementation and unintended consequences
Decentralization: The Autonomous Communities Scheme	Recognition of linguistic diversity: recognition of the co-official status of the regional languages in their respective regions	The search for a balance in the allocation of resources	Priority attached to combating ETA	Resistance to the transfer of authorities to the regions displayed by the 1981 coup attempt and the LOAPA
Strong commitment to democratization and a preference for handling the issue of conflict management within the context of the broader attempt at democratic consolidation		Designs of financial autonomy and negotiated agreements on taxes in favor of autonomous communities		Spread of regional consciousness: certain regional identities with no prior claim to distinctiveness were encouraged
				The arguments by certain regions that financial autonomy designs were skewed in favor of the richer continued unabated

Supporting condition: Domestic peace and democratic consolidation

Violence may surface as a major factor complicating the operation of democratic political systems and the search for democratic stability. The operation of democratic political systems does not necessarily eliminate the violence factor. Weinberg indeed argues that "(d)espite the difference [political parties and terrorist groups] display in relation to democratic political processes, it is in relatively open societies with self-restrained if not always democratic governments that both seem to do well" (1991: 424). Ongoing violence may indeed become a threat to democratic development and consolidation in its various forms. Schedler enumerates 'private men-at-arms (guerrillas, drug cartels, violent street protesters)' as well as the 'professionals of state violence' in 'the list of (either suspected or convicted) assassins or gravediggers of democratic rule' (1998: 96). While failing to live up to their declared purposes most of the time (4), the terrorist groups still manage to create an atmosphere of insecurity and distrust in the political system.

<u>The tyranny of the dead:</u>

Defining 'ethnic terrorism' as the effort undertaken by terrorist leaders to develop an extreme attachment to their large group identities and to try to broaden it through widespread use of violence as well as opposition to an 'invading or colonizing' dominant or large ethnic group that remains external to the defined group, Volkan classifies ETA, PKK and the LTTE as ethnic terrorist groups (1999: 183). The FLQ could also have been classified as one such organization.

A spiral of violence hence poses the risk of turning into a self-perpetuating cycle. Indeed, a major risk seems to be that "the continuation of a violent conflict may be justified, not according to the initial reasons for the conflict that resulted in the loss of life, but in terms of the loss of life itself" with the likelihood of the

leadership falling into the hands of militants (Ryan, 1996: 154 and 146). This vicious cycle seems easier to sustain than to break. Every group resorting to violence aims to justify this line of action by arguing that no other options are available to it and that this is merely the last resort.

Even the decision to halt violence results in a fragile situation. Rönnquist indeed refers to what the Irish historian Beckett has termed as 'the tyranny of the dead' in arguing that "(t)he sacrifices of past and present 'freedom fighters' make it harder to accept negotiated compromises as a reasonable outcome in relation to the invested human capital" (1999: 155). The level of casualties and figures of martyrdom hence acquire significance in relation to the course of the conflict. The killing of Etxebarrieta or the Burgos trial in the case of Spain, the killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa in Nigeria, and the loss of Tamil lives in 1983 riots in Sri Lanka provide clear examples by radicalizing the stances of the nationalist groups and making it more difficult to reach accommodation. Such themes indeed obtain particular centrality under conditions of communal conflict.

State effectiveness versus legitimacy concerns over state actions:

Under circumstances of violence, concerns of self-preservation acquire priority for the state authorities. Yet, here the state authorities are confronted by a dilemma. Failure to contain or halt violence may be perceived as state weakness whereas excesses of state response may threaten the legitimacy of the actions of the state. Tacar warns that while the increase in the level of violence resorted to by the state authorities transforms ethnic sensitivities into ethnic solidarities, their failure to respond to attacks on the symbols of state authority might be perceived as a signal of the weakness of the state in which case groups who thus far relied on the security provided by the state might take up arms in further perpetuating ethnic violence

(1999: 158-159). A situation in which the state seems to be losing its monopoly over the use of force poses a critical juncture.

Ineptitude of state security forces or discriminatory actions by them indeed further erode the legitimacy of the existing system. (5) Przeworski et al. confirm that "(i)neffective states coexist with autonomous spheres of power: these operate under different rules and often degenerate into systems of private violence and private domination, into familism, regionalism, prebendalism, or personalism" (1995: 36). The image of the weak presence or ineffectiveness of the central authorities in a certain region or province within the political system is hence bolstered by widespread violence. The loss of state monopoly over the use of force and the search for provision of security by actors other than the state may then follow. It is necessary to reiterate that an effective state is an essential requirement of democratic consolidation (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 20 and 22).

Communal violence versus violence perpetuated by organized groups:

A major determinant of the extent to which violence proves out to be more or less disruptive for the functioning of a democratic political framework relates to whether it is of communal nature or not. Violence in its communal form seems to be more difficult to contain since it engenders deep communal feelings. On the other hand, violence perpetuated by organized groups such as a terrorist organization is indeed more likely to be confronted by state security forces. Developing an integrated strategy of conflict management with the core component of marginalizing or eradicating the organized groups perpetuating violence in addition to cultural, social, political or economic precautions is the essential remedy. Hence, the strength of organization, resources and ideology of the group seem to cause the variance in the strategy to be adopted.

In the communal manifestation of violence, however, the real issue relates to whether deep feelings of hatred and antagonism between different groups could be bridged. Posen's definition of 'the security dilemma' as "the special conditions that arise when proximate groups of people suddenly find themselves newly responsible for their own security" as "(w)hat one does to enhance one's own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less secure" (1993: 103 and 104) may similarly be employed to describe such situations. Hence, while certain groups might battle against the state policies and hence target the state forces, more complicated cases are provided by communities within state boundaries fighting against each other. The Sri Lankan and Nigerian cases provide the clearest examples of such a challenge.

The halting of violence:

Whether sequencing has to be observed in the implementation of a variety of conflict management mechanisms acquires particular significance in relation to the violence variable. Whether the halting of violence should be accepted as the precondition for the expansion of economic, cultural, social and political initiatives has been a controversial topic in certain political systems. Cases examined for the purposes of this study reveal that initiatives in conflict management may be drawn up even under conditions of violent confrontation. Yet, for the initiatives in conflict management to succeed, the halting of violence might function as a supportive condition. Public opposition is more likely to be averted and even to be transformed into support for conflict management when domestic peace is attained.

De Nevers argues that "little can be done until conflicts have spent themselves" and adds that windows of opportunity could open up "if the main parties in a conflict are simultaneously weakened or if they decide that further fighting could

lead to a worse outcome for their side" (1993: 63). Along similar lines, Horowitz argues that "(r)eevaluations of policy prompted by recent experience painful for all groups probably stand the best chance of producing evenhanded and enduring accommodative policies" and adds that "(m)easures of accommodation adopted when recent developments have affected the various groups unevenly appear least promising of all" (2000: 580). Mutual exhaustion is hence expected to provide a major breakthrough for accommodation. Other windows of opportunity open up when the legitimate security forces suffer from serious setbacks or when organized groups fighting in the name of those with grievances are exposed to defeat.

In accounting for how violence may be halted, it is critical that organizations resorting to violence and terror have been declared as illegal in most of the democratic political systems. This actually urged many to redefine their mission and status. The decision to halt violence by a certain group might be dictated by the circumstances rather than displaying willingness to do so. A 'strategic shift' is indeed displayed by terrorist organizations as "(a)t least some of them have abandoned the armed struggle and sought to pursue their goals by peaceful means" in response to the ineffectiveness of violence, its having outlived its usefulness, the need for new approaches and the desire to obtain respectability (Weinberg, 1991: 424-425 and 428).

Violence and pluralism:

Violence is most likely to target pluralism in two major ways. Firstly, the security dilemma may impose greater monolithism on groups. The search for security within the ranks of a group may urge the members to waiver their separate existence or differing discourse. The proliferation of organizations advocating the protection of their respective minority groups within Nigeria stands as an example.

On the other hand, greater unity is actually imposed when elimination of other groups is affected by a group resorting to threats or the use of force. The LTTE campaign against the variety of Tamil organizations has provided the clearest indication.

TABLE 13:

Comparative Examination of the Scope and Intensity of Violence

NATURE OF VIOLENCE	CASES			
	Canada	Spain	Sri Lanka	Nigeria
Continuity	The activities of the FLQ were halted	ETA still stands as the major perpetuator of violence	LTTE surfaced as the major perpetuator of violence and the JVP posed another attack on state authority. A fragile ceasefire is currently holding	A variety of groups resorting to violence in professing to the protection of the rights of certain ethnically defined groups such as the MOSOP for the Ogoni are currently functional
State performance in combating violence	State authorities were effective in combating the FLQ	State authorities are struggling against ETA	State authorities are perceived as biased and ineffective mainly due to their failure to protect the lives and possessions of Tamils and suffer from high casualties and setbacks (6)	State authorities are perceived as biased and experience difficulties in confining violence (7)
Communal nature	The security forces were fighting against an organized group	The security forces are fighting against an organized group	State authorities are faced with communal violence (8)	State authorities are faced with communal violence and religious riots
The level of casualties	Limited casualties in the conflict with a number of prominent political and diplomatic figures being the major targets	Limited casualties in the conflict with symbols of state authority as well as Basque politicians who are members of nationwide parties being the main targets	Total casualties are unparalleled by any other case with a death toll of over 60,000 and an estimated disappearance figure ranging between 40,000 and 60,000 by 1997 (Kloos, 1997: 224). Esman reports that by 1994, 1.7 million people were displaced (1994: 222).	Casualties are on the rise particularly with the recent religious clashes and clashes over resource distribution claiming hundreds and even thousands of lives by incident

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Supporting condition: political parties, conflict management and democratic consolidation

The centrality of political parties to democratic consolidation seems to stem from one basic factor. It is indeed essential to acknowledge that "by channeling the pursuit of interests and values into the institutional framework of competitive politics, political parties regularized intergroup conflicts" (Przeworski et al., 1995: 53). A number of the specific characteristics of the parties and the party system gain importance in determining their role in channeling the demands through the democratic process. The level of fragmentation and polarization in the party system, the organizational strength of the parties as well as their representativeness, and the base of support they rely on stand out to be the significant determinants of the impact of political parties and the party system.

Moderate mainstream and ethnoregional party approaches:

Responsible party behavior is the most essential requirement in contributing to conflict management. In Reilly's opinion, the promotion of interethnic accommodation, multiethnic political parties, and moderate, centrist politics are the key elements in building a sustainable democracy in divided societies (2002: 156). Hence, mainstream parties' efforts in appealing to the discontented groups and the regions of conflict acquire particular significance. A constructive political party role in conflict management indeed necessitates the existence of nationwide parties that are able to address various grievances by effective organization and that offer serious alternatives by perceiving a stake in competing across the political system.

Mainstream Spanish parties' efforts at reaching out to every region stand as a remarkable example. A strong rightist party traditionally committed to the unitary status of Spain has existed from the UCD and the AP to the PP. The PSOE did not

hold a radically different position either. Gibbons indeed underlines that while "the PSOE contrived to advocate and support the transfer of more powers over finances and services to the regions and nationalities, and such initiatives as the enhancement of the role of the Senate", it "also warned, sporadically, of the dangers of excessive fragmentation and the need for an overall ceiling (techno) on transfers, as the PSOE put it, to preserve the integrity of the state" (1999: 47). An attempt at moderation is also evident in the PP and the Socialist party, with both parties aiming to appeal to the electorate located at the center. In fact, Spanish electorate's preference for moderate political actors has resulted in the fact that "(s)ince the 1970s, most initially chose centre-right parties (such as the UCD), before switching to the centre-left (such as the PSOE), and more recently to a party like the PP, which hovers between the right and centre-right", with minimal electoral support for the anti-system parties such as the HB (Montero, 1999: 62-63). The fact that the PSOE functions as the major political actor in the regions of most evident discontent such as the Basque region, Catalonia or Galicia will be elaborated on in the coming parts of this analysis. It has to be added here that the support the PP was able to enroll from regionalist actors such as Unio Valenciana and Coalicion Canaria has also provided it with remarkable political strength. Accounting for these successes by the PP and the PSOE has been the level of internal autonomy granted to the regional branches of the two parties so that they could more accurately observe and address the regional grievances.

To cite another major example, the federal Liberal Party is indeed a serious contender in almost every province in Canada. Its local branches and particularly the Liberal Party of Quebec have become significant actors of the provincial party systems. The Liberal Party of Quebec was indeed the party which negotiated the

Meech Lake Accord with Ottawa. Parallel to the Spanish example, the importance that central parties attach to autonomous local organization and activity proved to be a major asset for conflict management in Canada. Such active search for a solution has made the Liberal party a major target of the PQ. The PQ indeed argues that the Liberal Party of Quebec is concerned with the interests of the anglophones and is "the servant of its 'boss', the Federal Liberal Party in Ottowa" (Newman, 1996: 126).

Furthermore, the role assumed by political parties that have a claim to representing the groups voicing discontent with the existing system is also central to the current debate. Such parties may openly advocate a sectional cause and may largely depend on the support of a defined section of the population. Ethnoregional parties display such characteristics. Newman defines such parties as 'mobilizing parties' in that they "attempt to take advantage of changing social and political conditions by emphasizing their association with new cleavages and by mobilizing new political identities" and adds that they are less likely to be co-opted by the established parties (1997: 30). These parties may aim to acquire greater powers for their constituencies with the objective of voicing their grievances or they may have more radical goals such as the redefinition of the group's relations with the state. The ethnoregional parties are indeed crucial to this analysis due mainly to their ability to locate ethnic issues at the center of the partisan debate. While such parties present a challenge to the system, their mere existence does not signal the failure of the democratic framework to acquire sustainability. Indeed, Schmitter and Karl stress that "the presence of antisystem parties should be neither surprising nor seen as a failure of democratic consolidation" as "(w)hat counts is whether such parties are willing, however reluctantly, to play by the general rules of bounded uncertainty and contingent consent" (1993: 50). Hence, democratic political systems set the

framework within which the parties exerting a challenge on the existing system are allowed to operate. Thus, particularly critical to efforts at conflict management are the existence of moderate political parties that represent those with grievances by distancing themselves from resort to violence. The CiU's 'pactisme' or the PQ's 'ètapisme' provide clear cases.

As the major regional actor in Catalonia, the CiU declares its commitment to the idea of self-determination yet refrains from displaying full-fledged support for independence. Ross points at what he regards to be "one of the most typical features of the tradition inherited by the CiU; its pactisme, or readiness to enter into agreements with Spanish actors for mutual material benefit", inherited from Lliga Regionalista (1996: 491). The ERC, on the other hand, differs from the CiU by explicitly calling for an independent Catalonia. Yet, neither of the two actors accepts resort to force as a legitimate means of waging a political struggle.

As a major provincial political party, the PQ has been located at the center of Quebec's party system. The PQ is indeed a coalition of a variety of independence movements. Within it, the militant factions advocating civil disobedience for independence were later weakened due to the dominance of the technocratic groups which favored sovereignty-association (Newman, 1996: 119-120). The PQ advocated the sovereignty-association formula for Quebec, with their commitment to the goal of sovereignty ebbing and flowing at times. The PQ's efforts at appealing beyond the supporters for Quebec independence was one major reason for the shifts in the weight assigned to the goal of independence. The party's attitude in garnering support for the independence option could hence be considered as a cautious and patient effort. Hence came the adoption of ètapisme as a strategy. Disagreement over whether the party should go into elections campaigning on the sovereignty issue or

whether it should keep that emphasis dormant until the conditions were ripe surfaced as the major source of split. The whole idea of 'sovereignty-association' itself characterized the cautious attitude of the PQ since this design functioned as a cushion for those fearing the economic consequences of independence. Yet, the removal of certain provincial powers and the veto power of Quebec through a unilateral move by Trudeau to repatriate the constitution by the approval of all provinces except for Quebec as well as the failure of the Meech Lake Accord to secure ratification have mainly been perceived as windfalls for the PQ (Newman, 1996: 126 and 131). Both of these developments came to be perceived as an assault on the Quebec province and imposed a greater unity of cause among the Quebecois. Hence, a feeling of emancipation from the injustices inflicted by anglophone Canada acquired greater emphasis in PQ's discourse. Yet, extremist ideological positions or resort to violence never characterized the federal or provincial Canadian political parties.

It is essential to recall that conflict management may necessitate a dialogue between actors representing those with grievances and the political authorities who hold the power. The emergence of moderate and systemic political actors expressing grievances may become a compelling factor for such consensual settlement. In the case of Spain, agreements have been drawn up as a result of negotiations with moderate Basque and Catalan nationalists. Currently, the regional governments stand as the major authorities that the central government negotiates with. As far as the Canadian case is concerned, the provincial government in Quebec negotiates with the federal government whereas the final settlement is subject to approval by other provinces. Sri Lanka presents a particular case with the government currently negotiating with the LTTE. That is mainly accounted for by the military defeats the government forces suffered in their confrontation with the Tamil militants. Unilateral

designs emanating from the federal government rather than bargains with interlocutors characterized the Nigerian conflict management strategy.

<u>Ethnic outbidding, intra-ethnic competition and radicalization:</u>

Exclusive attachment to the promotion of sectional interests turns the parties into a part of the problem rather than the solution and becomes the major barrier to moderation. Analysts indeed argue that "(i)f people identify themselves more closely with their tribe or faith than with their country, political parties can become the means of promoting narrow communal interests, or, worse, fomenting ethnic grievances" (The Economist, March 1, 2003: 14). This concern indeed seems to account for why various legal restrictions are placed on the organization as well as operation of political parties throughout democratic political systems whereas various parties have been subjected to bans and, most strikingly, party competition was all together ruled out in other systems. A striking recent experiment has been undertaken by Ugandan President Museveni who banned all political parties from carrying out established party activities on grounds that they solely serve to mobilize tribal allegiances and thus deserve to be isolated from politics until the people become equipped to cope with pluralism (The Economist, March 1, 2003: 14). Yet, it has been recently revealed that a return to multi-party politics is on the agenda (The Economist, March 1, 2003: 14). Most recently, Spanish and Turkish cases reveal that political parties believed to preserve links to organizations perpetuating violence could not be tolerated within the confines of democratic political systems. It is particularly striking that even in the context of a consolidated democracy such as Spain, political parties may face exclusion through bans and closures.

Ethnic outbidding among the parties may surface as a major barrier to conflict management. In that context, chief aspect of the party system relates to whether

intra-ethnic competition is transformed into an asset or not. There are cases where the grievances of a certain group are advocated by more than a single party. Whether this fact breeds moderation by weakening group monolithism and urging the parties to seek sources of support other than their defined constituency or sets the stage for greater radicalization by stimulating ethnic outbidding is the main determinant of the impact of intra-ethnic competition.

Across various political systems, moderate and non-violent parties have accompanied radical and extremist ones. In the Sri Lankan example, for instance, the existence of two major parties claiming to represent the majority group has only served to bolster the radical discourse upheld by both groups towards Tamil grievances. The split and destruction of the AG in Nigeria also seems to testify to how the representation of one group by more than a single political force might rather aggravate tensions. Hence, the emergence of extremist parties opposing the other parties claiming to represent the same grievances through an even more radical discourse might prove to be disruptive for the efforts at conflict management. A chain reaction may indeed characterize the attitude of political parties functioning under conditions of intense conflict. The turn to a greater ethnic emphasis by one party is likely to ultimately urge the others to follow. This carries the risk that identification with the concerns of a defined group would become the route taken by an increasing number of political parties who in the meantime radicalize their discourse. When ethnic issues are placed at the top of the agenda of political debate, it is indeed impossible to isolate political parties from taking their part in the debate. In the case of Sri Lanka, even the parties of the Sinhalese left felt compelled to reflect an image as the guardian of Sinhalese interests in line with the dominant

political discourse. 'Ethnicity' thus becomes entrenched as a major bone of contention for all the actors involved.

Ethnic outbidding has particularly been intense in the Sri Lankan case. The gradual radicalization of political discourse and the transfer of power to those with extreme stances have affected both the Sinhalese and Tamil political parties. Wilson indeed argues that "populist politics gained ascendancy with the progressive mobilization by political elites of the lower and disadvantaged strata in each ethnic group" (1993: 149). The gradual marginalization of moderate actors of Tamil political scene was then witnessed in the 1970s. The main Sinhalese political parties indeed further complicated the conflict management efforts. The UNP which Wilson defines as 'an elite formation of Sinhala Buddhists, Ceylon Tamils and Muslims' (1993: 152) failed to become a cross-community political actor and rather suffered a split in 1951. From that point on, competition between the UNP and SLFP has rather dimmed the prospects for moderation. Failure to implement the two negotiated pacts and the collapse of President Jayewardene's efforts at negotiating with the Tamils all came about as a consequence of the two parties' assaulting each other for making concessions to Tamils. Moderate leadership has been in shortage in the Sri Lankan political system. De Silva could recall that Senanayake's "great achievement was in keeping the country together in the final stages of the passage to independence" (2001: 258). Parallel endeavors have not followed this early experience.

Radical and extremist parties also exert a significant impact on the Spanish party system, particularly at the regional level. Newman classifies the HB and EE as dual radical parties in that they "challenge both the socio-economic consensus and the sovereignty of the state", as the former is in pursuit of an independent Marxist state and the latter is an extreme left party intending to form an independent Euskadi

(1997: 42 and 33). The HB's links to ETA have long been a controversial topic in Spanish politics. It is highly significant that HB rallies "usually end with black-hooted ETA people joining Batasuna leaders on the podium to shout 'Gora ETA! (Long live ETA!)" as "(l)ocal councillors who belong to Batasuna habitually refuse to back motions condemning ETA attacks, even when fellow councillors have been murdered" (The Economist, June 8, 2002: 28). While the EE insistently voiced its opposition to violence and its commitment to the 1979 Statutes, the EA has constantly embraced the objective of independence. The latter even attacked the PNV for not being committed enough to the goal of independence.

The evidence seems to suggest that the existence of radical nationalist parties has urged the moderates to radicalize their commitment to nationalist objectives even in the case of Spain. The CiU and the PNV have also made occasional references to the goal of independence. Even Pujol has at times been perceived as implying support for independence, "most famously by comparing Catalonia with the newly emergent states in eastern Europe after 1989" (Ross, 1996: 498). A similar emphasis is also evident in the PNV recently. While the PNV has mainly been committed to the achievement of greater powers for the Basque Country within Spain, a radicalization currently characterizes the political discourse of the party. The recent ban on the HB stands as a landmark in that respect. As regards the ban, the PNV premier Ibarretxe "accused Mr Aznar of being unable to accept any ideas that differ from his own" (The Economist, June 8, 2002: 28). He then announced on September 27, 2002 his plan for a redefinition of Basque region's relationship to the central state which intends to make the Basque region one with its own citizenship laws as well as foreign policy and to link it to Spain as an equal (The Economist, October 5, 2002: 30). The PNV claims that this plan will be subject to approval in a referendum in the

region. The PNV's recently declared aim hence centers on negotiations with Madrid to redefine the relations between the two governments. Amidst this novel controversy, the calls by conservatives and also to a lesser extent by the Socialists for the suspension of part or all of the Basque self-government rights intensify (The Economist, September 28, 2002: 37).

Moderation through institutional mechanisms:

Limits seem to be placed on the extent to which parties may be allowed to shift the focus of electoral competition to one of ethnic rhetoric. It is of particular significance that "even in the democracies, individual parties whose outlooks are regarded as extremist, subversive, or anticonstitutional have been banned" (Weinberg, 1991: 429). The association of the legitimate political parties with organizations resorting to violence has been deemed to be alarming by democratic political systems. Whether the ethnic parties challenge the boundaries of the state and the legitimacy of the existing political order poses another serious test.

It needs to be reiterated that the latest case of such a ban is displayed by the Spanish treatment of the HB. A new law on the obligations of political parties was hence enacted. This new law which allowed the government to ban any political group deemed to 'promote hatred, violence and civil confrontation' or to challenge Spain's existing democratic institutions (The Economist, June 8, 2002: 28) has firstly been invoked against the HB. It was solely the Basque and Galician nationalists as well as the far left political parties that voted against the bill.

Hence, restrictions and bans on the formation and operation of political parties are evidenced across democratic political systems. A further step would be the formation of parties by the regime itself which was witnessed in the Nigerian example. The requirements for a truly nationwide party in terms of appeal and

membership have rather been engineered by various regimes in Nigeria. Practical effects of guidelines for party formation were soon displayed with cross-regional efforts being undertaken by the parties particularly in their choice of candidates. The 1979 constitution, for instance, mandated the parties to have units in two-thirds of the states and disqualified them in cases where their symbols or appeals were directed to a particular ethnic group (Esman, 1994: 259). Institutional mechanisms are also designed in such a way that winning elections requires seeking support across various groups and communities. Thus, the circumstances compel the parties to uphold a cross-sectional appeal, particularly in the hope of obtaining the mandate to rule. Hence, a party rooted in a certain section of the population has to strive for a broader base of support with a commitment to a nationwide agenda. Exclusively regionalist outcomes were averted to an extent, yet party continuity was too often evident in spite of the efforts to reshape the party system.

Thus, moderation in party politics can be induced by resort to a variety of institutional mechanisms designed as part of conflict management strategy. A degree of crafting is always possible to bring about the desired changes in the party system. In accounting for the role of electoral engineering, Reilly stresses that "by changing the incentives and payoffs available to political actors in their search for electoral victory, astutely crafted electoral rules can make some types of behavior more politically rewarding than others" (2002: 156). A variety of proposals are aired in line with the size of the groups concerned and their geographical distribution. Under a PR system, for instance, ethnic parties may be expected to participate at the national level in greater proportion to their share in the composition of the population. Diamond claims that "where social cleavages are multiple, deep, and politically mobilized, to obstruct their representation through the party system by

abandoning PR would be to risk political alienation, turmoil, and violence that could threaten democratic stability" and adds that "(t)he purer the form of PR, and the lower the minimum percentage of the vote required for a party to enter the parliament, the more significant parties there will tend to be and the more parliament will tend to mirror in its political composition the balance of social, cultural, and ideological interests in society" (1993: 102). The electoral threshold, together with the degree of territorial concentration of support, may indeed surface as a major determinant of the participation of sectional parties. (9) Moderation of attitudes is also encouraged when politicians are made dependent on votes other than those from their own group. Reilly points at the vitality of the preferential systems of vote as "such systems can encourage politicians in divided societies to campaign not just for first-preference votes from their own community, but for 'second-choice' votes from other groups as well- thus providing parties and candidates with an incentive to 'pool votes' across ethnic lines" (2002: 158). (10) Furthermore, the need for pre-election coalition-building may also be expected to enhance the prospects for moderation.

An example to the contrary has been presented by the Sri Lankan case. No cross-sectional appeals are essential for the two major Sinhalese parties to obtain the majority to rule. Governing without support of the Tamil constituencies is possible. No mechanism was erected to urge the parties to seek support beyond their defined constituency. It was solely the alternative or preferential vote system instituted with the 1978 constitution that made the Tamil votes count through their re-allocation between the top two candidates for the presidency provided that no candidate won the majority, making re-allocation practically unnecessary for most of the time.

Cross-cutting cleavages and the incorporation of sectional grievances: the PSOE model

A central question revolves around how political systems deal with groups expressing grievances in their efforts at attaining democratic consolidation. Political parties indeed provide major vehicles for the integration of such groups. It is essential to note that parties may stimulate cross-cutting cleavages with the objective of moderating the polarizing effects of ethnic identity. The left-wing political parties are perceived as the major candidates for exerting such an impact. Pointing at the electoral costs associated with strict ethnic neutrality, Horowitz underlines that "(s)o long as ethnic tensions remained in the background of politics, it was possible for left-wing parties to advocate bridging ethnic divisions by building alliances across ethnic lines" as these could be "based on the common class interests and allegiances of workers and peasants of the respective ethnic groups" (2000: 338 and 337). Hence, putting the emphasis on alternative issues such as divergent ideological positions or class interests may be expected to bridge ethnic polarization to a certain extent. The PSOE in Spain indeed provides the most striking example. The Socialists always stood as the major contender to the PNV in the Basque region, in both regional and general elections. Similarly, in Catalonia for instance, the major challenge to the CiU has been presented by the Socialists rather than the nationalist rival ERC whose role stems from its opposition to the Franco regime. The PSOE also participated in coalition governments with regionalist parties in Galicia. This role assumed by the party indeed displays a marked contrast to the performance of leftist political parties in the Sri Lankan case. Not only the SLFP which defined itself as a social-democratic party but also the socialist and communist political parties functioned as major perpetuators of ethnic outbidding.

Horowitz underlines that "(e)thnic demands are made through and often espoused by the broadly based party, but not automatically, not without consideration of competing demands, not without adjustment" and adds that "(t)hat the broadly based party can remain broadly based in spite of this is typically evidence of a moderate level of ethnic conflict and the existence of nonethnic issues that also animate its supporters" (2000: 296). Such an evaluation seems to characterize the Spanish and Canadian cases more accurately than it does resemble the others.

The ethnic vote and the ethnic parties:

The fact that various parties rely on the ethnic vote leads to a decline in the prominence of policy commitments and practices. Groups converging around an ethnic identity form a major constituency that the political parties may appeal to as a reserved pool of support. Ryan claims that it is a common misunderstanding that "(s)upport for extremist parties is attributed to an 'illiterate electorate' or to intimidation" (1996: 159). Of the two voting models presented by Sartori as limiting cases, the party identification model in which "the sequence is: (a) self-placement on a left-right, or progressive-conservative, or cleavage-based spectrum; (b) corresponding party images; (c) vote for the party one identifies with, i.e., closer on the relevant spectrum" (1987: 108), seems to stand as one route in accounting for how ethnic parties could count on appealing to a reserved level of support. (11) In the final analysis, "(e)thnicity offers political leaders the promise of secure support" (Horowitz, 2000: 294-295). Such references to ethnicity are indeed likely to deliver benefits quicker and less costly than the drawing up of party organization, policy commitments and practices that intend to systematically address the conflict. Yet, such outcomes prove to be less stable and enduring as they do not offer an

institutionalized source of appeal to the constituencies with grievances. A high level of electoral volatility in the regions of conflict surfaces as a clear indication.

Such an inclination by the mainstream parties to invoke the existing societal cleavages stimulates the emergence of ethnic parties and an increasing tendency to engage in ethnic voting. Horowitz defines an 'ethnic party' in reference to how the party's support is distributed and to a commitment foremost to 'the more valuable principal source of support' (2000: 292 and 293). Such parties serve to enhance the possibility that significant blocks of vote have a pre-determined destination. Hence, whether the parties aim to mobilize already existing groups or to create a broader constituency by their policy commitments and practices makes a significant difference to their role in conflict management.

Co-optation poses an alternative model for incorporation upheld by the mainstream parties. Bargaining between the parties is likely to involve the extension of benefits in return for support. It has, for instance, been possible for the predominantly Sinhalese political parties to co-opt the Muslim political representatives mainly gathered around the SLMC and Indian Tamil representatives operating through the CWC. Both of these groups opposed the Tamil demand for an independent state and voiced less radical grievances of their own. On the contrary, the Sri Lankan Tamils had organizations of their own which denied support to the Sinhalese parties and enjoyed rather narrowly defined rights in comparison to the two other groups.

In the case of Nigeria too, political elites seem inclined to base their political existence on a regional basis of support. Underlining that "(a) political career is started in a local community on an ethnic basis, and a cross-ethnic party is in that situation nothing more than a coalition of ethnic interests", Mundt and Aborisade

stress that "(p)arty strategists would henceforth need to combine a strong base in one of the main ethnic group areas with a successful appeal for support among minorities and potentially among dissident groups in the home bases of the other two major groups" (1996: 767). Commitment to fostering a truly nationwide party has been weak with every party aspiring to advance the causes of a defined section of the population. It could be argued that this was particularly true for the northern parties who could rely on the numerical dominance of the north and thus had lesser incentives to appeal to other parts of the country. Functioning under constant threats of bans, the multiethnic parties hence split along ethnic lines from the 1950s on and starting with the breakup of the NCNC. Hence, the determination to appeal to a guaranteed base of support in a defined region is a major factor accounting for how the political parties fall short of contributing to conflict management.

Broadly shared understandings among the actors in the party system:

It is not solely the ruling parties whose actions are central to conflict management. A democratic framework also requires an opposition functioning in total accordance with the rules of the game regardless of whether it is regionally or nationally organized. Diamond stresses that "(o)pposing party leaders must take the lead in crafting understandings and working relationships that bridge historic differences, restrain expectations, and establish longer, more realistic time horizons for their agendas" (1993: 106). On the contrary, extensive disagreement between the ruling and the opposition parties might make ethnic issues another ground for conflict and stimulate ethnic outbidding.

A broadly shared understanding between the political actors may be expected to limit the destructive effects of intense polarization between different groups by stimulating moderation. Convergence around such shared understandings may center

on the renunciation of violence as a method or absolute commitment to the rules of the democratic game. The willingness of the political parties to discard ethnicity-based issues as campaign commitments, their consensus that the issues not be manipulated, and their shared commitment to eliminating violence may also be enlisted as factors of particular significance. It is essential to note that conciliatory leadership is expected both from nationwide and ethnoregionalist parties as well as the national and the regional elite.

Such broadly shared understandings in the form of the negation of violence or commitment to uphold the rules of the democratic framework have largely characterized the Spanish and Canadian experiences. On the contrary, the lack of a consensus on certain essential principles between the mainstream parties has been the major cause of ethnic outbidding in Sri Lanka. As far as the Nigerian case is concerned, even democracy surfaces as a highly contested concept. Njoku states that "(t)he Nigerian politician, whether in military or civilian garb hardly ever accepts defeat", with the losers encouraging the military to step in and the 'winner-take-all political culture' making "life unbearable for electoral losers, who would as such prefer to destroy the system rather than endure the very high costs of defeat" (1999: 11 and 28).

<u>Broadening the base of support: the Reform Party model</u>

Certain sectional parties occasionally air claims to being nationwide parties. It is particularly significant that "ethnically based parties commonly feel the need to preserve a facade of multiethnicity by including members of various groups in their leadership and in their list of candidates" (Horowitz, 2000: 320). Yet, a sole claim to profess a nationwide agenda or structure may not suffice for a political party to be considered as a truly nationwide party. It is rather the determination of the political

parties not to be identified with or against a certain ethnic group and their willingness to diversify and broaden their bases of support that are likely to contribute to the moderation of the conflict.

It is in the Reform Party that one may detect clear signals of a move to become a nationwide party. The Reform Party indeed reciprocates the BQ's advocacy of separation for Quebec. Voicing the grievances of western Canada in protest of the dominance of eastern economic interests, the Reform rejects the central political role accorded to Ontario and Quebec and the potential granting of a special status to Quebec. Despite the regional concentration of support for it, the Reform recently engaged in efforts to expand its support base particularly through expansion to the east. Mayer, Kaymak and Justice indeed argue that the Reform Party is undergoing a transformation "from a new right party with a regionalized base of support to a more mainstream party with a national constituency" by attracting the votes of Progressive Conservative party supporters (2000: 90, 91 and 94). The party was formed in 1987 and contested the first elections in the following year. It was, however, in 1989 by-election that the first Reform Party MP was elected. The first step towards expansion into the east came about in 1991 when "(i)n a party-wide referendum in May, 94 percent of Reform members voted to expand east of Manitoba" and membership jumped from 54,000 to approximately 100,000 by December 1991 (Canadian Alliance Official Website, 2003). Another significant step was the gathering in 1999 of 'The United Alternative Convention' with the objective of forming a nationwide conservative political movement. It was in the next year and as a result of the convention meetings that the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance (the Canadian Alliance) was formed. The March 2000 referendum of the Reform Party displayed 92 percent support for the adoption of the constitution of the Canadian Alliance. Despite

the fact that the Reform has been largely perceived as another party representing western protest, its efforts at becoming a truly Canadian party were significant from 1990s on. The Reform and then the Alliance are believed to be obtaining the support of a substantial number of voters who previously extended support to the Progressive Conservatives and the NDP. The gradual increase in the national vote for the party since 1993 was indeed accompanied by the acquisition of a single seat in 1993 and two seats in 2000 in Ontario.

To a more limited extent, the efforts at widening the range of PQ's appeal were also remarkable. The PQ's early realization that it had to offer more than Quebec independence if it was to obtain support beyond a defined constituency was quite path-breaking in that sense. That basically was the main motive accounting for the PQ's choice of an incremental strategy.

Similarly, mainstream parties need to reconcile a variety of regional, provincial or identity-based demands in order to obtain a broad base of support. The role assumed by the nationwide parties in appealing to a variety of political positions is also of particular significance when extremist and radical parties confront the system. An example has been provided by the fact that the UCD and the PSOE "never sought support exclusively within the non-autonomist constituencies in Catalonia and Basque Country meant that there was space for Catalans and Basques with good regionalist credentials to join centralist parties and coalitions" (Przeworski et al., 1995: 24). It makes a remarkable difference whether those with grievances believe that broad-based political parties are likely to address their grievances or are rather convinced that the party that has a claim to represent their ethnic group poses the only channel for articulation.

Redressing political exclusion:

Democratic political systems are expected to provide benefits not only for the winners but also for the losers. Plasser, Ulram and Waldrauch identify symbolic rewards such as scope for political self-representation and material rewards of financial nature or in the form of key positions, organizational resources and access to information for those not winning elections (1998: 15). A key point rests in the recognition that democracies allow for a transformation whereby groups which occupy the minority position might in time become majorities provided that they manage to appeal to the whole system. Allowing the parties representing grievances to take part in the nationwide ruling coalitions or in local governance in line with their electoral performance is one way of empowering them.

Giving the representatives of every group the prospect of a share of power is likely to compel every group to abide by the rules of the game. Fear of exclusion from the political processes experienced by the groups with grievances may, on the contrary, exert a rather radicalizing impact. Continuous exclusion from political processes and offices is indeed likely to further undermine allegiance to the political community. Similarly, Przeworski et al. underline that "if democracy is not to evolve into a de facto dictatorship, democratic institutions must furnish the losers with instruments to counteract these effects" as failure to protect the power of the minorities would mean "democracy will not be stabilized, since those who have lost in the first rounds of democratic competition will have good reasons to fear that they would never have a fair chance" (1995: 40-41).

The experience of ruling or sharing power with other actors is also expected to exert a moderating influence. Horowitz stresses that "(o)nce in power, an ethnic party may likewise temper its response to ethnic constituency demands because the

responsibilities of governing seem to require that such demands be balanced against other goals with which they may be in conflict" (2000: 348). Governing in coalitions at the nationwide level as well as governing in a province or region when different political actors dominate the center may all become moderating experiences. Indeed, whether there is a need for building cross-sectional coalitions in governing is also a major determinant of the extent to which parties may feel the need to moderate their stances. Keeping the parties representing the grievances on board the national politics and urging them to perceive a stake at the level of national or local politics through enhanced coalition or blackmail potential thus surfaces as an integral part of conflict management.

A particularly explosive situation is constituted when the election results are perceived to be uncertain only with respect to which of the parties claiming to represent a specific ethnic group would come out as the winners. Hence, when bounded uncertainty is confined to the potential balance between the moderate and the extremist parties claiming to represent the same constituency, exclusion may become a major threat for some groups. Such a situation is particularly apparent in Sri Lanka. Welsh points at the assumption that parties would rotate in power as coalitions are formed on a shifting basis, yet qualifies that "(i)n the ascriptive politics of ethnically divided societies, however, these assumptions either do not operate or operate only in attenuated form" (1993: 47). A possible risk may be increasing levels of public apathy. Horowitz states that in a variety of political systems, "interest in the electoral process declined as ethnic and party outcomes became utterly foreseeable" (2000: 318). The groups in the minority position may then perceive the channels of representation to be blocked. This is markedly the case in Nigeria where northern dominance in politics is a major source of grievance not only among the southern

population but also among the various minority groups. Hence, the extent to which ethnic alignments determine the voter preferences and the stances of the political parties is highly central to the perception of the degree of 'bounded uncertainty' accompanying every election.

The regionalist parties indeed play a significant role in the Spanish party system. The regional concentration of their support is a major asset for these parties. Montero indeed stresses that fair representation is more problematic for other minor parties such as the Communists [and the IU] who lack geographically-concentrated support (1999: 73). Furthermore, the CiU and to a lesser extent the PNV support allowed the PSOE and the PP to form single-party minority governments in 1993 and 1996 respectively. The CiU also led to the demise of one such cabinet in 1995 by withdrawing its support. Hence, the relevance of moderate actors of Basque and Catalan nationalisms was established at the national level.

Among the regionalist parties, the PNV is the one with the greatest experience in regional government. At other times, coalitions could be formed to rule in the Basque region as was the case with the 1998 coalition between the PNV and the EA which was supported by the EH. The PNV also extensively formed coalition governments with the PSOE in governing the Basque region. This awareness on the part of the political parties that they might be urged to form coalitions and to rule together has exerted a major moderating influence over their discourse and policy actions. Mutual dependency between nationwide and regionalist parties is hence highly significant.

The PQ has been alternating in Quebec provincial government with the Liberals. While Quebec parties have so far failed to function in Canadian governments, the recent acquisition by the BQ of the official opposition status

testifies to the centrality of Quebec to Canadian politics. The party system has most recently witnessed the spectacular rise of two province-based political actors, owing mainly to the policy failures by and decline in support for federal parties such as the Progressive Conservatives. Mayer, Kaymak and Justice perceive both the Reform and the BQ as neo-populist parties undertaking a struggle against the hegemonic power structure in support of 'a culturally defined sense of nationhood' (2000: 79-80-81).

The electoral system and the regional concentration of the vote stand as the major factors in accounting for the centrality of parties of provincial discontent to Canadian politics. While the Liberals have managed to come out as the victors of the latest three federal elections, the rise of the Reform and the BQ also demand scrutiny. In 1993 elections, with 18.1 percent of the votes the Reform obtained 52 seats whereas the BQ was able to acquire 54 seats with 13.9 percent of the votes. Hence, in terms of the seats obtained the BQ was the second largest party following the Liberals and the Reform was the third. In the following elections of 1997, with 60 seats and 19.4 percent of the total vote, the Reform was the second largest party to be followed by the BQ which obtained 44 seats with 10.4 percent of the vote. Despite the fact that the Progressive Conservatives and the New Democrats acquired a larger share of the vote than the BQ, the number of seats they obtained fell short. Similarly, in 2000 elections, the Reform was the second largest party with 25.5 percent of the vote and 66 seats. Despite obtaining a lesser percentage of the votes than the Progressive Conservatives, the BQ was once again able to come out of the elections as the third largest party by obtaining 38 seats due to the regional concentration of support for it. It is particularly significant that the results of the latest three elections reveal that Reform is on the rise whereas the BQ has constantly declined since 1993.

Criticisms revolving around monocultural control of the state apparatus or ethnocracy are directed at the Nigerian and Sri Lankan cases particularly (Pieterse, 1996: 35). It is a significant qualification, for instance, that Wilson defines the Sri Lankan political system as 'Sinhala numerocratic democracy' (1993: 166). In the Sri Lankan Tamil camp, the FP was created when the ACTC failed to preserve unity. The FP has functioned as the major party of the Sri Lankan Tamils from mid-1950s until 1972 with an uncompromising support for federalism. The TULF (the renamed TUF) has then become the major Tamil political force and obtained the mandate for a separate Tamil state from the population in 1977. Small in numbers in the parliament to exert influence, the Tamil political actors have also been mainly excluded from the Sri Lankan governments for the bulk of the time. Their coalition and blackmail potential is almost non-existent. Senanayake convinced the Tamil Congress leader and the party's MPs to join the government in a symbolic show of unity in 1948. Similarly, the Tamils participated in a coalition government with the UNP in 1965. Exclusion was more marked in the latter decades. De Silva points at the fact that "(t)hroughout the period of rule of the Bandaranaikes, only once did the Cabinet have a Tamil member (1970-77) and even he was not an elected MP, but an appointed one" (2001: 259). In addition to this threat of exclusion, Tamil politicians have also become main targets of the LTTE. The fact that the TULF members walked out of the parliament in 1983 upon their refusal to take an oath on the unitary status of Sri Lanka was a significant turning point. The LTTE was then presented with the opportunity to become the leading voice of the Tamil nationalist movement. In parallel with the gradual radicalization of the political scene, the extremists managed to obtain the upperhand in the Tamil camp as the conflict largely shifted to extra-parliamentary channels.

As far as the Nigerian case is concerned, minority groups are believed to be excluded altogether from key political processes or offices. Among the different groups, the belief that the northerners exclusively dominate the political scene is quite pervasive. At the national level, northern dominance is well entrenched. Yet, coalition governments were essential to rule with eastern parties mainly functioning as coalition partners for the northern parties. An all together distinct pattern characterizes politics at the level of the states. The Nigerian political system indeed "permitted the three majority-group elites to win elections within their respective regions without minority support, and a combination of any two to form a mutually suspicious coalition government at the center" (Ejobowah, 2000: 7).

Moderation, inclusion and upsurge of support: the HB model

It is essential to underline that the public assumes a central role basically because its reluctance to extend support to extremist and anti-system alternatives may reduce the prospects for polarization. Moderation is stimulated when political parties discover that their prospects for inclusion and obtaining support are enhanced provided that they refrain from adopting a radical and exclusive discourse as well as such policy actions. The experiences of the HB display a typical example with an upsurge in the party's support and the willingness of the other parties to engage in dialogue and cooperation with it whenever it abided by a ceasefire. The price the HB had to pay for its association with violence has long been exclusion from the policy-making process. Upon HB's refusal to condemn the activities of ETA which it believed were provoked by the Spanish authorities, other political parties rejected it as a partner and declined from cooperating with it. The HB has indeed been excluded from the 1988 pact where all parties condemned violence and refused contacts with those not following the same path.

It is highly central for the political parties to realize that extremism has earned declining support to its proponents. The rise and fall of support for the HB presents a clear example. While the HB obtained 18 percent of the vote in Basque local elections in 1999 when a ceasefire was in force, its support fell down to 10 percent in May 2001 regional elections following the calling off of the ceasefire. When the HB joined with other political groups to form the EH and refrained from adopting an extreme discourse in line with ETA's declaration of cease-fire, the EH was able to obtain a significant 17.9 percent of the vote in regional elections. The Spanish public indeed seems to have rewarded the HB when it halted armed struggle and when it cooperated with other actors through moderating its discourse.

Shifts in party positions in line with the contextual circumstances of the time have been witnessed quite often. The HB has not been the sole party capitalizing on such a strategic shift. Newman indeed argues that "(o)nly in the last few years, however, has the EE moderated its policies leading to its rise in popular support and its inclusion in the Basque coalition process only as it has evolved away from its categorization as a dual radical party" (1997: 45).

<u>The role of the approaches displayed by the personalities:</u>

The political elite form a major component of the analysis of the role of political parties in conflict management. Certain models such as the consociational one accord a central role to the political elite. The political leaders are indeed the main actors in fostering the broadly shared understandings in the party system.

More central, however, is their role in drawing up and extending support to conflict management initiatives. Whether the political elite display a highly personal approach which means that support for conflict management is more context-dependent than institutionalized surfaces as the most significant question. When the

political will and determination to pursue the initiatives is dependent on the personal traits of the political elite, a stable commitment to ensure conflict management is unlikely to materialize. The personal disposition of the political leaders of the various Nigerian regimes has so far been utilized as a major factor in accounting for the course of Nigerian politics. Similarly, leadership styles and approaches seem to cause a variance in the Sri Lankan case. The identification of various political leaders in the post-Senanayake period with ethnic outbidding and the strong link established between the peace negotiations and the personality of President Kumaratunga are clear indications.

TABLE 14:

Comparative Examination of Political Party Role in Conflict Management

THE ROLE ASSUMED BY PARTIES	CASES			
	Spain	Canada	Sri Lanka	Nigeria
Main Nationwide Parties	Moderate discourse in relation to the conflict and effective organization across the regions	Moderate discourse in relation to the conflict and stakes perceived in organizing across the political system (particularly by the Liberals)	Intense ethnic outbidding by the Sinhalese parties	-Parties have been mainly regionally based despite the provisions to the contrary -No party has been defined as all-embracing
Moderate Nationalist Parties	The renunciation of violence by major regionalist/nationalist parties and their commitment to dialogue	All provincial parties are committed to dialogue	Radicalization has gradually marginalized moderate actors	Political parties have mainly been sectional in their organization and representation of interests
Relevance of Groups with Grievances to the Political Process	- High coalition and blackmail potential in Madrid - Highly central to regional politics	-Parties representing provincial grievances are key opposition actors in Ottowa - Provincial parties are the key players in provincial politics	The Tamil parties have largely been excluded from the political process	- Northern parties have been at the driving-seat of nationwide politics despite the urge to form coalitions (with the parties from other regions being confined to the role of small coalition partner) - Regionally, every party seemed destined to rule in the region with the highest concentration of the group it was claiming to represent
Extremist Political Parties	As the major extremist political force, the HB has a limited radicalizing impact since it has been mainly isolated by the moderate parties	No actor with an extremist discourse or resort to violence	The LTTE and the JVP have managed to radicalize the political scene and a shift of balances in favor of extremist actors was witnessed in all camps	Extremist discourse and the clash between regional identities have characterized the party system while being occasionally moderated by deliberate crafting efforts

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Supporting condition: Role of the public in conflict management and democratic consolidation

The stances of the individuals on issues pertaining to a conflict are particularly crucial to the fate of that conflict. The way the electorate votes, the attachment the individuals feel towards the political community or the citizens' understanding of the legitimate means of upholding interests all matter in how a conflict is likely to evolve. It is among the chief arguments of this study that the existence of voluntary associations of individuals and the position that these take in relation to a conflict are crucial to conflict management. Indeed, in Sartori's opinion, " 'electoral participation' is neither real participation nor the appropriate site of participation" which necessitates a theory of participatory democracy denoting the strong meaning of the word as "taking part in person, and a self-activated, willed taking part" (1987: 113).

Popular attachment to political community:

Public allegiance to the political community with respect to whether it is openly challenged and how widespread the challenges are is a factor of utmost importance. In addition to widespread support for democracy and rejection of violence, popular commitment to the political community is likely to endow the public opinion variable with a supportive quality. Taylor emphasizes that "a nation can only ensure the stability of its legitimacy if its members are strongly committed to one another by means of a common allegiance to the political community" as "a modern democratic state demands a 'people' with a strong collective identity" (1998: 144).

Yet, every community with an expressed grievance and a struggle to redress it seems to have developed a concern over conformity and homogeneity being imposed on them. In this search for building up a collective identity, the fabric of the political

community might come under attack from various groups. Referring to the efforts by the states to develop a common and exclusively relevant territorial identity among their citizens to endure through periods of crises, Rönnquist argues that such identity-building "has often proved difficult to control, and depends, among other things, on the cultural inclusiveness of the institutions of the state and on the existence of competing bases of identification" (1999: 147). The efforts at managing the conflict hence are complicated when a certain group explicitly rejects the legitimacy of the state and the existing political framework. References to a distinct ethnic background or differing cultural traits may hence characterize opposition by a group to the monolithic political community conception.

The region or the province, for instance, stands as other major sources of allegiance in a number of political systems. The province is the main source of allegiance for the Canadian citizens whereas regional identification is highly consolidated among the Spanish public. While intense attachment to the region may prove problematic in certain contexts such as where wars of separation are being waged, allegiance to the region or the province and the political community do not necessarily stand as exclusive attitudes in other political systems.

The major differences between the interest conceptions and standpoints of the variety of nationalisms relate mainly to the organization of the state and the sharing of particularly the economic resources. Although there are aspects of all conflicts which revolve around primordial identity concerns, the proposals for reform of the existing system turn out to be the major point of contention in certain political systems. While immigrants in Quebec and Catalonia are required to display conformity to the use of French language and Catalan language respectively and the relations between the Basques and immigrants are tense due to the latter's marked

affiliation with the Castilian culture, the controversies are mainly framed as conflicts of interest among opposing regions or provinces in Spain and Canada. In Spain, the central controversy relates to the asymmetrical transfer of powers to the regions whereas whether all the provinces should enjoy equal status rather than the acquisition of a distinct status by some was the major bone of contention in Canada. Yet, in some other political systems, the groups advocating different interests are so polarized that the main contention centers on the primordial characteristics of each group. Thus, rather than revolving around debates over broad concerns such as the organization of the state or the sharing of resources, the controversies in certain political systems are phrased in terms of the clash of different identities with a rhetorical emphasis on the revolt of certain groups against others and communal emancipation. The Sri Lankan conflict has indeed been transformed into a Sinhalese-Tamil conflict whereas the problem in Nigeria is presented as the struggle for grasping rights for the Igbo, Yoruba or the minorities in spite of the continuous creation of states. It may be plausible to argue that the conflicts phrased in terms of disagreement over the organization of the state and the sharing of resources present a greater opportunity for being bridged by initiatives in conflict management. The conflicts of the second type are more difficult to address by the initiatives as the clash of conflicting and irreconcilable identities has become the dominant discourse.

It has to be acknowledged that the challenge of tackling a number of tasks simultaneously puts some additional pressure on those political systems that are struggling to consolidate not only their democracies but also their physical existence as a single unit. Emphasizing that West European sequence of state building, legal domestication of the state and democratic domestication of the state are not paralleled by latter experiences, Schedler underlines that many democracies in other

regions "have been created in the context of states whose presence looks partial and precarious (in both territorial and social terms) and with judicial systems in place that often cannot do much more than administer the rule of lawlessness" (1998: 99). Sequencing hence becomes a significance variable with respect to which unit the individuals identify themselves with.

The need to simultaneously tackle a number of tasks such as the consolidation of state boundaries, the provision of social integration and the installment of a democratic political framework without the opportunity for sequencing have indeed placed certain political systems at disadvantage in many of the variables analyzed here. The perception of a threat of subversion associated with conflict management initiatives would be rather minimal in a consolidated democracy whereas every step taken might easily be condemned as leading to the potential disintegration of the political system in the contexts where multiple tasks are awaiting to be simultaneously undertaken. Indeed, Nigerian and Sri Lankan cases exemplify the way in which colonial rule was associated with favors extended to certain communities and hence an effort at redressing the imbalances has become a major objective guiding the actions of a variety of groups at early independence.

Voluntary associations:

The autonomy acquired by voluntary associations, the constraints they face, the level of popular involvement they attain and the degree of fairness in access for all surface as significant determinants of the extent to which such organizations may be expected to assist conflict management. Organized representation of demands and interests may indeed surface as another major channel for the integration of anti-system actors. It is indeed critical that civil society organizations also represent the demands of marginal sections of the population such as the ethnic minorities who are

rather excluded and for whom it is impossible to attain political power on their own (Tosun, 2001: 181). Hence, civil society is expected to serve the function of preventing the marginal groups from going underground (Tosun, 2001: 182). Schmitter and Karl argue that "interest associations, and not political parties, have become the primary expression of civil society in most stable democracies, supplemented by the more sporadic interventions of social movements" (1993: 44).

Yet, the contribution that voluntary associations may make to conflict management and democratic consolidation is also dependent on a number of other factors. The extent to which such associations observe democratic principles in their structure and operation is a key determinant. The internalization of democratic principles and values by civil society organizations hence acquires prominence. Tosun enlists the internal operation, human resource and the objectives as the major determinants of the democratic nature of organizations, movements and civic initiatives within the civil society (2001: 152).

It is essential to note that the level and extent of the expression of organized positions markedly differ across a variety of political systems. Of all the cases analyzed in this study, Canadian and Spanish political systems stand as the ones where constraints on the organization of different interests are minimal. In the case of Nigeria, on the other hand, the organized expression of interests has rather been tailored to suit the objectives of the existing regime. Hence, it has been problematic to talk about autonomous organization and representation of interests. Sri Lanka presents another distinct case with the organized groups advocating Sinhalese supremacy acquiring complete dominance. It has to be particularly underlined, for instance, that "Buddhist fronts and societies of various types can be activated and mobilised at short notice to obstruct any Sinhala government preparing to make

concessions to the Tamils" (Wilson, 1993: 147). Other organized groups which may be expected to counter that impact fall short of displaying a parallel effort which testifies to the disparities in access for various groups.

Public stance on violence:

Public stance on the violence issue is of particular significance as it reveals citizens' understanding of the legitimate means of representation of interests. While the ethnic terrorist groups have a defined list of targets, it is still possible to argue that all sections of the political community are likely to be affected by their activities. Volkan indeed underlines that assisting the emergence of an ethnic terrorist group is for those who do not actively participate in terrorist activities yet share the common ethnic descent to at least reveal a latent sympathy to the terrorists while displaying poor remorse for their victims (1999: 184). Volkan also adds that this process eases for the group's leader the task of finding audiences to view the perpetuation of violence (1999: 184). Furthermore, there is the related risk that sections of the political community may indeed perceive the terrorist groups as offering a degree of security to their own group when confronted by the harsh retaliation of other groups and the state authorities. This factor may be expected to exert a highly divisive effect on the political community.

The fact that voter support for the HB intensifies during the ceasefire only to reach lowest levels following its end display how the public may contribute to conflict management by punishing those perpetuating violence and rewarding those refraining from disturbing the domestic peace. Similarly, it is basically when public condemnation of ETA violence intensifies that the organization engages in activities that limits potential casualties such as through informing the public authorities of some of their specific deeds in advance. While vocal popular condemnation of

violence allowed the public to take over the role of major opponent of violence from the military, the Blanco event represented an eruption of popular mood. As far as the Canadian case is concerned, the October Crisis constituted a watershed. On the contrary, security offered by various violent organizations has been valued by certain communities in the case of Sri Lanka and Nigeria.

Polarization and parallel institutionalization of the civil society:

Civil society organizations may themselves reinforce ethnic and communal tensions. Extreme levels of polarization widen the gap between various communities in certain political systems. It thus has to be expected that the interplay between organized groups defending a variety of interests is a major determinant of the course that a conflict is likely to take. When various communities have formed their own parallel and exclusive institutions, the scope for cooperation within the civil society organizations is rather minimized. Parallel institutionalization of various groups is indeed more likely to stimulate polarization through encouraging mutual exclusion. Parallel organization has driven communities further apart in Nigerian and Sri Lankan contexts with the Christian-Muslim divide or the Buddhist clergy-Tamil rift assuming a particularly central role in the structuring of civil society organizations. The dominance of mutually exclusive parallel organizations is also likely to weaken the prospects for state-society synergy. Indeed, some scholars regard the homogeneity of a society as an advantage for mutual empowerment since "(a) joint project and effective public institutions are much easier to build upon a common ethnic or religious identity" (Wang, 1999: 241).

Public support for initiatives: state-society synergy

It is basically the problem-solving capacity of the civil society organizations in addition to their ability to channel discontent into peaceful activity that makes

them central actors to conflict management. The extent to which conflict management initiatives obtain the support of the public at large is critical. A synergy between the state and the public hence surfaces as an integral component of conflict management. Pooling the efforts of the public for the management of the conflict is likely to enhance the success of conflict management endeavors.

Autonomy of the state is an integral part of the definition of synergy. State autonomy enables the state to function as the representative of public interests as without it "the deep engagement between the state and a highly fragmented civil society will probably lead to either the Balkanization of the state apparatus or rent-seeking cooperation between individual officials and interest-driven social groups" (Wang, 1999: 246). The state is indeed central to ensuring mutual respect between the civil society organizations. Yet, it is essential to underline that a public sphere completely left to the state would expand the confines of the relative autonomy of the state by fostering a society which expects every function to be performed by the state and feels itself to be dependent on the state (Tosun, 2001: 169). The state is rather the critical actor in the determination as well as implementation of legal guarantees for and the confines of freedom to associate (Tosun, 2001: 172). Analysts also point at the mutually empowering interaction between the state and social forces in arguing that "some dimension of state power has more to do with the state's ability to work through and with other social actors and therefore that a state's apparent disconnectedness from social groups turns out to be associated in many cases with weakness rather than strength" (Wang, 1999: 231-232). The synergy between the state and the civil society in the fight against resort to violence indeed well exemplifies a key aspect of the Spanish experience.

Public support for democracy: establishing diffuse support

Political tolerance, individual efficacy, support for nonviolent conflict resolution, support for rule of law and constitutionalism, endorsement of the value of individual liberty and rights orientation, participatory orientation, interpersonal trust, and cooperative social relations have been listed by Maher as orientations supportive of democracy (1997: 86-92). Widespread public support for democracy as revealed by attitudes in conformity with such orientations is also a significant asset for a democratic political system battling against ethnic conflict. Schmitter stresses that "what seems to suffice in the longer run are diffuse feelings within the citizenry of the 'naturalness' and 'appropriateness' of their regime" (1995: 550 and 552). Disenchantment with the existing actors and processes are not directly associated with the democratic regime when a reservoir of support has already been established for the democratic option. Yet, when diffuse support has not been established and a ravaging conflict is ongoing, the route to democratic development is likely to be clouded. Indeed, a remarkable degree of public welcome for the coups in the case of Nigeria provides a significant example. Furthermore, LTTE's rejection of a multi-party democracy for the intended state and JVP's extreme hostility towards established classes also need to be pointed at.

A political system experiencing ethnic conflict at the early stage of its democratic development is hence confronted with an additional burden. It is highly critical that the transition to democracy presents a peculiar period in time. Welsh argues that "(i)n democratic polities, the scope for ethnic politics is dramatically widened" as "(t)he lifting of the hegemonic controls and the initiation of liberalization and democratization are like air to a smoldering fire" (1993: 44 and 47). Similarly, Leatherman underlines that "in democratizing states, unlike mature

democracies, the rules of the game and parameters within which conflicts are to be resolved are all at stake" and points at the finding by Mansfield and Snyder that "the probability for war for democratizing states was 60% greater than states not undergoing regime change (or those moving toward autocracy)" (1999: 188 and 189).

This situation gains significance in combination with the fact that democracy is valued on the basis of early performance where it lacks diffuse support. Diamond stresses that "(d)emocracy will not be valued by the people unless it deals effectively with social and economic problems and achieves a modicum of order and justice" (1993: 96). Performance defects indeed make democratic systems more vulnerable to threats of different kinds. Hence, in the newly democratizing political systems, any disruption in the capacity of the system to devise solutions caused by an unfolding ethnic conflict puts public confidence in democracy at risk.

TABLE 15:

Comparative Examination of the Role of the Public in Conflict Management

	CASES			
POPULAR STANCE ON	Spain	Canada	Sri Lanka	Nigeria
Violence	Rejection and exclusion of violent groups and the public protests waged against them	Rejection of violence is total	Rejection of violence is uncertain (communities are actually involved in the spiral of violence)	Rejection of violence is uncertain (communities are actually involved in the spiral of violence)
Democracy	Support for democracy is almost total (anti-regime forces fail to obtain widespread popular support)	Support for democracy is almost total (anti-regime forces fail to obtain widespread popular support)	Democracy is not under direct challenge where suggestions for an alternative regime type are advanced, yet the search for order and the fight against separatism assume priority for many (to such an extent that certain anti-democratic initiatives are not popularly condemned)	Support for democracy is rather weak (the coups manage to obtain support from certain groups as promising more of order and less of corruption)
Political Community	Support for political community is substantial despite the strength of regional identities (regional and national identities are perceived by many individuals as being complementary)	Support for political community is substantial despite the strength of provincial identities (provincial and national identities are perceived by many individuals as being complementary) (12)	Support for political community is rather weak among the Tamil population	Commitment to an overarching Nigerian identity has not materialized (13)
Organized Representation of Popular Stances	Relative freedom from restrictions and fairness in access for all	Relative freedom from restrictions and fairness in access for all	Unequal influence and access provided to the variety of organized groups	Under extensive discretion of existing regimes

Pluralism exterminated through terrorism and violence:

The extent to which the members of a certain group display differences in their attitudes towards the conflict stands as another crucial variable. Leatherman expects the promotion of cross-cutting ties in society to produce affirmative effects, "so that interests are shared more widely, and there is less likelihood of the mobilization of an ethnic community based on perceived group grievances" (1999: 192). Group coherence and prospects for moderation are hence dependent on the position occupied by the group members in relation to other cleavages. Yet, the fact that different cleavages further divide a certain ethnic group may have the effect of either moderating or sharpening the stances of the different groups. In the case of Sri Lanka, the differences among the Tamils served to radicalize certain sections of the Tamil population and were transformed into a challenge at the established centers of Tamil power. Moderate voices of Tamil nationalism have become marginalized. Thus, the public might become increasingly polarized when the most vocal actors in a certain group sharpen and radicalize their attitudes against other group members. Esman indeed underlines that ethnic communities "are vulnerable to segmentation into factions that attempt to impose their values on collectivity, compete for control of the community's resources, and seek recognition by outsiders as the authoritative representatives and spokesmen for the community", pointing specifically at how class cleavages, kinship rivalries, and personal conformity might be imposed on groups within a certain community (1994: 248 and 225). In the case of Spain and Canada, on the other hand, multiple cleavages served to weaken the nationalist or provincial cause.

The imposition of conformity particularly surfaces in systems where violence is an enduring element of the political process. Extermination of pluralism through

the issuing of threats or resort to violence against dissident groups has been attempted by various organizations. As was mentioned in the previous parts of this study, the LTTE provides the clearest example. Volkan stresses how compelling it is for the terrorist organization to stifle opposition and to establish absolute authority within its own ethnic group and how a campaign of terror directed against the organization's own ethnic group is perceived as an essential part of the campaign against the dominant ethnic group (1999: 185).

Clash of a variety of interests: the intractable nature of conflicts

It is also essential to determine whether various communities disagree with each other on the initiatives for conflict management. Various conflicting interests are indeed likely to be touched by the proposed initiatives. The defeat of the Charlottetown Accord in the national referendum and the ratification crisis of the Meech Lake Accord revealed that different communities within Canada had conflicting concerns. Every proposal aiming at the introduction of a distinct society status for Quebec contrasted the divergent concerns of other Canadian provinces and was hence defeated. In the case of Spain, the lack of parallelism between the level of autonomy granted to historic regions and the others was increasingly a source of concern for the latter. In Sri Lanka and Nigeria, the polarization between communities upholding divergent interests was all the more apparent with groups perceiving themselves as being engaged in a zero-sum game. Each initiative was regarded as an extension of one group's privileges at the expense of the others'.

TABLE 16:

Comparative Examination of the Variety of Interests and Group Cohesion

CASES	Variety of Conflicting Interests and Standpoints	Group Cohesion
Spain	- Historic nationalisms (Basque, Catalan and Galician) versus other nationalisms	- Integration of immigrant communities problematic particularly in the Basque region - Navarre's reservations for joining Basque nationalist demands - Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya as strongholds of Basque nationalism as opposed to the more reserved stances by Alava and Navarre
Canada	- Quebec versus the rest of Canada debate - Different approaches by the provinces to multiculturalism: the West with a population over half of which declares to be neither French nor English in origin stands as the stronghold of multiculturalism whereas Quebec which perceives Canada as the product of a pact between two equals, the English and the French, rather opposes multiculturalism - The search by the aboriginal population for greater rights - Western discontent	- Federalists in Quebec versus the sovereignists - Partitionists versus anti-partitionists: some municipalities declared their commitment to staying within Canada in case Quebec separates - The class factor: the youth, the business and the traditional elite challenging each other particularly from the 1960s on - Anglophones, francophones and allophones in conflict, particularly with the increase in the flow the latter to Quebec and their tendency to endorse English language and culture - Cree Indians and the Inuit in northern Quebec opposing Quebec separation
Sri Lanka	- Sinhala nationalists, Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils and Muslims all stand as different groups with differing objectives - Indian Tamils distance themselves from the Sri Lankan Tamils - Muslims who obtained a degree of recognition of their identity and culture clash with Sri Lankan Tamils over their own security concerns - Both the Muslims and the Indian Tamils had their separate bargains with the Sinhalese-dominated governments	- Tamil youth militancy challenged established Tamil actors - Regional cleavages among the Tamils: Colombo Tamils and their traditional leadership status came under increasing challenge by the Batticaloa Tamils of the east and the Jaffna Tamils of the north who later assumed the leadership - Caste cleavages: Indian Tamils perceived as lower-caste by Jaffna Tamils
Nigeria	- Enormous ethnic variety - The main axis of conflict has been the north versus the south - Religion has provided another ground for conflict	- Disagreements exist among the Hausas and the Fulani and among different Muslim sects as Muslims in Yoruba-dominated regions have socio-economic, political and educational concerns - Natives versus the other inhabitants due mainly to the indigeneity principle - Minorities versus the majority groups across the regions: an example was provided by minorities' denial of support to the Igbo campaign for independence - Muslims versus non-Muslims in northern Shari'a states

NOTES:

(1) Lijphart claims that "(t)he potentially most damaging challenge to the idea of consociational engineering is that the lessons drawn from Western consociational experiences are not applicable to non-Western plural societies because there is literally a world of difference between the plural societies in the First and Third Worlds", objecting to the arguments that the economic underdevelopment and the presence of intense cleavages in the latter makes the model irrelevant to such settings (1977: 231). Horowitz, on the other hand, qualifies that in European polities sources of cleavage other than ethnicity are also major factors, hostility towards other groups are less intense, and that there exist suprasegmental allegiances and adds that "European conflicts are thus less ascriptive in character, less severe in intensity, less exclusive in their command of the loyalty of participants, and less preemptive of other forms of conflict" (2000: 572).

(2) Alternative paths to stability in deeply divided societies have indeed been offered. Lustick for instance advocates control approach as opposed to that of consociationalism. This approach intends to focus "on the emergence and maintenance of a relationship in which the superior power of one segment is mobilized to enforce stability by constraining the political actions and opportunities of another segment or segments" (Lustick, 2000: 1745 and 1759). Similarly, Esman points at the existence of coercive patterns of conflict management, confirming the acceptance of pluralism through exclusion or subordination (1994: 259). Coakley, on the other hand, defines indigenization, accommodation, assimilation, acculturation, population transfers, frontier adjustment, genocide and ethnic suicide as the alternative ethnic management strategies (1992: 346-351).

(3) The constitutional conference of 1994-1995 indeed recommended the "maintenance of the federal structure; creation of more states and local governments; abolition of the quota system in respect of educational administration; review of the present revenue-sharing formula in order to allow the oil-producing states more access to oil royalties; readoption of a multiparty system; shifting of the base of power from the north to the south in a rotational system that will allow the south-east to produce the next presidential candidates for the fourth republic; adoption of a multiple vice-presidency to allow for more participation of other groups at the centre; and the immediate return of power to civilians" (Njoku, 1999: 17).

(4) On the contrary, grievances of those refraining from resort to use of force have effectively been addressed in a variety of political systems. Catalan nationalism provides one example. Furthermore, the Inuits in Canada obtained their rights through peaceful means. Similarly, Muslims across Sri Lanka were able to acquire broader concessions than other groups particularly in cultural matters without resort to use of force.

(5) Ugarte and Perez-Nievas points at how "in the years following Franco's death the incapacity or unwillingness of the central government to stop terrorist attacks by the extreme right-wing groups, as well as various kinds of abuses perpetrated by the police forces in the Basque Country, contributed to the growing climate of violence" (1998: 103). Similar controversies over the effectiveness and impartiality of the representatives of state authority have been ongoing in the case of Sri Lanka and Nigeria.

(6) Kloos, for instance, particularly underlines in relation to the 1983 riots that "high government officials, including Cabinet Ministers, actively promoted the targeting of Tamils living in Colombo by handing over election lists disclosing the names and

addresses of Tamil voters to gangs of thugs who were transported by public transport buses to streets and neighborhoods where many Tamils lived" (1997: 239).

(7) Bribery in the provision of police services and the support provided by the military personnel to some of the parties to the communal struggle have all been referred to (Agbese, 2001: 145 and Ibelema, 2000: 211).

(8) Nordstrom defines dirty wars as wars that "intentionally target noncombatants in order to control a nation's political process" and add that they "are fundamentally concerned with the nation-wide construction of a culture of terror" (1992: 27). Nordstrom argues that Sri Lanka is undergoing a dirty war considering the fact that "(a)s the conflicts progressed, dirty war tactics that widely targeted civilian populations escalated on all sides", from the LTTE to the movements in the south and the state retaliation against them (1992: 29).

(9) The Spanish electoral system, for instance, implements a 3 % threshold at the district level. In the Sri Lankan political system, no seats are granted to a party which obtains below one-eight of the vote in a constituency.

(10) This scheme encourages parties, including the ethnic ones, to appeal across ethnic groups in a system where a party can not solely rely on the votes cast by the members of the group it claims to represent. While pointing at the alternative vote or single transferable vote as the major mechanisms, Reilly underlines the fact that "negotiations between rival candidates and their supporters for reciprocal vote transfers can greatly increase the chances that votes will shift from ethnic parties to nonethnic ones- thus encouraging, even in deeply divided societies, the formation and strengthening of a core of 'moderate middle' sentiment within the electorate as a whole" (2002: 158).

(11) The alternative model presented by Sartori is the issue voting model in which "the sequence is: (a) issue preferences; (b) issue perceptions; (c) vote for the candidate or party that appears closer in issue stands" where he acknowledges that combination of various criteria account for the actual attitude in voting (Sartori, 1987: 108-109).

(12) Evaluating the results of a 1991 survey by Angus Reid for Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, Kalin concludes that respondents from Quebec display the highest attachment to provincial identity and are less likely than other respondents to choose attachment to Canadian identity, obtaining the lowest scores in Canadianism (1995: 34-41). Yet, Kalin also underlines that "Quebeckers rate Canadian identity positively (nearly 5 out of a possible 7 for Quebeckers of French origin, approximately 6 for Quebeckers of British origin and nearly 6 for those of Other Ethnic origin), and also score relatively high on Canadianism (Quebeckers of French origin scoring nearly 5 out of a possible 7, and those of British and Other Ethnic origin scoring over 5) leading to the suggestion that Quebec nationalism within Canada is a strong attitudinal option" (1995: 41). Hence, the figures reveal at large that attachment to ethnic and provincial identities coexist with allegiance to Canada.

(13) The existence of an overarching Nigerian identity is indeed very much contested particularly in some parts of Nigeria. Njoku stresses that "(i)n an opinion poll conducted among Igbo communities in Lagos during the period of crisis following the cancellation of presidential elections in 1993, 90 per cent of respondents wished that war would result from the crisis for them to have an opportunity to avenge what was termed 'Yoruba betrayal ' in 1967-70" (1999:12). Some animosities between groups prove to be resilient.

Where Does Turkey Stand?:

Failure to institutionalize the supporting conditions

An examination of the Turkish case reveals that there is a remarkable failure to institutionalize the supporting conditions in spite of the recent acceleration of the drawing up of initiatives and the drop in the intensity of violence. The problems encountered in ensuring political party and public support for conflict management particularly surface as major factors accounting for the intractable nature of the current conflict. Hence, the ongoing conflict and the low-quality democratic outcome become inextricably linked.

It is in fact the key argument of this study that Turkey currently presents a valuable case in the analysis of prospects for democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict. Periodic recurrence of violence as well as lingering likelihood of its full-fledged eruption and intensified attempts at drawing up an integrated strategy of conflict management which are given a boost by the EU candidacy account for this significance. Whether conflict management initiatives can be matched by an unconditional cessation of violence or public and political party contribution to conflict management is central to determining the eventual course of the conflict.

Hence, it would be implausible to expect the various novel initiatives, and even more, to succeed on their own. In addition to the progress to be recorded with respect to the initiatives, two of the following conditions have to be met: the unconditional halting of violence, the assumption of an active role by the parties in the drawing up of initiatives as well as in their implementation and the launching by the public of a campaign to assist the political authorities in redressing the costs associated with the conflict in commitment to the political community. A political

context devoid of violence as well as the threat of its resumption, strong public contribution to conflict management or responsible political party and elite behavior through the fostering of a consensus on some essential principles are likely to enhance not only the prospects for the success of conflict management initiatives but also for democratic consolidation.

Initiatives in Conflict Management:

<u>Towards the diversification of initiatives</u>

In addition to the fight to contain violence, the list of potential initiatives in the case of Turkey encompasses recognition of identity claims, efforts at socio-economic development and abolition or reversal of the past practices largely believed to have aggravated the conflict. While socio-economic precautions formed the essence of every governmental package directed at the eastern and southeastern regions, a greater variety in governmental policies is recently experienced. The fact that violence has been increasingly contained from mid-1990s on particularly accounts for this diversification. Other factors exogenous to the system such as relations with the EU are also critical in explaining such a shift.

The gradual diversification of the initiatives was to be expected considering the recent redefinition the current conflict has undergone. Initially, the initiatives failed to keep up with this gradual transformation of the conceptualization of the conflict. That was instrumental in accounting for why the state was regarded as biased in coping with the problem. Yeğen particularly underlines that "(w)henever the Kurdish question was mentioned in [Turkish State Discourse], it was mentioned as an issue of either political reaction, tribal resistance or regional backwardness, but never as an ethno-political question" (1999: 555). Regardless of whether it has initially surfaced as a regional or a socio-economic problem, particularly with the divorce between the Turkish left and the Kurdish groups within it, perceptions of the conflict have begun to revolve around ethnic identity. It is hence plausible to argue that events cited as landmarks in the genesis of Kurdish nationalism initially displayed religious, tribal and anti-centralist characteristics which were later surpassed by ethnic tones. Indeed, the progress recorded within the larger leftist

movement with the recognition of Kurdish identity soon gave way to a divergent discourse whereby the emphasis on national identity moved to the forefront. Hence, the viability of referring to Kurdish rights or grievances has increased at the expense of other formulations. The transformation that the question has undergone thus needed to be reckoned with in discussions relating to conflict management. There is indeed the convergence of many analysts on that "(m)ajor economic improvements and increased democratization in the southeast will help alleviate some symptoms of the crisis, but in the end a solution that addresses the ethnic character of the problem is required" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 180).

The formulation and the implementation of economic initiatives has been the least controversial for every government. It is essential to note that "(s)ince 1960, the southeastern and eastern provinces have been designated in State Planning Office documents and plans as disadvantaged areas in need of extra investments and incentives" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 187). It has to be added that the budget share the eastern and southeastern regions receive far exceeds state revenue derived from there. Hence, there has been a flow of resources extracted from the other regions to the regions of conflict. (1) Kramer confirms that "public investment in the [southeast] has been three times higher than the national average for all regions since the early 1980s" (2000: 46). Furthermore, it needs to be specified that the transport and communication networks have also been heavily invested on.

Various cabinet meetings have been organized in cities of the region to announce government financial packages directed at the region. In 1999, Prime Minister Ecevit announced a comprehensive plan to stimulate economic activity in the eastern and southeastern regions. (2) This revealed the government's intention to redress the costs of the conflict. With 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric plants, the South

East Anatolia Project (GAP) was perceived as the major means of addressing the grievances of the region. Irrigation of the surrounding lands and generation of hydro-electricity to support industrial production were the intended outcomes. The project extends to Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Siirt, Batman, and Şırnak. Yet, qualifications are attached to the extent to which the project can fulfill the desired objectives. McDowall argues that "(w)ithout a fundamental land reform it was inconceivable that the majority of the farming population could benefit from GAP" (2000: 434). Cornell also warns that "(d)evelopment efforts that enrich only aghas and their client networks but not the Kurdish population as a whole could provide a spark for a social explosion" (2001: 9). It is particularly striking that the program of the current Justice and Development Party (AKP) government includes the undertaking of land reform.

Cross-border developments also proved central to the region's economy by aggravating the existing problems. The collapse of trade with Iraq from 1990 on due to the United Nations embargo posed a major difficulty for the region. Rather than normalization, trade across the border with northern Iraq progressed in a fluctuating manner. Government's decision to open up the border has aimed at redressing the economic effects not only of the embargo on Iraq but also Turkey's closure of the border with Iraq to halt the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) activities across the border. It was in 1994 that the Turkish government allowed for the exchange of food for diesel fuel with northern Iraq. It was with the transportation of diesel fuel with trucks that the regional economy was revived to an extent. Yet, this scheme was particularly disrupted from September 11 attacks on with diesel fuel not being transferred to northern Iraq and, hence, not being transported into Turkey. The recent war on Iraq served to aggravate the existing problems. The tightening of limitations

on border trade threaten to contribute to violence and poverty considering the fact that over forty thousand vehicles occasionally lay idle without the provision of an alternative source of revenue. Hence, the economic challenges seem far from being tackled.

Another significant pillar of the conflict management strategy has been the military one. A change has indeed affected the military strategies of combat to fit the exigencies of the conflict. The General Staff of the Armed Forces published in 1995 a document titled Public Relations and Winning the Public in Internal Security that was distributed to its personnel serving in the region. This may indeed be perceived as a move to avert what McDowall has termed 'the progressive loss of 'hearts and minds' in the south-east' (2000: 427). Distinguishing the PKK fighters from the noncombatant civilian population was a major task in that respect. Other specific campaigns were waged to that end. In 1998, the military initiated the 'army and the people hand in hand' campaign which aimed to aid the students in the southeast. The hosting of successful students from the eastern and southeastern regions by the branches of the General Staff in western parts of the country during the semester or summer break has now become a major activity. Education and health facilities as well as other services were also provided by the military in parts of the regions of conflict.

Nevertheless, increasing containment of violence brought with it various policy reversals particularly in relation to the policy instruments utilized in the conduct of the struggle against the PKK. The abolition of the village guards system is currently under consideration. Yet, cautious steps have to be taken considering the fact that any abrupt dissolution of the village guard system may have immense social and economic side-effects. The State of Emergency Rule (OHAL) was lifted in

Bingöl, Bitlis and Batman in 1997. Siirt then followed in 1999. OHAL's complete abolition came in November 30, 2002. Occasional conditional amnesties and acts of repentance were also issued by the governments. While the sixth reform package involves the deletion of Article 8 of the anti-terror law in spite of a presidential veto, a new act on reintegration into society may be contemplated as a major step.

The diversification of initiatives in conflict management particularly through a declining emphasis on military and security-related components seems to be a promising sign as regards the prospects for democratic consolidation. While military and socio-economic initiatives have been the most forthcoming, the recent focus on cultural initiatives signals a major shift. Barkey and Fuller refer to the centrality of cultural initiatives in arguing that while not likely to be regarded as sufficient in the long-run, they "will buy time and possibly force a change in the PKK's strategy and tactics, and they may even weaken it vis-à-vis other Kurdish organizations" (1998: 185). A policy of reversal in that realm was undertaken in the 1990s. The ban on Kurdish language was abolished in 1991. (3) The approval in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) of the amendments relating to broadcasting and educational rights was a major follow-up. Following the approval of reform packages in the TGNA in August 2002 and upon National Security Council's (MGK) suggestion for broadcasting in Kurdish, the High Council of Radio and Television (RTÜK) embarked on the task of preparing a regulation which would allow for test broadcasting in radio and television (Milliyet, December 3, 2002: 4). Yet, the sixth reform package encompassed a change in policy whereby private enterprises would be allowed to broadcast in Kurdish and other 'local' languages. Private language courses were also allowed with the 2002 reforms. While major changes are hence

taking place, it remains to be seen whether further cultural initiatives will be contemplated.

Attention to political, and particularly territorial, initiatives has been the scarcest. Territorial initiatives in conflict management have occasionally been discussed in the case of Turkey through references to models such as the Basque one. Furthermore, demands for autonomy and separate existence have been voiced by a variety of Kurdish groups. A considerable level of autonomy was enjoyed by the principalities and the Kurdish local leaders under the Ottoman Empire due mainly to their geographic distance from the center and their commitment to protect the empire's borders by the 16th century. The feudal lords paid some taxes and offered military services in return for what White terms as their 'semi-autonomous' status (2000: 96). In the 19th century, however, "increased imperial intervention in the Kurdish regions, levies for troops, and warfare between Russia, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire that touched Kurdish areas increased challenges to the privileges of Kurdish overlords" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 7). Feudal rebellions were then witnessed as the Kurdish areas aimed to avert centralization through force of arms at the end of which they were defeated. In addition to a previous period of considerable autonomy enjoyed under Ottoman rule, the advocacy of autonomous status has also been grounded on Articles 62-64 of the Sevres Treaty. While in Article 62 the drafting of a scheme for local autonomy was envisaged for Kurdish dominated areas to the east of the Euphrates, Article 64 stated that "(i)f within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that these peoples are

capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas" (Mc Dowall, 2000: Appendix 1). On the other hand, many analysts voice claims as to Mustafa Kemal's intention of granting autonomy to the regions where the Kurdish population formed the majority. (4) The minutes of Amasya interview and proceedings of Erzurum and Sivas Congresses were believed to indicate that "(f)or a while Mustafa Kemal apparently toyed with the idea of meaningful Kurdish autonomy in the new state" (Gunter, 1997: 5). The formation of local governments under the administration of the TGNA for the Kurds was believed to have been specified by Mustafa Kemal (Saatci, 2002: 562). References were also made to the Draft Proposal for Kurdish Autonomy as discussed in TGNA on February 10, 1922. For many other commentators, on the other hand, Özal would have drastically altered the official policy on the territorial organization of the state had he lived longer.

Ergil underlines that about half of the Kurdish population lives in other parts of Turkey than the southeastern region where they form the majority and particularly stresses that "Istanbul, a city of 11 million, is believed to harbor nearly 2.5 million Kurds, making it the largest Kurdish city in the world" (2000: 122 and 125). Özal indeed argued that up to 60 or 65 percent of the Kurds were living outside the southeast whereas 20 to 25 percent lived in İstanbul (Kirişci, 1998: 231). (5) Intense concentration of the Kurdish population has taken place in parts of Marmara, Aegean and Mediterranean regions. Indeed, this widespread dispersion of the Kurdish population within Turkey has been insistently stressed by the PKK. (6) Horowitz particularly underlines that "the two principal disincentives to secession are dispersion of the separatist group's population outside of the separatist region,

especially in lucrative opportunities, and the regional investments or subsidies that a separatist region would lose if it opted out" (2000: 626). The situation in the case of Turkey closely conforms to this pattern. What Van Bruinessen terms 'deterritorialization' (2000 (b): 105) denoting the outflow of a significant level of Kurdish population from the east and the southeast with a destination to the other parts of Turkey or Europe largely sets the case of Turkey apart from the other cases analyzed here. Hence, the depiction of the issue as one pertaining to a particular region has become all the more irrelevant. In line with that, the odds of providing for a territorial solution seem to be significantly reduced.

Under these circumstances, administrative decentralization may emerge as a more plausible option than other possibilities. Devolution of greater powers to local administrative units within the framework of the continuous debate over decentralization may become intimately tied to this issue. (7) Local administration reform on the agenda of the AKP government hence acquires prominence in that sense. The proposed reform of public administration revealed on November 3, 2003 indeed entails the transfer of various ministries' local organizations to local administrations with a number of ministries retaining their organization at the local level. The proposal also envisages the transfer of personnel and authorities relating to the issue to local administrations in a period of a year whereas this range is extended to five years for ministries of education and health. Furthermore, it is essential to underline that the way the EU evolves necessitates the transfer of greater authorities to the local level. The EU conducts membership negotiations through encouraging the participation of local and regional administrations. Flow of opinion from these units is regarded as highly valuable. EU funds also allocate financial assistance to local administrations upon membership. Support for various projects, creation of job

opportunities or assistance for the educational plans to enhance the qualifications of the personnel needed have all been attempted by the EU. The reduction of regional disparities and the representation of local identities surface as the major objectives. All these seem to coincide with the search for more resources, more authority, and enhanced democratic quality for local administrations in the case of Turkey (Uzun and Kurt, 2002: 95). Finally, it is also remarkable that Keleş points at how surveys conducted across Europe reveal that figures on allegiance to the cities and regions are the highest (Keleş, 1998: 214).

It is thus essential to acknowledge that the major boost to various initiatives came in close connection with the progress in relations with the EU. Compliance with the EU policies in the pursuit of full membership indeed stimulates the drawing up of initiatives which may prove central to conflict management efforts. The 1995 amendments to the constitution on the road to securing approval for the customs union treaty envisaged increased role for trade unions, academic staff in the universities, students, and professional as well as private associations. The stimulation of popular participation was affected. Removal of the bans on political activity by trade unions, associations, foundations, cooperatives and public professional organizations as well as the granting to public employees of the right to unionize were encompassed. Cooperation between political parties and civil society institutions was also allowed. University academic staff and students were allowed to become political party members. Women and youth branches of political parties could be reactivated. The amendment of Article 8 of the anti-terror law was also undertaken as part of that process. It basically entailed reduction in the sentences and introduced the condition of searching for 'conscious intent to commit separatism'. Hence, a more explicit definition of what was meant by separatist activity was

attempted. The expression of 'whatever method, objective, and thought' within the clause was also removed.

The commitment by the political authorities to embark on full membership negotiations with the EU stimulated another swift process of amendments to the constitution and other laws. October 2001 reforms consisting of a package of thirty-four constitutional amendments were a step in that direction. August 2002 reforms' coverage of broadcasting and educational rights in Kurdish, abolition of death penalty and greater freedom of expression constituted the most comprehensive step as far as the conflict management strategy is concerned. The controversial issues of Kurdish language rights and the fate of Öcalan were most immediately affected by these constitutional reforms. It hence seems plausible to argue that policies directed at the management of the conflict entered a new phase within the context of Turkey's bid for membership in the EU and search for conformity to the Copenhagen criteria. The quick replacement of the military judge in state security courts with a civilian one during Öcalan trial to avoid criticism by European institutions was also a remarkable example of the significance of the European impact. On January 20, 2003 the justice committee in the TGNA approved a draft proposal allowing re-trial to those convicted in case of a European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) verdict stressing deficiencies in fair trial. The Democracy Party (DEP) members currently avail themselves of this right. The granting in 1987 of the right to forge individual applications to the ECHR has hence been gradually extended in use since then. It also needs to be highlighted that there are news reports stressing that a new reform package encompassing a reduction in the electoral threshold, the removal of the ban on propaganda in Kurdish language in the acts on political parties and elections,

unity in judiciary and the abolition of the State Security Courts may be demanded by the EU (Doğan, 2003: 13).

<u>Lack of political capability and allegations of bias in conflict management:</u>

Various grievances invoked by the PKK and other Kurdish groups were indeed grounded on a multiplicity of state policies. Together with the formation of the Republic, nation-building experiment modeled along the French experience was embarked on. Republicanism and nationalism were indeed principles that conformed to European experiences in building nation-states (Kramer, 2000: 5). Yet, the fact that the 'millet' understanding was based on religious community rather than a national one made the new model rather alien to the masses. This was basically where the capacity of the traditional leaders to mobilize the masses rested. On the other hand, as Turan mentions, the elimination of the Sultanate and the Caliphate has left the nation as the sole attraction for political allegiance and the single source for political legitimacy (2000: 366-367). In fact, the definition of the 'nation' as well as the production of national identity proved all the more confrontational. The process of centralization and the project of building a nation-state from the remnants of an empire seem to have been major factors triggering an identity-based conflict. Opposition to being stripped of autonomy as well as rejection of the increasing emphasis on an identity centering on Turkish culture and language that came along with the establishment of the Republic gradually became the dominant medium for expression of grievances. Bozarslan points at a then widespread fear among the Kurds in arguing that the establishment of the Republic led to the degradation of their status as they, "formerly a part of the dominant Muslim majority, were hitherto transformed into a minority without obtaining a juridical status offering them some rights" (2000: 23). The official state policy emphasized that since the Kurdish

population enjoyed the full rights of citizenship, no additional rights had to be granted. The basic reservation of the Turkish polity with respect to the granting of group rights mainly stems from the concern that the search for communal rights may spread across the country and threaten potential disintegration.

The rebellions of the 1920s and 1930s acquired particular significance in the Kurdish nationalist discourse. The convergence of nation-building and state-building policies with the suppression of the rebellions in the 1920s and 1930s was particularly crucial in the formulation of that discourse. Van Bruinessen indeed concludes that the difficulty of integrating the Kurds into the nation-building project stemmed not so much from the strength of their nationalism as from their sheer numbers and their tribal social structure (2000(b): 91). State response to the uprisings of the 1920s and 1930s had the chief aim of imposing centralized state authority. In fact, the uprisings were mostly defined by the state authorities as the actions of bandits in defiance of central authority. Atatürk interpreted the Sheik Said rebellion as "endeavors by some criminal elites disguised under religious appeal" and reiterated his commitment to defending the Republic (Kışlalı, 1996: 109). The Sheik Said rebellion was followed by the introduction of the Law for the Maintenance of Public Order which empowered the Independence Tribunals. The activities of various religious institutions were halted. Furthermore, the opposition Progressive Republican Party was banned after its brief existence on grounds that its members extended support to the rebellion and manipulated religion for political ends. Deportations, resettlements and declarations of state of emergency followed the rebellions. A settlement law in 1934 served to exile certain tribal chiefs to western parts of Turkey. State policies to that end were also defined as assaults on the

Kurdish nation and were therefore referred to in the context of the Kurdish nationalist discourse even decades later.

Furthermore, the abolition of Caliphate in 1924, the outlawing of the religious sects in 1925, the placement of all schools under government supervision through Tevhid-i Tedrisat, the abolition of Shar'ia courts, and the addition in 1928 of the constitutional provision that Islam is no longer the state religion were the major sources of religious reaction to the new regime. On the other hand, nation-building efforts such as the Sun Language Theory or the Turkish History Thesis in the 1930s are still subject to criticisms of having instituted the dominance of one group over the others. The Settlement Law of 1934 is also regarded as the continuation of that policy by classifying the population into three categories as Turkish speakers and those of Turkish ethnic origin, those who do not speak Turkish but are considered to be members of Turkish culture (i.e. mainly the migrants from the Balkans and the Caucasus) and those who could neither speak Turkish nor belong to the Turkish culture and by assigning privileges to the first group such as freedom to settle in any part of the country.

Prohibitions on the use and development of language and culture surfaced as the major source of grievance that served to strengthen the PKK's position. Restrictions on the use of Kurdish language from 1924 on particularly in official realms; the renaming of Kurdish villages through Act 1587 following the 1960 military intervention on grounds of lack of conformity with national culture, customs, traditions, and moral values; the 1967 law prohibiting the importation of publications and recordings in Kurdish; Act 2932 of 1983 which banned the expression, publication and diffusion of opinion in any language other than the main official language; and bans on taking part in activities propagating the use of any

language other than Turkish were all extensively referred to in the Kurdish nationalist discourse.

Issues relating to economic development and employment opportunities proved to be particularly explosive as failure in their provision fuelled the conflict through increasing support for the PKK. Furthermore, Çarkoğlu and Avcı predict that "as long as developmental problems and disparities continue, the electoral bases of anti-systemic, nationalist, and pro-Islamist parties will most likely stay intact if not expand over the next elections" (2002: 133). Coupled with the unemployment problem in the two regions is the fact that qualified workforce refrains from taking up employment in the east and the southeast. Additional incentives hence need to be offered. Failure to undertake land distribution reform mainly due to political concerns and tribal connections was another central constraint on the region's economy. The mechanization of agriculture in the 1950s is defined by McDowall as another major factor bolstering Kurdish nationalism in the 1980s, mostly by stimulating a massive outflow of the region's population (2000: 399 and 401). Disruption in stockbreeding and agriculture in the southeast have become the major casualties in the conflict.

Furthermore, security risks posed by the conflict seemed to have deterred the private sector from investing in the east and the southeast. This fact has made the state almost the sole entrepreneur. Yet, even the state investments in the east and the southeast have largely been targeted throughout the course of the conflict. Bulk of the greater investments in the region centered on Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep which were regarded to be relatively distant from the conflict. The investments in turn made it easier for them to remain relatively isolated from violence. Investment by foreign companies in the regions of conflict has also been disrupted due mainly to the

ongoing violence (Barkey, 1993: 59). Hence, the state's contribution acquired even greater prominence. Yet, it has to be qualified that various investments failed to materialize or to be completed. Furthermore, economic activities in the region became more difficult to control. Morad indeed warns that "(a) sub-economy is taking hold in many Kurdish areas, based on various shady enterprises such as smuggling, money laundering and drug processing and trafficking" (1997: 120).

The major instruments of the fight against the PKK also came under extensive criticism. The village guards system was one such instrument intended to be complementary to the military efforts. Decree 285, on the other hand, established OHAL in 1987. By 1987, Diyarbakır, Batman, Mardin, Bingöl, Bitlis, Hakkari, Şırnak, Siirt, Tunceli and Van were placed under state of emergency. Decree 413 (later renamed as Decree 424) in 1990 served to extend the powers of the regional governor and proved to be particularly controversial in granting him the right to censor the press in a variety of ways; control activities such as lockouts, boycotts, and strikes; or evacuate villages. Other decrees granted new powers to the governor such as in the case of resettlements. Government decrees were not subject to the review of the Constitutional Court under OHAL. Hence, a strong degree of central control and coordination was achieved. Various laws have also been employed as instruments of deterrence. Article 125 of the criminal code prescribed capital punishment for those taking actions hampering the unity of the state and attempting to remove a part of the territory from the state's jurisdiction. Anti-terror Law of 1991 forbade propaganda against the indivisible unity of the state with its nation and territory. This initially covered all written and oral propaganda, meetings and demonstrations as well as other actions targeting the indivisibility principle. The definition of terrorist action encompassed all actions involving the use or threat of

use of pressure, force and violence by the members of an organization aiming to change the basic characteristics of the Turkish Republic including its political, legal, social, secular and economic systems. Many of these provisions were indeed regarded as significant assaults on freedom of thought and expression.

Failures in implementation:

Failure to design and implement the proper initiatives allowed popular support for the PKK to grow since state policies have continuously been presented by the organization as attacks on the Kurdish nation. While the taking of every initiative seems to leave the organization with one less problem to capitalize on in waging its propaganda, there is the likelihood that it will attempt to convince the public that the initiatives could come about through its own efforts and that it will be indispensable to the whole new process.

The implementation of an integrated strategy of conflict management has indeed been problematic in the case of Turkey. Controversies in relation to the initiatives are particularly aggravated at the stage of implementation. To cite a recent example, the regulations the broadcasts and language courses in local languages will be subject to and the inspection of their practices are likely to set in new contentions. The regulation on broadcasting in languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens in their daily life could only be issued by RTÜK in November 2003. Provisions stressing that public as well as private national television or radio channels will be entitled to broadcasting in languages and dialects that are traditionally used by Turkish citizens whereas broadcasting by local or regional channels will proceed after an initial time period are likely to prove particularly controversial. It is also essential to note that broadcasting involving the teaching of these languages or dialects is also prohibited. Licensing of Kurdish language courses

also proved contentious. In fact, reform proposals seem likely to be confronted by skepticism from various groups. The Human Rights Association (İHD), for instance, condemned the bulk of 2002 reforms as mere cosmetic changes with the specific legal regulations following the reforms making the use of those rights impracticable: they argue in relation to broadcasting rights that RTÜK contradicted the law by establishing a monopoly as regards the languages in which broadcasting would be conducted by sparing two hours per week for television and four hours per week for radio broadcasting despite the multitude of existent local languages and by delegating its authority to the state TRT channel to the exclusion of other enterprises (İHD Basın Açıklaması, February 21, 2003: 2). The İHD also engages in a serious criticism of the requirements of a separate building, separate application procedures and the qualifications of personnel for language courses, arguing that these account for why applications for the use of that right are not forthcoming (İHD Basın Açıklaması, February 21, 2003: 2). Similarly, Abdullah Öcalan issued a declaration of call for peace and democracy in October 2003 in which he regarded the reform packages, and particularly the ones on education and broadcasting rights for local languages, as insults on the Kurdish people and rather advocated that no restrictions should be placed on these rights (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, October 1-2, 2003: 1). Free Society Party (Özgür Toplum Partisi or Özgür Parti) and Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) wage campaigns by stressing that failure to use Kurdish names including the letters x, w, q serves to reduce the significance of the effective lifting of the ban on the use of Kurdish names by September 2003. In fact, applications to courts for the adoption of Kurdish names or petitions for Kurdish language education in elementary state schools continue unabated. Another controversial issue with regard to implementation is provided by the fact that most of the applications in

relation to the act on reintegration into society come from the sentenced and the imprisoned. Hence, it is highly uncertain whether the complete cessation of violence will be attained as intended through the act. In fact, reports on the purges within the organization of those wishing to avail themselves of the rights granted in the act are forthcoming (Hürriyet, September, 3, 2003: 22). Nevertheless, an evaluation of the practical effect of the act by the deadline of February 2004 is likely to enable a more accurate analysis.

A significant factor may, however, be expected to assist the implementation of initiatives. Cessation of violence is likely to ease the way in which a variety of initiatives may come under consideration and obtain popular support. It is highly significant that the MGK meeting on February 28, 1997 indeed reformulated the major threat directed at the system by pointing at Islamic fundamentalism. The military's constant calls following the confinement of the conflict that civilian political and socio-economic initiatives should follow are another clear indication. Indeed, there was a consensus in March 1997 MGK meeting on that "in the east and southeast, economic, social, cultural, and psychological measures ought to be speeded up" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 145). In a meeting with journalists in January 1999, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pointed at the need for a change of strategy in combating the conflict and listed democratization, respect for human rights, rule of law, and the provision of economic welfare as the most effective weapons in the struggle abroad (Cemal, 2003: 458). The granting of cultural rights was also specified with the qualification that group rights would not be contemplated (Cemal, 2003: 458). Furthermore, the PKK decisions that greater prominence would be attached to political struggle necessitate that realignment be made on the components of the conflict management strategy. Such a shift indeed seems to stand

in conformity with the popular expectations. The TÜSES surveys conducted in 1994, 1996 and 1998 reveal that while 45 percent of the respondents identified terror as the major problem experienced by Turkey in 1994, economic problems or inflation were listed as the major problem in 1996 and 1998 with 46,7 and 46,1 percent respectively (Erder and Polat, 1999: 60-61). Hence, the limitation of the scope of violence is likely to enhance commitment to conflict management initiatives.

Defects in implementation are likely to become the central concern from here on considering the recent intensification of the resort to initiatives. The EU insistence on observing the implementation of the legal amendments voiced most recently through the progress report announced on November 5, 2003 is likely to provide a major stimulant. In fact, the Reform Monitoring Group composed of the ministers of foreign affairs, domestic affairs and justice as well as bureaucrats held its first meeting on September 18, 2003 with the objective of observing the implementation of the reform packages.

The timing: redressing the costs of the conflict

With the current acceleration of the initiatives following the confinement of violence, the war-torn nature of the related regions and the population are attempted to be alleviated. Indeed, redressing the costs imposed by the conflict currently seems to be the highest priority. The calls for the urgency of economic and social programs directed at the regions where the conflict extracted its highest toll have even come from the military following the containment of the conflict. Recently, other significant reforms have also been under consideration. A proposal by the Ministry of Justice during the previous coalition government centers on compensation for damages without resort to court jurisdiction which is intended to become operational following the application of those affected by village evacuations or other problems

associated with the conflict. The draft proposal on the compensation of the damage caused by the fight against the PKK without recourse to the legal process and the imposition of taxes to build up a fund for this was brought into attention in January 2003. Similarly, the project on return to the villages is currently evaluated particularly by the TGNA's Human Rights Commission. Initiatives to heal the wounds of the conflict are hence currently contemplated.

While the containment of large-scale violence from mid-1990s on and the prospects for full membership in the EU have jointly expanded the scope for conflict management, the recent process of diversification of the initiatives has been the most critical development. Indeed, the initiatives undertaken by Turkey seem less diversified when compared to the initiatives discussed or implemented in other political systems with territorial ones being particularly ignored. Furthermore, in the political realm, negotiations or the drawing up of accords have not materialized either. Yet, the recent changes introduced particularly in the cultural and social realm seem to signal a realization that while the conflict has shifted from a military to a political platform, a transformation in the strategy of conflict management needs to be undertaken. Furthermore, a most recent trend reinforcing the conception of the conflict as one centering on ethnic identity has been the internationalization of the Kurdish problem mainly due to its centering in Europe following Öcalan's fleeing from Syria and lingering debates over the future of Iraq. The discussions on group rights have hence acquired greater spin.

Violence as an enduring element:

<u>Violence and the primordial nature of the conflict:</u>

The resistance of Kurdish leaders to centralization and the building of the nation-state in the form of rebellions occupies a central position in the Kurdish nationalist discourse. In Yavuz's opinion, "(t)he first proto-religio-ethnic rebellion took place in 1880 under Seyh Ubeydullah (d.1883), a local religious leader, in reaction to the centralizing policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II (reign 1878-1909)" (2001: 5). His concern that the agreement concluded following the Russo-Turkish war might lead to the allocation of lands inhabited by the Kurds to the Armenians and the Christians put him in direct contact with the British and made him rebel against the Ottoman Empire. The establishment of a Kurdish state by the unification of the Ottoman and Iranian Kurds was considered to be the main motive. White argues that "(a)lthough Ubaydallah was a failure militarily, his rebellion and subsequent invasion of Persia did succeed in lighting the torch of Kurdish nationalism for the first time" (2000: 60).

A succession of rebellions with varying degrees of references to Kurdish nationalist symbols then took place. Indeed, all seemed to have enrolled the support of various Kurdish organizations. Kurdish nationalist organizations were beginning to spring in urban areas from early 20th century on and particularly in İstanbul from 1908 on. It is believed that while the initial emphasis of these associations has been on the economic development of the eastern region within the Ottoman system, the policies of Union and Progress (İTC) towards centralization and a greater emphasis on the Turkish identity were listed as the major reasons for their shift to a Kurdish nationalist discourse (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 85-86).

Two major qualifications nevertheless need to be introduced. Indeed, alienation from the masses characterized the Kurdish organizations. Kirişçi and Winrow argue that the Kurdish nationalist elites advocating independence by 1908 chose to base the pursuit of their objectives on the support of Allied powers rather than popular support (1997: 89). The Society for the Advancement and Progress of Kurdistan (Kürdistan Teali ve Terakki Cemiyeti- KTTC) was regarded as an upper class endeavor devoid of support from the masses. Hevi-Kürt Cemiyeti that soon replaced it also had an elitist orientation. A Kurdish nationalist party named as the Azadi (Freedom) was formed by the Kurdish nationalists and Kurdish officers in the Ottoman army and advocated independence through British support. Kirişci indeed argues that the Azadi was "opposed to the new Turkish government's policies toward Kurds and found the abolition of the caliphate and the introduction of a modern education system based on Turkish particularly offensive" (1998: 237). Hence, it is quite difficult to argue that promotion of Kurdish nationalism was the main concern shared by the masses participating in the revolts. Furthermore, a second qualification in relation to the revolts was that almost all of them were identified with certain sections of the Kurdish population in a defined area. This factor makes it all the more impossible to classify them as manifestations of monolithic Kurdish resistance.

As the first example of the revolts supported by urban Kurdish nationalist associations, a major rebellion was waged by the Koçgiri tribe for an independent state in 1920. McDowall claims that the KTC influence over the rebellion was discerned by the non-sectarian nature of the demands which might be listed as "(i) acceptance by Ankara of Kurdish autonomy as already agreed by İstanbul; (ii) the release of all Kurdish prisoners in Elazığ, Malatya, Sivas and Erzinjan jails; (iii) the withdrawal of all Turkish officials from areas with a Kurdish majority; (iv) the

withdrawal of all Turkish forces from the Kuchgiri region" (2000: 185). (8) Yet, it was rather some of the Alevi groups which extended support to the rebellion. The Sheikh Said rebellion of 1925 in turn mainly mobilized those committed to the traditional structure of the region with a particular emphasis on religious symbols. The roots of this revolt have been traced back to the Azadi. In McDowall's opinion, the establishment of the Azadi signaled the arrival of Kurdish nationalism in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and its emancipation from educated notable classes in İstanbul, larger towns in Kurdish areas, and some aghas with a spread among the Sufi orders, the encampment of ex-Hamidiye aghas and Kurdish battalions in the army (2000: 192). Another indication of the particularistic tone of the rebellions was that the Alevi Kurdish population refrained from extending support to the Sheik Said revolt which carried high tones of religious (Nakşibendi) motives. The revolt was able to enlist the support primarily of the Zaza-speakers whereas support from the urban areas was relatively weak (Entessar, 1992: 84). (9) The 1930 rebellion centering on Ağrı Mountain was supported by the Kurdish nationalist Hoybun movement which was the coalition of a number of nationalist organizations aiming at the formation of a Kurdish republic. It is particularly significant that "Hoybun's principal leaders belonged to the great 'feudal' (that is to say tribal) Kurdish families" (Chaliand, 1994: 37). Moreover, this time there was a determination to carry on the revolt with trained and organized non-tribal elements (McDowall, 2000: 203). The Ağrı Revolt was exclusively classified as a Kırmanji rebellion. The 1937 Dersim rebellion, on the other hand, was regarded to be in conformity with Tunceli's reputation as an area resisting centralization. (10) Kışlalı indeed states that from 1876 until 1937, the area has witnessed eleven military operations (Kışlalı, 1996: 130). (11) The 1937 uprising was believed to have been led by the local Alevi Kurdish

elites while it failed to obtain Sunni Kurds' support. The unrest of the 1920s and the 1930s could then hardly be classified as Kurdish mass movements. (12)

The motives of the revolts in the period 1925-1938 have been highly controversial. Opposition to centralization seems to be the common dominant theme across the revolts. While traditional leaders in the region and the leaders of religious orders were endowed by the nationalist associations with the mission of assisting the spread of Kurdish nationalist ideas, they nevertheless seemed to be motivated more by discontent with centralization and dissatisfaction with secularist reforms. A concern among the traditional elite for their future role under greater centralization has been a major source of backlash. Kirişçi and Winrow indeed underline that except for the activities of a few Kurdish nationalists, tribal as well as personal disagreements were the main motives behind the revolts in the regions mainly populated by the Kurdish population (1997: 98-99). The inhabitants of the region, on the other hand, seemed to be stimulated mainly by allegiance to traditional leaders. Van Bruinessen indeed argues that "(m)ost of the common participants, however, were motivated by loyalty or obedience to their tribal or religious leaders, not by a sense of belonging to a Kurdish nation" (2000(b): 92). Their religious attachment based particularly on sects and their tribal allegiances seemed for so long to dominate over a stress on Kurdish identity. Yavuz indeed refers to the period 1878-1924 when local Islamic networks such as Nakşibendi and Kadiri orders were the main centers of resistance to centralization (2001: 2). Even today, it seems possible to argue that Kurdish identity and other specific attachments are in competition with each other for the people's allegiance.

A period of relative tranquility seemed to succeed the suppression of the rebellions. Yet, it could be argued that total eradication of opposition and the

establishment of the legitimacy of state authority were far from achieved. Challenges surfaced in different manifestations. Bozarslan indeed argues that while the crushing of these rebellions seemed to point at the extinction of the Kurdish movement, "smuggling, the medrese, and the rejection of practices imposed by the 'infidel regime' were the signs of the popularity of this opposition" (1997: 96). Hence, it could be argued that other sources of opposition seemed to precede the expression of nationalist grievances. It was decades before an explicitly Kurdish nationalist movement began to articulate what were formulated as Kurdish demands.

As to when and how ethnic identity moved to the forefront of political discussions, the divorce in the broad leftist movement along nationalist lines seems to stand as a landmark. Indeed, a process has set in from 1960s on, culminating in a context where a single organization has managed to establish a monopoly over violent Kurdish nationalist outbreaks. A decline in the impact of traditional allegiances has affected the Kurdish nationalist movement as divisions among Kurdish groups along religious or tribal lines have become less apparent particularly in political discourse. In fact, greater monolithism within the Kurdish nationalist camp has been achieved mainly through intimidation.

Various groups stressing a separate Kurdish identity have flourished from 1960s on. The Eastern Revolutionary Cultural Hearths (DDKO), the Cultural and Democratic Revolutionary Associations (DDKD) aiming at the independence of all Kurdish regions, Freedom (Özgürlük) advocating a federation within Turkey, the Union of the Proletariat of Kurdistan (Kawa) supporting the independence of all Kurdish regions with a Maoist emphasis, the Kurdish Communist Party (KCP) demanding independence, the relatively moderate Democratic Party of Turkish Kurdistan (KDPT) seeking autonomy, the National Liberators of Kurdistan (KUK)

believed to be an offshot of KDPT aiming at independence within a socialist Turkey, and the Kurdistan Liberation Party (Rizgari) seeking independence for all Kurdish regions through socialist revolution were listed as the major radical underground Kurdish organizations of the 1970s that occasionally fought against each other and engaged in temporary opportunistic alliances (O'Ballance, 1996: 147-148). The KDPT which was modeled along the lines of the KDP of Iraq functioned as an underground organization encompassing urban notables, craftsmen and Kurdish religious leaders (Bozarslan, 1997: 98) until its leaders have become targets of armed attacks. Splits within the organization became inevitable by late 1960s. In White's opinion, accounting for the party's demise was the fact that the party could not keep up with the radicalization of Kurdish workers and intellectuals as it "soon came to be branded as 'bourgeois nationalist' by most of the other Kurdish organizations that subsequently emerged, influenced profoundly by the radicalization in Turkish cities (...) , as well as being frustrated by the inadequacy of existing Kurdish organization" (2000: 132). Among all these organizations, however, the DDKO formed in 1969 was of particular significance. Barkey and Fuller perceive this organization as the kernel for many revolutionary Kurdish groups, including the PKK (1998: 15). It has to be acknowledged, however, that all these efforts encountered difficulties in enrolling widespread popular support and largely remained as elite and intellectual efforts during their brief existence.

The PKK, on the other hand, occupied a distinct position as the most organized group with a monopoly over violence. Among the PKK's initial aims was a major social transformation of the Kurdish society through dismantling the feudal structure and adopting an anti-imperialist rhetoric. In fact, Öcalan claimed that he joined the struggle of the Kurdish nation not because he was a Kurd but because he

was a socialist (Volkan, 1999: 199). As specified in the document titled Kürdistan Devriminin Yolu (The Path to the Revolution in Kurdistan), the organization indeed perceived the region as a 'classic colonial entity' where the Kurdish working class and peasantry were exploited by the Kurdish feudal landlords, comprador bourgeoisie, and the ruling class in the colonial country (Entessar, 1992: 94). This discourse advocating a struggle in the name of the downtrodden basically aimed to make the PKK appeal to the masses in a manner not paralleled by previous Kurdish organizations. Another initially specified goal by the PKK was the pursuit of an independent Kurdish state. It could be concluded that these stated objectives in combination with the violent methods employed enabled the PKK to mobilize the masses to an extent not witnessed before.

The tyranny of the 'captured':

An evaluation of the extent to which the PKK as the major perpetuator of violence has aggravated the conflict rather than assisting conflict management seems to be inevitable. Various criticisms have indeed been waged against the PKK. Gürbey and Ibrahim particularly criticize the PKK for having "remained trapped in left-wing radical concepts dating back to the early 1970s" which make its arguments rather anachronistic and for having built a personal cult around Öcalan who fell into great contradictions in his remarks (2000: 11-12). This pattern seems to have been further reinforced only recently.

This has particularly been the case since the capture of Abdullah Öcalan with the course of the conflict being intimately tied to Öcalan's fate. KADEK Presidential Council member Osman Öcalan declared following November 2002 general elections that KADEK "will give six months to government. They should deal with the problem with our Leadership within the first three months, and within six months

they should take steps on general matters. If they do not do them, there will be a risk for war" (Kurdish Observer, November 19, 2002: 1), with the statements on the 'leadership' relating to the institution of better conditions for Öcalan in İmralı. Hence, the current KADEK line of action seems to be dictated by Öcalan's conditions, particularly in relation to his falling out of the coverage of the act on reintegration into society. At the beginning of October 2003, Abdullah Öcalan declared he would not participate in his scheduled meetings in İmralı in order to protest his isolation and issued his declaration of call for peace and democracy which presented an 11-point plan for solution, with the first point entailing an end to his isolation (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, October 1-2, 2003: 3).

State effectiveness and legitimacy: irreconcilable goals?

While violence could target anyone, i.e. whether in uniforms or not and whether Kurdish or not, it has mainly been confined in scope to the east and the southeast with occasional outbursts in the other parts of the country. In fact, the PKK engaged in various actions that created the image of the collapse of state authority in the southeast. By 1991, the PKK declared its adoption of a visa system for foreign visitors to the southeastern region. At the height of its strength, the PKK imposed a blockade on northern Iraq in 1992. The organization also stated that the pipelines could not be operated without its consent. It also banned Turkish and foreign reporters from the region and closed Turkish newspaper representations in 1993. Furthermore, it tried to implement a ban on Turkish political party activity in the region. In 1994 it declared that the school teachers should obtain the assent of the organization to keep offering their services. The PKK also established tribunals. Attacks on the region's economic infrastructure such as factories, irrigation schemes, and oil compounds or on tourism centers were intended to weaken the power of the

state. Hence, the PKK campaign presented a major assault on the territorial sovereignty of the state in the early 1990s. The year 1995 was a critical turning point where the military started to score major victories against the PKK and urged it to reconsider its strategy. Hence, the restoration and consolidation of territorial sovereignty of the state were affected. Ensuring the legitimacy of state response simultaneously surfaced as another major challenge.

Avoiding communal violence:

While casualties suffered in the conflict have led to increasing polarization within the society, transformation into communal violence could largely be avoided. In fact, a major asset in the case of Turkey seems to be that violence reigning since 1984 has not assumed communal proportions. Many commentators point at incidents of hostilities between the Turks and the Kurds caused by the conflict. The funerals of soldiers are presented as the prime example. Various analysts present lists of the problems that the Kurds experience in western parts of Turkey, covering difficulties ranging from discrimination in employment opportunities and renting of apartments to boycotts or destruction of shops (Barkey, 1993: 57-58; Gürbey, 1996: 17; Gunter, 1997: 60). Growing public reaction against Italy revealed by the boycotts or demonstrations during Öcalan's residing there has also been constantly referred to.

Yet, the fact that transformation of the conflict into one of communal violence has been avoided is extremely valuable for the Turkish case with respect to prospects for conflict management and democratic consolidation. In the final analysis, it has to be noted that the protests mainly targeted the personality of Abdullah Öcalan and his organization. It is particularly striking that the transcripts of Öcalan's trial presented by Pirim and Örtülü (2000: 121-126) reveal that during the trial, relatives of the servicemen who lost their lives in the conflict frequently

referred to how their personal relations with the Kurdish people have never been problematic and protested Öcalan's claim to defend the rights of the Kurdish population. Still, the risks always stand ahead. McDowall warned that "(b)omb attacks in the west could transform the conflict from one between the Kurdish people and the state into an inter-communal struggle" (2000: 444). Responsible behavior by all sections of the society is hence integral to the preservation of the existing situation.

The precarious nature of the cessation of violence:

It is essential to highlight that the PKK was compelled to make realignments in its instruments and final objectives. Hence, a strategic shift was inevitable. The adoption of a more conciliatory tone became the dominant trait of the organization's discourse from mid-1990s on. Yet, conditions and threats often accompanied this shift. Indeed, the motives of the declaration of the first unilateral cease-fire in March 1993 were too often questioned. (13) It is essential to note that the PKK calls for abidance by the ceasefire have always been attached to threats. Öcalan, for instance, "threatened to extend violence to the spheres of tourism, the economy and big cities and the use of suicide squads if Turkey would not accept the cease-fire or respond to it by force" (Gürbey, 2000: 80). While the government response was limited to the suspension of the spring offensive and a limited amnesty, the PKK attack on unarmed soldiers culminated in the effective ending of the 1993 cease-fire. Dissident commanders and groups within the organization were believed to be responsible. Instead of disowning those actions clearly, Öcalan mostly acted in an outbidding manner by issuing even greater threats. This was at no time more critical than in 1993 when he actually declared a total war against Turkey following the attack on the unarmed soldiers. Robins points at the clearest example of this pattern in stating

that following the attack by Sakık which Öcalan explicity stated he had not ordered, "when faced with the dilemma of disowning his lieutenant (and thereby possibly splitting the PKK) or disowning the ceasefire, Öcalan chose the latter" (1993: 670). Two consecutive ceasefire declarations by the PKK followed in 1995 and 1998. None proved to be enduring.

Assembling international pressure on Turkey has become a novel component of the organization's strategy. A diplomatic campaign to secure the recognition of the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan (ERNK) by NGOs and international organizations was also waged. Furthermore, PKK's chief goal has been to take its place in negotiating a solution with the Turkish government. In the fifth Party Congress held in 1995, the PKK passed resolutions calling for political dialogue and gave Öcalan the authority to pursue negotiations. Appeals were made to the Turkish public, and particularly to whom the organization perceived to be the 'progressive forces' within Turkey. (14) The fifth congress of the PKK indeed called "on the Turkish people ... to struggle and fight alongside the Kurdish people in solidarity against the fascist regime" (Gunter, 1997: 52). In that context, the PKK and its leader increasingly began to stress that their efforts did not pose a threat to Turkey's territorial integrity and added that the organization believed that a settlement might be reached within the existing borders. In fact, it was in the fourth party congress in December 1990 that the idea of a federation was aired instead of independence. Öcalan is indeed quoted to have stated to The Independent that Turkey and 'his people' "can't split for at least 40 years" (McDowall, 2000: 429). Hence, Öcalan began referring to examples as varied as Germany, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland and Russia in commenting on his proposed solution to the conflict.

Yet, the most drastic policy reversal came with the PKK Congress of February 2000 when the PKK leadership decided to abandon armed struggle and to pursue the 'Democratic Republic Project' drawn up by Öcalan in İmralı. Öcalan's calls to PKK members to lay their arms down and to withdraw from Turkey have been reciprocated by symbolic moves of surrender. (15) Following the decision in its Seventh Congress to adopt political means and objectives, the PKK renamed itself as KADEK in January-February 2002, mainly to disassociate itself from its former reputation as a 'terrorist' organization.

Stressing that it is no longer committed to an independent state and moderating its commitment to socialism upon the realization that the idea did not have widespread appeal among the population of the east and the southeast, the PKK began to signal an ideological transformation. The hammer and the sickle were removed from the party flag. The most vital transformation, however, related to the approach to Islam. The pro-PKK Islamic Party of Kurdistan (PIK)'s potential acceptance into the 'parliament in exile', the support extended by the PKK to the building of mosques in Europe, the PKK's support for the creation of Kurdish Alevi Union, the recruitment of an Islamic theologian to assist the establishment of Patriotic Men of Religion linked to the ERNK in 1989, the gathering by the organization of a group of clerics who emphasized that Islam allowed for ethnic identities, the inculcation of the unique religious and sectarian traits of the Kurdish nation, the formation of Kurdish Islamic Movement in Europe in 1993 and the intensifying resort to verses from the Koran and Islamic symbols were all signs of this transformation. (16) Öcalan even argued that Islam was being suppressed by the Turkish state (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 156). (17) It might hence be claimed that

the PKK retreated from certain of its original positions to conform to popular attitudes and expectations.

Despite the attempts at transforming the organization, constant threat of resumption of force is the major factor accounting for the fragile nature of the cessation of violence. In spite of the suspension of PKK activities following Öcalan's call to that end, it was continuously reiterated that this situation was neither unconditional nor permanent. Indeed, the Sixth Congress of the PKK in early 1999 declared armed struggle to be still valid. The threat by Osman Öcalan that the organization might resort to use of force if DEHAP was not allowed to contest in November 3, 2002 general elections testified to the fragile situation. In the same declaration that Osman Öcalan threatened the resumption of violence following 2002 general elections, he also called on the people to organize activities of *'serhildan'* (popular uprising) to protest Abdullah Öcalan's condition and to urge the new government to take steps on that issue (Kurdish Observer, November 19, 2002: 1). KADEK hence seemed to signal that unless the conditions it put forward were met by the AKP government, the circumstances for war would be recreated. To that end, KADEK announced an 'Urgent Solution Manifest' the specifics of which might be enlisted as follows: improvements in Abdullah Öcalan's conditions with a particular emphasis on ending his 'isolation'; amnesty for all political prisoners and closure of F-Type high security prisons; the return as well as active political participation of 'guerrillas and political refugees'; the return and compensation of 'forced migrants'; abolition of the village guard system as well as extensive support for the guards; enhanced emphasis on guarantees for education as well as broadcasting in mother tongue and support for the development of Kurdish culture; the strengthening of local administrations and the organization of various social and economic projects to

raise the plight of the Kurdish people; formulation of policies for women to participate in all aspects of politics and society; and calls for a new constitution instead of reforming the 1982 constitution (Kurdish Observer, November 25, 2002: 1-2).

On December 8, 2002 KADEK specified that on behalf of the Kurdish nation, it granted the Turkish state and the AKP government time until February 15, 2003 to correct their attitude (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, December 9, 2002: 1). The fact that some of the demonstrations condemning the war on Iraq on February 15, 2003 have been transformed into a rally of support for Öcalan and KADEK particularly in metropolitan cities acquires greater significance when analyzed in conjunction with this KADEK deadline. People were called on to participate in marches and demonstrations by KADEK Presidential Council which intended to set February 15, 2003 as a landmark for the initiation of a new stage in the organization's strategy (Özgür Politika, February 13, 2003: 1). It was indeed argued that the calls by KADEK to protest the fourth anniversary of Öcalan's arrival in Turkey through lock-outs, fasting activities, refusal to leave homes and dressing up in black have found large scale support across Turkey, Europe and the Middle East (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, February 16, 2003: 1 and Özgür Politika, February 16, 2003).

The first news of the latest resumption of fighting between the state security forces and KADEK came on January 16, 2003 to be followed by the clashes in Şırnak on January 27, 2003. Certain DEHAP members were placed in custody in the following days. The fragile nature of the cessation of violence has indeed been confirmed when KADEK Presidential Council announced on February 12, 2003 that 'a war of defence' has become inevitable and legitimate due to three factors: the lack of initiatives towards a solution to the Kurdish problem over the four years when the

organization engaged in what it perceived to be 'unilateral sacrifices', the continuation of the isolation of Öcalan and Turkey's potential decision to join the war on Iraq which, KADEK believes, would be a Turkish war of destruction on the Kurdish people through the expansion of invasion into 'southern Kurdistan' (Özgür Politika, February 13, 2003: 1). KADEK leadership hence defined the future line of action as a combination of 'democratic *serhildan*' and 'legitimate war of defence', adding that the effort to make the stalled peace process functional may continue provided that Turkey changes attitude for the affirmative (Özgür Politika, February 13, 2003: 1). Furthermore, KADEK called on the Kurdish 'nation' living in four parts of Kurdistan, the metropolitan areas and abroad to engage in serhildan activities (starting from February 15, 2003 to reach a peak in 'Newroz' and expected to score a victory in April 4 and May 1), requested the youth to join 'the guerrilla', and asked all sections of the population to extend all sorts of material and spiritual support to the 'war of defence' (Özgür Politika, February 13, 2003: 1). The organization also added that the opportunities presented by the war on Iraq should be utilized for victory (Özgür Politika, February 13, 2003: 1). Öcalan reiterated a similar point in his Nevruz message in March 2003 by stating that in the immense transformation that the Middle East was undergoing, a deepening understanding of freedom through abiding by the substance of legitimate defense has to be upheld (Özgür Politika, March 21, 2003: 1). It hence seems possible to argue that KADEK is monitoring the developments in Iraq very carefully with the objective of tailoring a role for itself. In September 2003, Öcalan called on KADEK to act in the way it regarded to be correct since his mission of achieving peace and a democratic solution was blocked by the Turkish state (Dörtkardeş, 2003: 22) upon which the organization called off the unilateral ceasefire and announced that low-intensity clashes may follow. KADEK

also allowed the Popular Defense Forces (Halk Savunma Güçleri- HPG) within its structure to declare autonomy in October 2003 with a mandate for retaliating against attacks directed at it within the legitimacy provided by self-defense. The HPG indeed defines its objective as the creation of a model of modern, democratic and professional army of defense (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, October 12, 2003: 1). It is also essential to note that KADEK disbanded itself in fall 2003. A merger of KADEK and the Kurdistan National Congress was intended. The KONGRA-GEL was erected as a result with a claim to being committed to politics without arms, to transcending nationalism, to democratic *serhildan*, and to being the culmination of Kurdish struggle over the last 30 years (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, November 17, 2003: 1-4). Yet, KONGRA-GEL also threatens that massacres targeting the Kurdish people and threats to Abdullah Öcalan's health will lead to the resumption of war.

It hence seems possible to argue that the current precarious state of violence can evolve into either the complete cessation of violence or occasional eruptions with threats and conditions being attached. The latter possibility seems to reign currently. Yet, the complete halting of violence stands as the factor that is likely to contribute to conflict management most immediately. It has to be reiterated that the centrality of the military to the political process and of the military initiatives to the conflict management strategy has indeed been bolstered until the containment of violence. Yet, the major criticism to be made by this study is that actions of KADEK still fall short of displaying conformity with its declared change of mission. Hence, the PKK/KADEK's changing discourse and practices from the 1990s on are too 'conditional' to enable the organization to contribute to conflict management efforts.

Violence as the major assault on pluralism:

In terms of survival, the PKK proved to be the most resilient organization. It was able to secure this position mainly by exterminating alternative expressions of Kurdish nationalism. In addition to armed clashes with leftist militant groups which it has explicitly branded as 'social chauvinists' upon their rejection of assigning priority to an emphasis on the Kurdish identity, the PKK led a battle against the KUK around Mardin. The PKK termed its offensive as a battle against 'primitive nationalists' or 'nationalist reformists' (Gunter, 1997: 25). The relations between the PKK and the PSK have too been full of crises and confrontations, particularly with respect to their conflict over the methods to be upheld in advocating Kurdish interests. Furthermore, the model offered by the KDP was the one thing that the PKK diametrically opposed. The PKK indeed had tense relations with Kurdish groups in northern Iraq. It is essential to note that "Öcalan even depicted Barzani as a 'collaborator, ... reactionary, feudal person and a primitive nationalist' " (Gunter, 1996: 53). In fact, the PKK often condemned these groups for cooperating with western and other alien powers. (18)

Nevertheless, the PKK's battle for supremacy was not solely confined to its clashes with leftist and traditionalist Kurdish movements. Separate Kurdish Islamist groups have also emerged to pose a challenge to PKK's bid for dominance. Chief among these was the Hizbullah. Yavuz identifies the Hizbullah as an urban organization aiming "to establish an Islamic Republic of Kurdistan by overthrowing the secular system in Turkey" (2001: 14). Some sections of the various organizations using this name have indeed targeted the pro-PKK journalists, activists, and leftists. Yet, the PKK gradually felt compelled to incorporate Islamic elements into its

organization and discourse. The PIK also engaged in violent activities such as bomb attacks and was believed to be associated with the PKK.

Indeed, a multiplicity of organizations claiming to represent Kurdish grievances initially came into existence in spite of the legal barriers to sectional organization. Yet, pluralism was impossible to sustain among these groups. PKK violence was initially directed exclusively at the fellow Kurdish groups with the objective of bolstering conformity. Its attacks on the moderate Kurdish organizations were a clear reflection of this goal. Divergent Kurdish viewpoints have been stifled and eradicated by the PKK. A parallel struggle to ensure monolithism ensued in Europe with several Kurdish centers and organizations emerging there. The PKK began to dominate the membership and activities of a variety of Kurdish organizations operating in Europe. Purges within the organization were also carried out with the objective of reinforcing monolithism. Indeed, during his trial, Öcalan put the responsibility for various PKK actions on the factions within the organization. Vocal opponents of Öcalan within the organization have been subjected to execution. They were accused of aiming at the eventual destruction of the PKK. A PKK member and vocal critique of Öcalan's policies, Mehmet Şener, was admittedly executed by the PKK due to his insistence that political struggle should take priority over armed struggle through a legal political party, mass organizations and a newspaper (White, 2000: 151) and because of his participation in the formation of the splinter organization PKK-Dirilmiş. Hence, the organization's attempt at imposing its own brand of Kurdish nationalism exerted a high toll on the dissidents and defectors. The emergence of splinter groups such as the PKK-DB around Tunceli which was brought into existence by the cadres accusing the organization of a

revisionist commitment or the PKK-Dirilmiş further stimulated violent suppression (White, 2000: 145). Various other splits continued.

Unity was hence sustained through the fabrication of internal and external threats to the organization. The wide-ranging campaign for conformity actually crippled various sets of actors. Hence, one major casualty of the conflict was the loss of pluralism in the expression of Kurdish grievances. As the main perpetuator of violence in the Kurdish camp, the PKK was able to impose a considerable degree of monolithism on the Kurdish nationalist movement. Hence, the emergence in the Kurdish camp of an interlocutor with moderate credentials has been problematic. In line with its record of eradicating pluralism within the Kurdish nationalist camp, the organization currently blocks the emergence of alternative actors. KADEK seems to stand as the sole actor with the power to set the pace and the conditions of what are admissible.

Still, the organization recently attempted to transform itself by reflecting a more pluralist image. The reports that the Sixth Congress in 1999 aimed to stimulate internal debate were significant in that sense. Particularly following the intensification of its activities in Europe, the PKK seemed more willing to condone the existence of a variety of actors claiming to represent the same constituency as it was. The determination that political struggle should achieve priority and the realization that securing European support would necessitate greater tolerance for pluralism seem to have motivated such a shift.

A very rare example of PKK's cooperation with other Kurdish groups came about in 1993 with a joint protocol between the PKK and the PSK. The joint statement in 1993 stressed national unity and the need for political dialogue. Commitment to respect for each other's existence, peaceful means, a united stance

with other Kurdish organizations, and a 'democratic federation' based on the equality of Turks and the Kurds formed the crux of the protocol. It was in the same year that Öcalan, Talabani, Burkay, People's Labor Party (HEP) leader Ahmet Türk and the leader of Kurdistan Democratic Party pledged nationalist unity. The PKK joined in January 1999 with the Socialist Party of Kurdistan, the Islamic Party of Kurdistan, the Communist Party of Kurdistan, the Liberation Party of Kurdistan and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan under the banner of National Platform of North Kurdistan. This gathering called on the authorities in Turkey for a dialogue.

The 'Kurdish Parliament in Exile' (KPE) formed in 1995 was a major attempt at bringing together a variety of Kurdish groups. Claiming to represent all the Kurds across the world, this body was intended to function as the eventual party in negotiations with the Turkish state. Upon the KPE's establishment, six former DEP members and some ERNK members acquired seats. Nigogosian indeed draws attention at how "(t)he PKK and its adjunct organizations comprise the largest single block of the KPE's sixty-five members" (1996: 41). The KPE's chairman was Yaşar Kaya, the former chairman of DEP and the publisher of Free Agenda (Özgür Gündem). The fifteen-person executive council was also dominated by personalities acting in the PKK or displaying sympathy towards it. It is particularly significant that the KPE includes in its program objectives such as commitment to the principle of self-determination for the Kurds, strengthening the national liberation movement, undertaking a struggle to end foreign occupation, convincing the international community to initiate embargoes on Turkish state, protecting the natural riches in the region as well as ensuring their use for people's happiness and liberation, assuring national cohesion among Kurdish groups through suppressing the conflicts among them and establishing close links with the democratic public in Turkey. In fact,

certain contradictions permeated this program. Barkey and Fuller argue that "the KPE program is formulated in such a way as to shed reasonable doubt on the willingness of the Kurds to remain part of Turkey in any meaningful way" and add that "the KPE cannot be said to represent more than the PKK and a broader group of sympathizers who see it as the major vehicle of organized, internationally oriented Kurdish power" (1998: 38 and 36).

While securing diplomatic recognition and drafting legislation were the immediate objectives pursued by the institution, the eventual goal in forming the KPE was the establishment of a Kurdish national congress with the participation of different groups. The Kurdish National Congress was gathered in December 1998 with the objective of fulfilling the right to self-determination for the Kurdish people and with the participation of twenty Kurdish organizations from Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran. The PSK of Burkay rejected to join, arguing that the Congress was mainly an appointed body. The two main Iraqi Kurdish groups also declined from participation. It was in September 1999 that the KPE decided to disband itself to join the National Congress.

It hence seems plausible to argue that monolithism within the Kurdish camp was far from achieved with the PKK insisting on preserving its dominance and some other actors refusing to condone that. Still, the most significant aspect of these recent experiences with pluralism is that all Kurdish organizations began to declare that the PKK could not be excluded from the peace efforts. This factor alone presents a success as far as the PKK's aim of dominating the Kurdish camp is concerned.

Political parties in managing ethnic conflict:

The case of Turkey reveals that both the mainstream parties and the parties representing particular grievances may themselves become a part of the problem in multiple ways. In fact, parties in the Turkish party system incur the costs associated with the conflict rather than meet them.

Ethnic outbidding by the mainstream parties:

A process of ethnic outbidding and radicalization seems to have affected the mainstream parties. Indeed, these parties aggravated each other's concerns over the issue by referring to various symbols in their discourse. One such example has been provided by what Kirişçi and Winrow term as the 'Sevres syndrome' which has been integrated into the Turkish political discourse from 1995 on (1997: 187). Complicating this picture further was the fact that the parties too often invoked nationalist rhetoric to claim a greater share of the vote. Stressing that both the Motherland Party (ANAP) and the True Path Party (DYP) "are made up of a kind of intraparty coalition of political groups representing bourgeois Westernizers, nationalists, and moderate Islamists", Kramer warns that "both parties lean toward the more radical right if that seems appropriate for gaining or holding power" (2000: 26). Hence, both occasionally incorporated nationalist symbols and themes into their political discourse. Ethnic issues thus seem to boil down to just another means of waging political competition among mainstream parties.

The Kurdish question was prominently brought by the political elite to the fulcrum of election campaigns. Çiller launched the 1994 campaign by stressing that a vote for her was a vote against the PKK (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 151). Yılmaz's statement that the road to Brussels passed through Diyarbakır was another effort at making political capital out of the issue. Particularly during his 2002 election

campaign, Yılmaz increasingly began to announce that the problem could only be solved through peaceful rather than military means and pointed at the issue's centrality to prospects for membership in the EU. Furthermore, highly oscillating positions have been displayed by party leaders. Almost all party leaders including Yılmaz and Çiller occasionally mentioned their support for education and broadcasting in Kurdish language. Yet, they have backed away from supporting these initiatives at other times. Bozarslan argues that "every step toward a political solution taken by a conservative leader is stopped by the opposition of another conservative leader" (1996: 144). (19) Yılmaz and Çiller both rejected the initiatives proposed by each other only to reiterate the same proposals later.

It hence seems possible to argue that aside from their peculiar practices, the mainstream parties were faced with similar challenges on the Kurdish question. In response to that, various common themes characterize their policies pertaining to the issue. Writing in 1996, Gürbey argues that with the exception of HEP and DEP, "the parties share the view that the Kurdish problem in Turkey does not exist in the sense of an ethnic minority issue" and refrain from proposing political solutions to the conflict through schemes such as autonomy (1996: 19). From 1950s on, the dominant discourse has become one of regional backwardness with the emphasis of parties shifting to the need for special measures for the backward regions which mainly accounts for the massive support extended by the Kurdish population to the Democrat Party (DP) in the 1950s, the Justice Party (AP) in the 1960s and the Republican People's Party (CHP) in the 1970s (Yeğen, 1999: 564 and 565). The emphasis on identity acquired centrality mainly in the 1990s in spite of the rare references to it by the political parties in 1970s. The Workers' Party of Turkey (TIP) declared its acknowledgment of the existence of Kurdish people in eastern parts of

Turkey in its fourth national congress in 1970. This recognition was mostly associated with the efforts by personalities of Kurdish origin such as Ekinci and Aslan who began to fill the key posts within the party and managed to shift the focus of the party to the Kurdish issue. The TİP sustained its position by pointing at the need to recognize the Kurdish identity and the economic problems of the southeastern region throughout the 1970s. The party actively participated in Eastern Meetings which protested the state of affairs in the region. Decades later, it was in December 1991 that İnönü emphasized the need for the recognition of the cultural identity of the Kurdish citizens in his capacity as the deputy Prime Minister. Upon his assumption of the post of prime minister in 1991, Demirel also declared in a speech in Diyarbakır that Turkey has recognized the Kurdish reality.

The party with the most distinct and the least ambiguous approach to the issue has been the Nationalist Action Party (MHP). Bozarslan indeed sets the MHP apart from all the rest of the parties by stressing that except for the MHP, all parties were obliged "to introduce a small dose of 'Kurdishness' into their discourse" (1996: 138). Even today, the party rejects the existence of a problem which may be branded as the Kurdish problem and shuns away from the recognition of a separate Kurdish identity. In fact, continuous negation of the existence of a mosaic of peoples on Turkish soil lies at the center of MHP's approach to the issue. The party's perception of the conflict rather centers on the role of foreign countries in plotting against Turkey. The fact that the party is a major actor in the towns where Alevis and Sunnis live together and that its sole base of support in the east and the southeast is located in some of the tribes supporting the village guard system crucially account for the radicalization of the party's discourse.

Yet, a recent shift is evident in the party's approach. Çınar and Arıkan point at what they regard as a flexibility in the MHP's authority which enables it to appeal not only to the radical nationalists but also to the center-right electorate since "(i)t is argued that the MHP's version of nationalism is predicated on an ambiguous definition oscillating between a cultural and an ethnic definition of the nation" (2002: 25). Relative moderation of the party's stance has indeed gradually taken place. (20) Bahçeli's increasing emphasis on Turkey rather than on the 'Turks' defined as an ethnic category stands as a vital sign of change.

The MHP's experience is also valuable in relation to the analysis of whether moderation is rewarded by upsurge of support and inclusion. It is highly significant that Bahçeli engaged in efforts to reshape the party ideology and practice from 1997 on and particularly during the party's performance as a coalition partner despite the heavy criticisms that surfaced from the ranks of the party and the constituencies supporting it. A divergence recently seems to have occurred between the party's priorities and those of the masses extending support to it. In this sense, the experience of MHP is quite unique. It seems as if moderation and the display of responsibility by the MHP have not been publicly rewarded. In fact, the party obtained higher support when its systemic credentials were of rather dubious nature prior to their being put to test through participation in the government. The case presented by the MHP indeed stands as a clear example of the fact that the public may stimulate ethnic outbidding at times. While, for instance, Öcalan's capture gave a boost to MHP's campaign, failure of the party to ensure that the death penalty for Öcalan was carried out led to disappointment among the sections of party supporters. The party also battled against the constitutional changes in August 2002 by voicing its dissent and casting its negative vote, yet not blocking the whole process. It

remains to be seen whether this moderation and integration with the existing system will be enduring in the face of the party's erosion of support.

The fact that the party was a part of the government that was confronted with the most drastic challenges of the 1999 earthquakes and the country's worst economic crisis in 2001 was another major factor accounting for its downfall. While the high cost inflicted on the population by the conflict is central to the party's rise in 1999, any significant aggravation of the conflict is not in the short-term likely to highly boost the party's performance either. This assumption is mainly predicated on the fact that most of the mainstream parties are likely to stand as major contenders for the nationalist vote in case of an upsurge in the nationalist sentiment. However, an altogether different basis of appeal seems to be currently under construction by the party. The fact that the party is rather skeptical on issues relating to EU candidacy means that difficulties experienced in relations with the EU may in the future lead to an upsurge in support for the party. The MHP's 2002 election campaign indeed signaled that the party might stand as a serious attraction point for the voters particularly skeptical of relations with the EU.

It is highly significant that failure to assist conflict management efforts has taken place in spite of the fact that cross-sectional appeals have mostly been upheld by mainstream parties. Except for the MHP, political parties have gradually incorporated the grievances of the southeast and the east into their discourse. While the expression of the Kurdish cause by the individual members has occasionally proved problematic within these parties, a large-scale sectional organization by mainstream parties of the sort encountered in Sri Lanka or Nigeria was still averted.

Ethnic outbidding by Kurdish nationalist parties:

Ethnic outbidding by the parties claiming to represent the grievances of Kurdish constituencies remains to be the major factor accounting for why interlocutors largely perceived as legitimate have failed to surface. A radicalized nationalist discourse indeed affected the Kurdish camp with the shift of power to radical actors. In drawing a comparison between the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey, Morad concludes that while the Kurdish movement in Iraq was led by the urban middle class and the landed families, the leaders in the case of Turkey came from impoverished families with the consequence that "Turkey's Kurdish politics has been noticeably dominated by radical leftist ideologies" which tended to "favour uncompromising, often indiscriminately violent tactics against the state, echoing a characteristic tendency of the country's radical left" (1997: 121). The fact that Kurdish activists formed a leading component of the leftist movements in the 1970s did indeed signal a change in the leadership of the movement. It was then also possible to refer to the Kurdish grievances through references to socialist ideology.

Radicalization of the Kurdish nationalist discourse in the 1970s undoubtedly exerted a parallel impact on the traditional actors. Tribal and religious leaders of the Kurdish society were faced with the threat of marginalization. These actors felt compelled to make specific references to the plight of the Kurdish population to be able to compete with the radical nationalists in appealing to Kurdish constituencies. Bozarslan in fact states that "(t)he implicit recognition of their Kurdishness, as in the past, was no longer enough to enable them to preserve their own clientele groups, especially their impact in the urban centers" (1996: 142). While many Kurds joined mainstream Turkish political parties, they were urged to pay at least lip-service to recently radicalized demands. Hence, ethnic outbidding exerted its impact on the

Kurdish members of the mainstream parties too, leading to an overall radicalization of the political discourse.

Increasing monolithism also affected the Kurdish camp from late 1970s on. Van Bruinessen in fact claims that "(t)he wholesale repression of the Kurdish movement in the early 1980s was successful in eliminating the liberal and democratic elements in the movement" (2000(b): 98). It seems plausible to add that such elements have already been threatened by the PKK even prior to the 1980s. The intensification of legal restrictions on organization along sectional identities from 1980 on and the PKK's attempt at establishing its monopoly over the representation of Kurdish grievances jointly served to exterminate the movements that were likely to adopt relatively moderate stances in comparison to the PKK.

In fact, the succession of parties advocating Kurdish nationalism followed major crises in the incorporation of Kurdish nationalist members into mainstream parties. The HEP was formed in 1990 upon the expulsion of seven deputies from the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) due to their participation in a conference relating to the Kurdish question in Paris. Still, it was as a result of its electoral alliance with the SHP that twenty-two HEP members became deputies following the 1991 general elections. It was this alliance which also allowed the HEP to become a part of the coalition government. Yet, the events during the taking of the oath in the parliament dealt a major blow to cooperation. Differences of approach in relation to the Nevruz events of 1992 formed the last drop. The resignation of the remaining HEP deputies from the SHP followed. In fact, Robins perceives this development as the point at which "(t)he emerging relationship between moderate Kurdish nationalism and liberal Turkish thinking had broken down" (1993: 667). The HEP was banned in July 1993 by the Constitutional Court on grounds of targeting the

indivisible unity of the Turkish state. Between HEP and DEP, Freedom and Democracy Party (ÖZDEP) was formed to safeguard the parliamentary seats acquired by the HEP. Yet, this party too was banned.

The DEP was formed in 1993 with the participation of many former HEP members. From its inception on, the party was located at the center of controversies relating to the Kurdish issue. In February 1994, DEP announced it would not participate in local elections due to what it branded as a campaign of intimidation directed against it. To further aggravate their discontent with the policies they were subjected to, the parliamentary immunity of six DEP deputies were lifted in March 1994 with these members being sentenced to imprisonment ranging from three and a half to fifteen years. Finally, the party too was banned by the Constitutional Court in June 1994 upon the statements by its members which were judged to be targeting the indivisible unity of the Turkish state. The suspension of the mandates of thirteen members then followed. Party members' reluctance in addressing the calls by other political forces for the condemnation of the PKK as a terrorist organization, their insistence that the PKK should be perceived as a party to negotiations, and their declared willingness to function as mediators between the government and the PKK have become factors leading to intense suspicion of the motives of both the HEP and the DEP. It was particularly the refusal on the part of the members of these parties to identify the PKK as a terrorist organization that largely shaped public perception of them as well as state policies directed at them.

The later chain in the succession of parties came when People's Democracy Party (HADEP) was formed in 1994. In conformity to its predecessors, HADEP declared the Kurdish problem to be a consequence of the state policies. It claimed that the problem could only be addressed by a democratic society and state structure.

Suffering from legal prosecution as well as the controversial nature of actions of some of its members, HADEP has been able to stage a precarious survival until 2003. Whether this was due to the relative moderation displayed by the party in comparison to its forerunners or to political consideration by the state authorities not to raise tensions proves to be a major source of disagreement among observers. Heper indeed voices a widespread opinion in arguing that "the anti-system characteristics increased from HEP to DEP, but decreased from DEP to the (...) (HADEP)" as "after 1999, following the Constitutional Court's allowing the party to compete at the national elections held in that year, the party leaders began to act in a more responsible manner, even asking for the public authorities' help in keeping their radical elements at bay" (2002: 145).

The moderate credentials of HEP, DEP and HADEP were indeed questioned on various grounds. Robins, for instance, points at the political immaturity of some leading Kurdish nationalist politicians and adds that "(r)ather than nurturing the transformation in the political atmosphere in Turkey in 1991, a handful of HEP members seemed determined to give offence to the symbols of the Turkish state at every opportunity" (1993: 666-667). Failure to keep a distance from the PKK was believed to be the main factor blocking the parties' incorporation into the existing system. The then Diyarbakır deputy Hatip Dicle, for instance, was quoted to have stated following a PKK attack on military cadets in a railway station in 1994 that "(i)n war, everyone in uniform is a target" (Güney, 2002: 125). Kirişçi and Winrow refer to statements by certain DEP members which support their conclusion that the former perceived the prominent Kurdish members of the mainstream parties such as Çetin, İnan or Işıklar as traitors to the Kurdish cause (1997: 153).

Suspicion of the genuine motives of HADEP has also been widespread. It was noted that a remarkable difference of opinion emerged between two tendencies in the party with the moderates facing the hardliners. Güney indeed stresses that the conflict between the radicals whose actions mainly paved the way for the events in 1996 and the moderates evolved in a way that bolstered the position of the latter in the party, yet qualifies that Öcalan's arrest "put a strain on HADEP's efforts to remain 'moderate' " (2002: 126). The party's suspected links to the PKK have always been a matter of concern despite its attempts at moderating its discourse. The moves by DEHAP and HADEP city organizations to condemn the war on Iraq as well as Öcalan's isolation through hunger strikes in party buildings during the first and the second days of the feast in February 2003 (Özgür Politika, February 10, 2003: 1) were particularly striking in displaying how the two issues were indeed linked by the two parties. The active DEHAP role in the current campaign for general amnesty is equally significant. Such displays of a potential link between the party and KADEK prove out to be disturbing for the public at large and hamper the party's efforts at posing itself as an autonomous political actor not organically linked to the PKK/KADEK. Some analysts indeed argue that HEP and its successors gradually began to be dominated by PKK supporters. This was believed to be the case despite the existence within the ranks of the party of those distant from sympathizing with Öcalan as evidenced by the resignations in 1993 upon the pro-PKK speech by Hatip Dicle and other resignations in 1998 (White, 2000: 163).

Kurdish political actors posed as the major moderate alternatives to the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence were also not immune from ethnic outbidding. It was indeed quite striking that Elçi who has been identified as the moderate voice of Kurdish nationalism "accused HADEP major of Diyarbakır Feridun Çelik for speaking with

cap in hand to MHP leader Bahçeli [in the latter's] visit to Diyarbakır [in year 2000]" (Gözde, 2000: 1). Furthermore, the exclusive nature of Elçi's formulation of Kurdish identity indeed casts the shadow of a doubt over his moderate credentials. Elçi criticizes the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence for not referring properly to Kurdish culture and values. It is particularly significant that Elçi also contemplates a political party rejecting violence yet invoking the symbols of Kurdish nationalism.

A significant qualification also hovers around the moderate credentials of Burkay. Indeed, his condemnation of violence seems to be rather conditional. In an interview with White in 1992, Burkay stated "(w)e are not against armed struggle [in principle], but we believe that the situation in our country was not right for armed struggle", and added that "(i)f the Turkish government doesn't change its policy, then we also must, maybe, take part in the armed struggle, in the future" (2000: 161). Burkay also stated in the party congress in 1995 that the previous congress ended with the decision to embark on armed struggle due to the pressure from the party ranks, yet qualified that lack of experience as well as barriers erected by the PKK led to failure (Bal, 2003: 160). Hence, Burkay's occasional legitimization of violence or Elçi's almost exclusive emphasis on the Kurdish identity provide grounds on which to question the moderate credentials of their parties.

Failure of the emergence in the Kurdish camp of a party that can be perceived as more than a single-issue party with no links to violent alternatives and that appeals to the broad sections of the population has been a major stumbling block. The parties defining themselves as moderate Kurdish nationalists managed to secure only limited appeal among the Kurdish population. These parties were indeed faced with a major dilemma: the radicalization of Kurdish masses affected by the PKK compelled these parties to follow suit in which case legal prosecution could not be avoided.

Competition with HEP, DEP or HADEP which preserved less confrontational relations with the PKK in appealing to the Kurdish nationalist vote urged the adoption of extreme stances. Thus, the parties branded as moderate proponents of Kurdish nationalism found their room for maneuver confined by the PKK, the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence and legal prosecution by the state. Hence was blocked the possibility that Kurdish nationalists competing with each other might moderate their positions to appeal to groups other than their potentially defined constituency.

Lingering doubts over the systemic credentials of the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence and marginalization of the relatively moderate Kurdish nationalist actors hence resulted in a context where no legitimate interlocutor seemed to emerge for the expression of Kurdish grievances. The final verdict on the DEHAP case and DEHAP's performance in the meantime need to be closely monitored. Furthermore, it needs to be added that a new party named as Özgür Parti was established in June 2003. Calling for a general amnesty and an end to the pressure on Abdullah Öcalan, the party's leader stated that they were not a party that avoided the HADEP tradition while rejecting that Özgür Parti was the continuation of HADEP or was the HADEP itself (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, June 7, 2003: 1). It was particularly striking that DEHAP mayors participated in the new party's congress in Diyarbakır. The Free Party currently declares its intention of fulfilling the organizational requirements for competing in the impending local elections.

Furthermore, the fact that the Kurdish diaspora exerts a major impact on Kurdish political actors functioning in Turkey further complicates the situation. It is widely claimed that "Kurdish activists in Europe and the Middle East have often seemed more radical than those on Turkish soil" (Robins, 2000: 86). Muller states that "the battle over Kurdish representation has moved from the press to the

Parliament to the courts and now to Europe" (1996: 193). Reverting back to the parliament as the medium of representation is central to any contribution to be made to prospects for conflict management.

<u>Moderation through institutional mechanisms:</u>

Ethnic outbidding became a reality of the political scene in spite of the legal precautions erected to eliminate the channels for outbidding. Legal bans on the sectional organization of political parties along the lines of religious, regional or ethnic groups indeed set the limits of the permissible. All parties are prohibited from seeking to create minorities and destroying national unity. (21) Political parties as well as associations can not express the existence of minorities based on differences of culture, language or ethnicity. Article 68 of the 1982 Constitution states that the statutes, programs, and activities of the parties shall not contradict the indivisible integrity of the state with its territory and nation. Article 312 of the Penal Code warns against 'provoking hatred or animosity between groups of different race, religion, region or social class'. Such requirements jointly serve to confine the elites' opportunity to engage in ethnic outbidding. It is nevertheless essential to conclude that these mechanisms mainly provided for the resilience of the existing political actors through renaming.

It was, for instance, widely believed that moderation of HADEP's attitude has been affected by the legal cases waged against the previous Kurdish nationalist parties. With two of its predecessors being convicted of propagating separatism and supporting the PKK, moderation indeed seemed to be the only path for survival. Party officials' recent references to mutual sufferings and their refusal to be considered as an exclusively 'Kurdish' party become evident aspects of the party's latest discourse. Indeed, what was once considered solely an issue of identity

recently began to be packaged within the broader framework of the challenge of democratic consolidation. HADEP intensified calls for a democratic political solution to the Kurdish conflict particularly upon Öcalan's arrival in Rome.

Cooperation with other parties under the banner of DEHAP was also the product of the party's intention of being perceived as more than a distinctly Kurdish party. The exclusively Kurdish nationalist discourse was indeed downplayed through forging an alliance with other parties. Furthermore, there was the expectation among the ranks of the party that any drastic consequences that might flow from legal prosecution would be avoided through such alliances. For many analysts, DEHAP was intended to be a substitute for HADEP considering the fact that the case against HADEP has been pursued since 1999. Prior to November 2002 general elections, HADEP joined the Party of Labor (EMEP) and Socialist Democracy Party (SDP) to form DEHAP which branded itself as a 'Labor-Peace-Democracy Alliance / Bloc'. In its election manifesto, DEHAP declared itself to be embracing Turkey and representing the brotherhood of Turks, Kurds, Lazes, Arabs and Circassians as well as the unity of the country (DEHAP Seçim Bildirgesi, 2002: 1). Furthermore, the party also advocated the drawing up of a new constitution; comprehensive legal reform; amnesty for all; closure of F-type prisons; abolition of the Board of Higher Education (YÖK); legal guarantees for the protection and the encouragement of the practice of all languages, cultures and beliefs; restoration of the rights of all facing political bans; guarantees for the rights of women and their integration into all aspects of life; and impartiality of the state towards all religious beliefs (DEHAP Seçim Bildirgesi, 2002: 4-5). More specifically, the party called for a peaceful and democratic solution to the 'Kurdish problem', the removal of village guards system and other special institutions, the ending of OHAL, the unconditional return and

compensation of those who have migrated from their villages, and the clearing of the whole region off the landmines (DEHAP Seçim Bildirgesi, 2002: 5).

In spite of the initial caution displayed in order not to be associated with the PKK, HADEP congress in June 1996 became a turning point with the treatment received by the Turkish flag and its replacement with an Öcalan banner causing the party trouble. It was hence in 1996 that Bozlak and thirty-nine party officials were arrested. Sentences followed for thirty-one members including Bozlak in 1997 for alleged ties to the PKK. In January 1999, the chief prosecutor applied to the Constitutional Court for the closure of HADEP by referring to the organic link between the party and the PKK. The party was still allowed to contest in the elections in the same year. It was, however, in March 13, 2003 that the Constitutional Court announced its unanimous decision to close HADEP on grounds of having become the focus of activities targeting the territorial as well as national integrity of the state by assisting the PKK. The Chairman of the Constitutional Court indeed confirmed that documents in the file were proof of de facto support for the PKK and added that actions in support of terrorism rather than mere declarations formed the basis of convictions (Cumhuriyet, March 14, 2003: 6). Forty-six of the members of the party were banned from political activity for a period of five years. The thirty-six mayors from HADEP in turn decided to continue their political activities in DEHAP.

Prior to 2002 general elections, the chief prosecutor brought charges of deficiency in DEHAP's nationwide organization. Kanadoğlu indeed appealed to the Supreme Electoral Board (YSK) not to allow DEHAP to run in the elections on charges that it failed to complete its organization. Considering the fact that parties are required by law to be organized in more than half of the country's constituencies and to convene a party congress at least six months prior to an election, it might be

argued that these conditions basically intend to avoid localization of political competition. When the appeal was turned down by the board, Kanadoğlu launched another appeal against DEHAP. The case against DEHAP was brought before the Constitutional Court on the same day that HADEP was banned. The charges centered around repeated forgery in official documents, with the party providing false information on the requirement that a party has to complete its organization six months prior to the election day in at least 41 cities. While the party declared that it fulfilled the conditions in sixty-three cities, the latter investigation revealed that the party properly organized only in three cities. A legal process is now underway. The then DEHAP Chairman Abbasoğlu stated that the succession of the Öcalan verdict by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), the closure of HADEP and the case against DEHAP revealed that this was all planned whereas former HADEP Chairman Bozlak complained that Turkey was experiencing a shortage of democracy (Radikal, March 14, 2003: 5). HADEP is indeed waging an application to the ECHR.

Another instrument which aims to promote moderation but rather leads to the aggravation of charges of political exclusion is the nationwide threshold. The threshold in the Turkish electoral system can be utilized to urge parties to seek support beyond their defined constituency by forming alliances with other parties. Following the SHP-HEP divorce, parties identified with Kurdish nationalist discourse sought alliances with minor and radical parties. HADEP concluded an alliance with two radical left-wing parties prior to 1995 general elections while DEHAP was specifically assembled to compete in 2002 general elections. It is essential to note, however, that when the parties identified with Kurdish nationalism manage to overcome the 10 percent threshold, the regional concentration of the vote is likely to become a major asset for them. Barkey and Fuller argue that without the

10 percent threshold, HADEP would have obtained 22 seats from the southeastern region in 1995 elections (1998: 86). It is also essential to note that had the national threshold been lower than its current level, DEHAP could have been expected to acquire a greater number of seats than the DYP or the MHP, despite the latter two's greater share of the national vote. Hence, a highly striking aspect of the broader debate on the crisis of representation is encountered when the Kurdish question is discussed.

The incorporation of sectional grievances:

Failure to incorporate Kurdish grievances largely characterizes the mainstream party role in relation to the conflict. Particularly crucial with respect to conflict management efforts has been the left-wing political actors' experience with the problem. While the participation of Kurdish nationalists in the mainstream parties increasingly proved troublesome in line with their particularist discourse, their discovery of the political left has been the first step which culminated in the emergence of parties upholding Kurdish nationalist discourse.

The constitution drawn up following the 1960 coup has indeed opened up channels for the representation of the interests of the Kurdish population by leftist parties. While initially allied with the Turkish leftist movements, groups advocating Kurdish rights gradually detached themselves from these organizations. Priority attached by leftist groups to the socialist revolution rather than the defense of Kurdish rights was a major source of resentment for the Kurdish activists. Öcalan indeed stated that the PKK has developed in spite of the Turkish left against which it had to struggle and that "(i)f there were no PKK, then there is no Turkish Left" (White, 2000: 152). On the other hand, Yavuz claims that the new twist in the Kurdish movement "from being critical of the state power to being critical of Turkish

nationalism has represented a turning point in the separation of Kurdish nationalism and the leftist movement of Turkey" (2001: 11). The divorce that affected the Turkish and Kurdish leftists by the 1970s further radicalized the tone of the expression of Kurdish grievances. After all, the Kurdish nationalists now felt compelled to distance themselves from the groups which they regarded as their only allies on the Turkish political scene. Chaliand defines the TİP as a party where the presence of Kurdish politicians became preponderant and concludes that "in the end, it was the Kurdish question that finished off the [TİP] which was already consumed by internal conflicts" (1994: 45). As a sign of further fragmentation along ethnic lines experienced by the left, the Socialist Party of Kurdistan (PSK) developed out of a split from the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) in 1974.

A close look at the general election results in the 1950s reveals that the DP consistently performed below its national average in all three elections in the cities where the Kurdish speakers constituted over 15 percent of the population as indicated by the results of the 1965 census whereas the CHP persistently performed over its national average (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 113). It is hence particularly striking that while the DP obtained higher support in the western regions, the CHP performed better in rural and less developed parts of the country including the east. Yet, the DP still became the major contender in the east and the southeast from 1950 on. Throughout the 1950s, Gaziantep, Siirt, Muş, Ağrı, Erzurum and Diyarbakır have been the strongholds of the DP whereas the CHP emerged as the winner of all three elections in Malatya and Kars. The shift of support to the DP was significant in Bitlis, Bingöl, and Hakkari where the DP came out as winners in 1954 and 1957 elections consecutively. Yet, volatility led to constant shifts in other electoral districts such as Van and Erzincan (where the CHP was the first party in 1950 and

1957 with a swing of support to the DP in 1954), Elazığ, Kahramanmaraş, Mardin and Şanlıurfa (where two consecutive DP wins in 1950 and 1954 were succeeded by CHP victories in 1957), and Tunceli (where the DP victory of 1950 could not be sustained in the following two elections). Tachau aims partially to account for this fact by stating that "(a)lthough the predominant tendency was to support the CHP, in some provinces this mode of political participation led to high levels of electoral volatility, with sharp swings from one party to another or to independent candidates, depending on the political deals that the locally dominant landlord-patrons were able to make on the national scene" (2002: 47).

The AP and the CHP were the main rivals in obtaining the regional vote in the 1960s together with certain minor parties. Indeed, in 1961 general elections, the AP was able to win only in Elazığ and Kahramanmaraş as far as the eastern and the southeastern regions were concerned. Yet, while the AP recorded a significant increase in its vote across the two regions through both the 1965 and 1969 general elections, the CHP's performance continuously deteriorated.

In the 1960s, Kurdish nationalists of all backgrounds, i.e. whether defined as traditional actors or more radical urban youth and intellectuals, still preferred to operate through existing parties. It was within the TİP that Kurdish activists came together with their Turkish counterparts. Furthermore, the formation of systemic parties attaching priority to the problems of the east and the southeast provided another channel for participation such as was the case with the New Turkey Party (YTP). Güney indeed identifies the YTP and the TİP as the first parties to exploit ethnic issues for political benefit (2002: 122). Certain traditional Kurdish leaders departed from the DP in the 1950s and the YTP was established by some of the same former DP members following the 1960 coup. Hence, the party mainly had among its

members notables and landlords from the east and managed to obtain a substantial level of vote in the eastern region in the 1961 general elections. Its overall performance enabled it to become a participant to the coalition government. During the coalition government of 1961-1962, Azizoğlu who headed the YTP was forced to resign from his cabinet post as the Minister of Health on charges that he was favoring the East by building an immense number of hospitals and dispensaries in the region. Even the then Minister of Interior accused him of regionalism (Chaliand, 1994: 45). After the dramatically low levels of support the YTP obtained in 1963 local elections, the party withdrew from the coalition with the CHP. The YTP's performance continuously deteriorated from then on, including in the southeast and the east. In the 1961 general elections, the YTP was the winner in Diyarbakır, Bitlis, Erzurum, Adıyaman, Bingöl, Siirt, Muş, Van and Tunceli whereas it was the second party in Erzincan, Hakkari, and Mardin. A dramatic downfall was experienced by the party in the 1965 general elections with the party winning only in Ağrı and Hakkari and securing the second position solely in Bingöl. The 1969 general elections did not alter the picture as the party was able to win the elections only in Bingöl and to acquire the second position in Mardin, Muş and Siirt. Hence, the YTP votes mainly seem to have shifted to the CHP and the AP. Other minor actors obtaining significant support in the east and the southeast were the Republican Reliance Party (CGP), the Republican Peasant Nation Party (CKMP) and independent candidates. The CKMP was the winner in the general elections only in 1961 in Ağrı. The CGP in turn was the winner in the general elections in 1969 in Hakkari.

TABLE 17:

The winning parties in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (1961, 1965 and 1969 general elections)

	General Elections		
The party with the highest percentage of the vote	1961	1965	1969
CHP	Erzincan Kars Hakkari Gaziantep Mardin Malatya Şanlıurfa	Bingöl Muş Malatya Van Tunceli	Adıyaman Muş Malatya
AP	Elazığ Kahramanmaraş	Diyarbakır Bitlis Erzincan Elazığ Erzurum Adıyaman Kars Kahramanmaraş Gaziantep Siirt Mardin Şanlıurfa	Diyarbakır Bitlis Erzincan Elazığ Erzurum Ağrı Kars Kahramanmaraş Gaziantep Siirt Mardin Van Tunceli Şanlıurfa

In accounting for how the Kurds and the Alevi population formed the TİP's backbone in the late 1960s, McDowall states that "(m)any were attracted to [it] on account of the land ownership question and the grip of the agha class" whereas others have been attracted due to its leftist ideas as the TİP has served a vital function in being "an effective vehicle for awakening a growing number of young Kurdish

students, particularly in Ankara and Istanbul, who in their turn were to provide crucial leadership for the national movement" (2000: 407, 408, 396 and 407). Yet, it is particularly significant that the TİP has not been transformed into a major electoral alternative in the eastern and the southeastern regions. The party obtained its highest percentage of the vote in Diyarbakır (8%) in 1965 and in Tunceli (16.8%) in 1969. Still, the TİP scored above its nationwide percentage of the total vote in eight of the eastern and southeastern cities in 1965 and in five in 1969 general elections.

The major contenders in the 1970s in the eastern and southeastern regions were once more the CHP and the AP. From 1970s on, political Islamists began to make inroads into the east and the southeast. In the 1970s, traditional Kurdish leaders largely extended support to the National Salvation Party (MSP) in addition to the AP. Still, the CHP was the strongest party in the east and the southeast throughout the decade. Hence, it was in the 1970s that the CHP's appeal to Alevi population and the Kurdish population both were being extended. McDowall stresses that "Ecevit attracted much of the politicized Kurdish vote, particularly since his rival, Demirel, had made his position on the Kurds abundantly clear, 'Anybody who does not feel Turkish, or feels unhappy in Turkey, is free to go elsewhere' ", despite the fact that Ecevit's leftist image did cost the party one third of its pre-1969 Kurdish notable votes (2000: 410).

TABLE 18:

The winning parties in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (1973 and 1977 general elections)

	General Elections	
The party with the highest percentage of the vote	1973	1977
CHP	Diyarbakır Erzincan Elazığ Adıyaman Kars Kahramanmaraş Hakkari Gaziantep Muş Malatya Tunceli	Diyarbakır Erzincan Elazığ Adıyaman Kars Kahramanmaraş Gaziantep Malatya Tunceli Şanlıurfa
AP	Bitlis Mardin Şanlıurfa	Bitlis Erzurum Ağrı Bingöl Hakkari Muş
MSP	Erzurum Bingöl	Siirt Mardin Van
CGP	Ağrı Siirt Van	

Tachau indeed argues that the CHP shifted from its role as the center to being a vehicle of social protest whereas the DP and the AP gradually became the defenders of the status quo (2002: 45). CHP's growing emphasis on socio-economic development stands as a major factor in accounting for that. This fact reveals that a

discourse and policy formulation that fits the needs of the region could be expected to bring some degree of success for political parties. It is also particularly striking that while the CHP's emphasis on issues of development allowed the party to score significant rises in the east and the southeast, a similar emphasis in the 1990s failed to serve the fortunes of mainstream parties since parties basing their discourse on identity politics began to obtain greater appeal. Kurdish nationalist actors' penetration into the eastern and southeastern regions particularly in the 1990s hence surfaced as a landmark.

ANAP was the major political party that secured the voters' support in the east and the southeast in the 1980s. It has indeed managed to improve its performance in both regions throughout the decade. Özal's intention of gathering various differing tendencies under the banner of the party and appealing to a broad spectrum of the electorate seem to have worked there too. ANAP was believed to display a distinctive approach to the Kurdish issue. Bozarslan indeed claims that the fact that ANAP "was able to transform the Kurdish problem into a partisan political factor, is a clear proof of the emergence of political pragmatism in Turkey" (1997: 108). As will be analyzed in the coming sections, the party's role was largely dependent on Özal's willingness to come up with novel initiatives.

TABLE 19:

The winning parties in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (1983 and 1987

general elections)

	General Elections	
The party with the highest percentage of the vote	1983	1987
ANAP	Erzincan Elazığ Erzurum Adıyaman Bingöl Kahramanmaraş Gaziantep Muş Mardin Malatya	Bitlis Erzincan Erzurum Adıyaman Ağrı Kars Kahramanmaraş Hakkari Gaziantep Siirt Muş Mardin Malatya Van Şanlıurfa
MDP	Bitlis Siirt Van Şanlıurfa	-
HP	Diyarbakır Ağrı Kars Hakkari Tunceli	-
SHP	-	Diyarbakır Tunceli
DYP	-	Elazığ Bingöl

Yet, it has to be recognized that ANAP's performance constantly deteriorated in the east and the southeast in the 1990s. Yılmaz most recently aimed to avert this decline through increasing emphasis on cultural rights, stressing the delegation of broader authorities to local governments as well as the municipalities, and linking the issue to the prospects for full membership in the EU. That effort seems to have made a difference with respect to where the party is perceived to stand. In fact, Çarkoğlu and Avcı argue that ANAP can be observed as "moving from a predominantly nationalist geographical base to one that is closer to constituencies, giving significant support to the HADEP, which is predominantly supported in eastern and southeastern provinces" (2002: 126-127). The SHP and the DYP also became main contenders in the region from mid-1980s on. The former received a boost following its alliance with the Kurdish nationalist party in the 1991 general elections whereas the latter became a more serious alternative in the 1990s with its invocation of tribal relations.

The shift of support to Kurdish nationalists and political Islamists indeed surfaces as the major trend of the 1990s. While the electoral threshold still stands as the main determinant of representation, the Kurdish nationalist party and the party associated with the political Islamist tradition have become the major contenders throughout the east and the southeast in the 1990s.

TABLE 20:

The winning parties in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (1991, 1995 and 1999 general elections)

The party with the highest percentage of the vote	General Elections		
	1991	1995	1999
HADEP	-	Diyarbakır Hakkari Van Iğdır Batman	Diyarbakır Muş Ağrı Mardin Kars Şırnak Hakkari Iğdır Siirt Batman Van
RP (Welfare Party)	Erzurum Bingöl Kahramanmaraş	Bitlis Gaziantep Erzincan Siirt Elazığ Malatya Erzurum Şanlıurfa Adıyaman Bingöl Ağrı Kars Kahramanmaraş Muş	-
FP (Virtue Party)	-	-	Bitlis Adıyaman Elazığ Bingöl Erzurum Malatya
MHP	-		Erzincan Kahramanmaraş Gaziantep
SHP	Diyarbakır Siirt Erzincan Muş Adıyaman Mardin Gaziantep Kars Tunceli	-	-
CHP	-	Tunceli	Tunceli
ANAP	Malatya Hakkari Bitlis	Mardin	
DYP	Şanlıurfa Ağrı Van Elazığ	Şırnak Ardahan Kilis	Ardahan Şanlıurfa Kilis

Throughout the 1990s, the alliance between the Kurdish nationalist party and the SHP followed by the autonomous participation of the former in the elections radically altered the political outcomes in the two regions. During its existence as a separate party, the SHP seemed to occupy the center-stage in debates relating to the Kurdish issue. The reports produced by the party have harshly criticized governmental policies such as OHAL, village guard system or the creation of the office of the governorate-general. In the party's 1990 report, proposals were floated as to the elimination of the ban on Kurdish language, ending of OHAL, establishment by the state of research centers and institutes on different languages and cultures, and abolition of the village guard system.

A similar approach was retained following the merger in the CHP. The 1996 report by the CHP also insisted on the granting of cultural rights. Hacaloğlu's performance as the state minister responsible for human rights proved to be particularly controversial as he was highly critical of the state policies and the conduct of state institutions. While both the SHP's and the CHP's insistence on various initiatives was remarkable, their practice was usually deemed to be inconsistent. While in government, these parties could only sustain the existing settlements which they fiercely criticized prior to the elections. Pointing at the contrasts in the actions of the SHP, McDowall argues that the party "had tried to be all things to all men" (2000: 428). Similarly, Barkey and Fuller stress that "(i)t is because of this gap between promises and deeds that, despite its more flexible philosophy, the [CHP] forfeited all credibility with the Kurdish populations" (1998: 111).

The dilemma facing the SHP might be partially accounted for by the fact that the party has experienced difficulties in its relations with its Kurdish members.

Hence, while cooperation with the proponents of the Kurdish nationalist cause has strengthened the party's hand in the east and the southeast particularly in the 1991 general elections, the problematic divorce led to the complete erosion of the party's support in the east and the southeast even following its integration into the CHP. As will be analyzed in the coming paragraphs, this pattern seems to have been sustained until now with the CHP having been able to obtain the highest vote in only one eastern or southeastern city in each of the latest three general elections.

A central question relates to whether the general trends in electoral behavior across Turkey hold for the east and the southeast. As far as the shift toward the right is concerned, that pattern seems to be confirmed by the electoral results in the east and the southeast. The drift to the right in Turkish politics in the 1990s was also evident in the two regions. Leaving the parties aiming to capitalize on Kurdish nationalism aside, right-wing mainstream parties have almost completely dominated the political scene in the east and the southeast throughout the 1990s. The SHP victories in 1991 general elections in alliance with the HEP in the two regions could not be sustained in the 1995 general elections except for in Tunceli where the merger handed power to the CHP. It indeed seems possible to conclude that SHP's alliance with the Kurdish nationalists boosted its performance in the region and the problems surfacing in relation to this alliance totally discredited the former in the eyes of the local electorate. It is equally striking that in the six districts where victories were scored by the SHP in 1991, the RP came out as the winner of the 1995 general elections. Diyarbakır and Batman witnessed HADEP victories whereas ANAP and DYP benefited from SHP's decline in Mardin and Şırnak respectively. Constant erosion of support for mainstream left-wing parties was thus highly evident with the results of the latest three elections revealing that the left-wing electoral success was

confined to the CHP wins in Tunceli in the 1995 and 1999 general elections and in Ardahan in 2002 general elections. Alarming for the parties of the left-wing is the fact that they do not stand as major contenders across the east and the southeast. While the 1995 general elections testified to the strength of the RP, it was the HADEP that staged victories in the two regions in 1999 general elections. The AKP surfaced as the major contender to DEHAP in 2002 general elections as the region has been completely dominated by the two parties except for Ardahan.

Electoral volatility is also reflected in the electoral outcomes in the east and the southeast. Sayarı indeed argues that the high degree of personalistic politics based on patron-client networks in the eastern and southeastern regions has been one cause of electoral volatility (2002: 179). The shift of large blocs of vote from the right to the left between elections could widely be encountered. Major shifts actually took place between parties such as the CHP and DP; CHP, AP, and YTP; CHP, AP and MSP; and SHP, CHP, HADEP, ANAP, DYP, RP and FP throughout different decades. The way in which the YTP has swiftly become a major contender in early 1960s only to suffer major blows from mid-1960s on was another clear indication of these patterns. Most recently, the AKP and the DEHAP have emerged as the major actors with a sway over electoral preferences in the east and the southeast with the former party contesting only for the first time. Consecutive electoral victories became less attainable for the parties through decades, a fact reinforced by increasing fragmentation of the vote. Few patterned electoral preferences can indeed be identified. The dominance of leftist parties except for brief intervals is witnessed in Tunceli since 1954. It remains to be seen whether the 2002 shift to DEHAP is to become the landmark for another enduring pattern. Another equally striking example is provided by Malatya where the CHP won every single election until 1983. ANAP

has made use particularly of personalistic ties through its leadership from that date on with the drift to the right continuing up until today. The parties most closely identified with the political Islamist tradition won the latest three elections. Broad patterns of the sort are more difficult to identify in other electoral districts with massive shifts characterizing voters' preferences between elections.

Divergent electoral preferences of the population in the east and the southeast also contributed to regional variation in political support across Turkey. This variation has become more marked particularly from 1990s on. Except for the 1961, 1991, 1999 and 2002 general elections, parties winning at the nationwide level managed to obtain the highest percentage of the vote in a large number of electoral districts in the east and the southeastern regions. It was, however, in 1961 that the YTP which obtained the fourth largest vote nationwide was able to win in more cities of the east and the southeast than other parties. In 1991 general elections, the SHP in alliance with the HEP staged the strongest performance in the two regions whereas the nationwide winner DYP was able to win elections only in Elazığ, Ağrı, Van and Şanlıurfa. Similarly, while HADEP was the major victor across the east and the southeast in 1999 general elections, the nationwide winner DSP could win in neither of the eastern and southeastern cities. Furthermore, the MHP which managed to obtain the second highest vote nationwide was able to win only in Kahramanmaraş, Erzincan, and Gaziantep. Finally, 2002 general elections reveal that while the AKP managed to win in just one less district than DEHAP in the east and the southeast, it was particularly significant that DEHAP was the major contender solely in the east and the southeast. Hence, the gradual upsurge in support for the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence and DEHAP was the major factor accounting for a growing divergence between the nationwide and regional preferences.

TABLE 21: The winners of general elections in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (1950-2002)

General Elections

Electoral District	1950	1954	1957	1961	1965	1969	1973	1977	1983	1987	1991	1995	1999	2002
Erzurum	DP	DP	DP	YTP	AP	AP	MSP	AP	ANAP	ANAP	RP	RP	FP	AKP
Kars	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	HP	ANAP	SHP	RP	HADEP	DEHAP
Kahramanmaraş	DP	DP	CHP	AP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	ANAP	RP	RP	MHP	AKP
Iğdır	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	HADEP	HADEP	DEHAP
Diyarbakır	DP	DP	DP	YTP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	HP	SHP	SHP	HADEP	HADEP	DEHAP
Bitlis	CHP	DP	DP	YTP	AP	AP	AP	AP	MDP	ANAP	ANAP	RP	FP	DEHAP
Erzincan	CHP	DP	CHP	CHP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	ANAP	SHP	RP	MHP	AKP
Elazığ	DP	DP	CHP	AP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	DYP	DYP	RP	FP	AKP
Bingöl	CHP	DP	DP	YTP	CHP	YTP	MSP	AP	ANAP	DYP	RP	RP	FP	AKP
Batman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	SHP	HADEP	HADEP	DEHAP
Ardahan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DYP	DYP	CHP
Ağrı	DP	DP	DP	CKMP	YTP	AP	CGP	AP	HP	ANAP	DYP	RP	HADEP	DEHAP
Adıyaman	-	-	DP	YTP	AP	CHP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	ANAP	SHP	RP	FP	AKP
Van	CHP	DP	CHP	YTP	CHP	AP	CGP	MSP	MDP	ANAP	DYP	HADEP	HADEP	DEHAP
Şırnak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	SHP	DYP	HADEP	DEHAP
Tunceli	DP	CHP	CHP	YTP	CHP	AP	CHP	CHP	HP	SHP	SHP	CHP	CHP	DEHAP
Şanlıurfa	DP	DP	CHP	CHP	AP	AP	AP	CHP	MDP	ANAP	DYP	RP	DYP	AKP
Mardin	DP	DP	CHP	CHP	AP	AP	AP	MSP	ANAP	ANAP	SHP	ANAP	HADEP	DEHAP
Malatya	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	ANAP	ANAP	RP	FP	AKP
Kilis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DYP	DYP	AKP
Siirt	DP	DP	DP	YTP	AP	AP	CGP	MSP	MDP	ANAP	SHP	RP	HADEP	AKP
Muş	DP	DP	DP	YTP	CHP	CHP	CHP	AP	ANAP	ANAP	SHP	RP	HADEP	DEHAP
Hakkari	CHP	DP	DP	CHP	YTP	CGP	CHP	AP	HP	ANAP	ANAP	HADEP	HADEP	DEHAP
Gaziantep	DP	DP	DP	CHP	AP	AP	CHP	CHP	ANAP	ANAP	SHP	RP	MHP	AKP

Finally, the lack of close contact between the mainstream parties and those identified with the Kurdish nationalist cause constitutes a major drawback as regards the contribution of mainstream parties to conflict management. Particularly after SHP's experience in cooperating with Kurdish nationalists, mainstream parties mostly defined the Kurdish nationalist actors as anti-system and refused to take part in efforts to accommodate them into systemic behavior. The mainstream parties' refusal to oppose the ban on HEP and DEP further contributed to polarization. Most recently, some efforts signal a revival of cooperation. The Siirt elections of March 2003 presented a particular leeway for cooperation between DEHAP and the mainstream parties. While CHP negotiated with DEHAP with a view to allocating its second and third place candidacies to DEHAP members and a process of bargaining was believed to be launched by the AKP too, DEHAP constantly stressed that post-election cooperation was more important in that the CHP should place the region's problems on the TGNA's agenda (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, January 17, 2003: 1). Yet, DEHAP calls for boycotting the Siirt elections seemed to reveal that a consensus in negotiations with the mainstream parties was far from achieved. Leaving the SHP-HEP alliance episode behind, mainstream parties need to take on a more active role in assisting the integration of such sectional parties into the political system.

It is also essential to add that parties presenting a radical challenge to the state discourse on the issue have occasionally been established. A major reversal of the established political discourse was indeed attempted by the New Democracy Movement (YDH). Advocating strict economic and political liberalism, the YDH officially became a party in December 1994 and embraced a claim to being exceptional with respect to its stance on the Kurdish issue. Defining the Kurdish

problem as one of identity, the YDH proposed the acceptance of Kurdish reality and culture through the granting of rights to the Kurdish population, creation of opportunities for the establishment of a Kurdish party and promotion of dialogue (Olson and Bozdağlıoğlu, 1996: 161 and 163). Boyner's argument that since there was a resistance on the part of the Turks to recognize the Kurdish identity, it was essential to talk about a Turkish rather than a Kurdish problem was backed up by his perception of federalism as a major option to be discussed (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 153). It is particularly striking that in spite of its far-reaching proposals for reform, the party could not escape being branded by the PKK as an instrument of the bourgeoisie. Its appeal to the voters in the east and the southeast was also highly limited. The YDH was able to obtain below 1 percent of the total vote in 1995 general elections. Its strongest performance in the east and the southeast was in Şırnak with 4.41 percent and in Van with 2.67 percent.

Political Islamists as the major agents of incorporation:

The Islamic emphasis of the RP and the FP, the strength of their anti-system qualities, and their organizational skills particularly in the delivery of services have traditionally strengthened the performance of political Islamist parties in the eastern and southeastern regions as well as in the urban areas of migration. The role assumed by religious orders in the east and the southeast was one factor accounting for their influence. Sakallıoğlu indeed explains this shift to political Islam by stating that Sufi tarikats, Islamic communities, parties such as the RP, Turkish state and PKK leadership "have all been using Islamic language and symbols to inject a degree of legitimacy into their discourses and actions" (1998: 2). In addition to that, Elçi argued that the RP appealed to the Kurds and obtained votes from their region basically by arguing that it was not a part of the existing order and was a

representative of societal opposition (1995: 113). Furthermore, the assistance and aid programs run by the party particularly in the shantytowns in large cities have also been crucial in making the party a major alternative for the Kurdish population in the western parts of the country. The RP's references to a 'just order' were also effective in that context. Some analysts also argue that the RP has been relatively cautious in its organization in the east and the southeast. Defining the RP as a Kurdified party, Bozarslan underlines that "(i)t is not implemented by Ankara but is composed of Kurdish members and in many cases Kurdish nationalists" (1996: 145). In the conduct of policy on the Kurdish issue, Erbakan indeed assigned a central role to RP deputies from the eastern and southeastern regions.

For many analysts, failure of social democratic parties was another major factor accounting for the dramatic upsurge in support for political Islamist parties. Göle argues that replacing revolutionary leftist movements of the 1970s, social democratic parties failed to grasp new issues due mainly to their populist tradition which envisaged a convergence between the state and the society (2000: 431). Hence, the fulfillment of a multitude of functions in addressing popular demands was assumed by the representatives of the political Islamist tradition. Özbudun claims that "(w)ith the decline of the welfare state and the erosion of social rights, Turkish social democratic parties have been unable to protect [the losers from globalization], and the [RP] seems to have successfully filled the vacuum left by those parties" (2000: 141).

Hence, political Islam seems to have become a serious contender to Kurdish nationalism particularly in the 1990s in commanding the allegiance of the population in the east and the southeast. The RP was increasingly perceived by various groups within the two regions as the least distant political actor. The only time the party ran

into major trouble in the region was due to its alliance in 1991 general elections with the nationalists. Yet, that image could easily be shed by the later performance of the party. It was particularly striking that when in spring 1993 the PKK threatened all the political parties, the RP was the only major party which sustained the bulk of its activities in the southeast (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 151). Furthermore, institutional cooperation was relatively more secure between the political Islamist and Kurdish nationalist parties. Where HADEP members could not compete on their own, their first destination was the RP party list from which they departed to rejoin HADEP when conditions allowed.

The fact that the parties advocating Kurdish nationalist demands fail to exceed the ten percent threshold also presents opportunities for political Islamist parties. In the 1995 general elections, the RP was the main party to benefit from that. While it was the party which obtained the highest vote in fourteen districts, it also managed to obtain the second highest vote in four others. As far as the electoral outcomes of the 1999 general elections were concerned, the FP received the highest vote in six districts as opposed to five others where it was the party with the second highest vote. Of the five cities where HADEP managed to obtain the highest vote in 1995 general elections, the RP proved to be the main beneficiary in three as it was the party with the second highest percentage of the vote. HADEP victories in eleven cities in 1999 general elections were in turn translated into five DYP wins, three FP wins, one DSP win, and one win for ANAP due to the threshold barrier. Hence, the DYP was the chief beneficiary of the threshold in 1999. The AKP emerged as the winner of 2002 general elections in eleven districts in the east and the southeast. Furthermore, out of the twelve districts where DEHAP was able to obtain the highest

percentage of the total vote, the AKP was the second party in nine and, hence, proved to be the main beneficiary of the threshold effect.

TABLE 22:

The parties with the highest and the second highest percentage of the vote in the eastern and southeastern electoral districts (2002 general elections)

Party Performance

THE PARTIES	Highest percentage of the vote(2002 General Elections)		Second highest percentage of the vote (2002 General Elections)	
DEHAP	Van	Kars	Şanlıurfa	
	Şırnak	Diyarbakır	Bingöl	
	Tunceli	Bitlis		
	Mardin	Batman		
	Muş	Iğdır		
	Hakkari	Ağrı		
AKP	Şanlıurfa	Erzincan	Van	Diyarbakır
	Malatya	Elazığ	Şırnak	Bitlis
	Kilis	Bingöl	Mardin	Batman
	Siirt	Adıyaman	Muş	
	Gaziantep	Erzurum	Kars	
	Kahramanmaraş		Ağrı	
CHP	Ardahan		Tunceli	Kahramanmaraş
			Malatya	Iğdır
			Siirt	Erzincan
			Gaziantep	Adıyaman
DYP	-		Kilis	
			Ardahan	
Independent Candidate	-		Hakkari	
			Elazığ	
MHP	-		Erzurum	

Whether convergence around Islam as a unifying identity may foster moderation is far from certain. Barkey and Fuller indeed conclude that "(t)he Kurdish question has opened another front for the Islamists in their struggle with secularism" (1998: 120). Hence, the objection waged against the secularist traits of the system combines with the attack on what is regarded as the imposition of greater homogeneity on the population. A search for unity of purpose with Kurdish nationalists as regards the potential revision of the existing system has permeated the discourse of political Islamists. The political Islamist parties indeed advocated the need for sharp reversals in state policies. The RP was believed to have resorted to informal contact with the PKK through its deputy Erbaş and İsmail Nacar who then acted as the spokesman for the Committee for Peace, Brotherliness and Solidarity. Erbaş also met with the PKK to provide for the release of Turkish soldiers held hostage by the latter. The release of the soldiers was perceived by many analysts as the product of a mission by Erbaş and the chairman of the İHD, Akın Birdal. Such attempts by the party led to protests from a variety of political groups, the media and certain state institutions. Furthermore, periodic reports prepared by the party detailed the mistreatment of the region's inhabitants and even called for elected governments and assemblies to empower the local people. Tayyip Erdoğan's report prepared for the party in 1992 rejected assimilation, advocated recognition for Kurdish culture and emphasized the need for greater concern with human rights (Bozarslan, 1996: 146). The Erbaş report of 1996 in turn envisaged the release of former deputies from DEP and HADEP, granting of a partial amnesty, and initiation of Kurdish language courses at private schools as well as broadcasting in Kurdish in state television channel (GAP) to be followed by private attempts.

However, risking the party's fortunes by explicitly challenging the state discourse was one thing both the RP and the FP had to shun away from. Both parties had to proceed carefully as their actions were closely monitored due to intense skepticism over their systemic credentials. This fact alone incorporated an element of inconsistency into the party's practice and confined its room for maneuver. For instance, Erbakan's desire of launching initiatives such as sending an intermediary to Öcalan for an end to armed conflict was believed to have been blocked by President Demirel (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 106-107). Erbakan was then urged by the circumstances to prolong the emergency rule to which his party fiercely opposed and to assign a greater emphasis on the 'terrorism' aspect of the conflict in his discourse while chairing the RP-led government. The 1996 extension by the same government of the mandate of Poised Hammer to which the party ardently opposed when in opposition signaled another reversal. Houston indeed claims that the RP's "rhetoric on the Kurdish question veers between statist and Islamist discursive realms depending on whether they are in government or not, whom they are addressing or appeasing, and which way the winds of political fortune are drifting" (2001: 147).

Furthermore, it does not seem plausible to expect that convergence around Islam will make references to ethnic identity obsolete. The fact that the recognition of various ethnic identities by political Islamists was at most confined to the granting of cultural rights and fell short of allowing any particular identity to dominate over the Islamic one ensured that the Kurdish nationalists and the political Islamists were not always on the same side. While advocating cultural rights for the Kurdish population, the RP and the FP were reserved in extending support to further initiatives out of a concern over dividing the Islamist cause. Hence, political Islamist support for the recognition of concerns of Kurdish nationalists centering on identity

claims was not complete. Analysts indeed point at the difficulty of identifying a single monolithic Islamic response to ethnic conflict that appeals to all those depicting themselves as Islamists. Houston argues that Islamist response to Kurdish problem might be analyzed through focusing on three camps: statist Islam which marries Islamic emphasis with the belief in a mission on the Turks to serve that cause and dismisses Kurdish particularism; Islamist discourse calling for the subordination of the legitimate Kurdish identity to an Islamic one in line with which the system and relations need to be modeled; and Kurdish Islamist discourse which "seeks to defend both the particularity of Kurdish Muslims against their belittling by Islamism's Muslim universalism, and also the universality of Islam against the prejudice of statist Islamism's Turkish particularism" (2001: 147-197). Hence, a convergence of objectives has its strict limits.

Furthermore, ethnic stances occasionally cast their shadow over the Islamic cause through providing incentives for ethnic outbidding. The emphasis on ethnic identity by Kurdish political Islamists has been reciprocated by occasional ethnic references made by major political Islamist parties such as the RP or the FP. Sakallıoğlu confirms that "Kurdish-Islamist writers tend to search for a 'space' for Kurdish ethnic distinctiveness within the framework of the suggested formula of ummah, the Islamic community of the faithful, while the position of the Turkish-Islamist writers leans heavily toward defending the integrity of the Turkish state rather than to acknowledging a Kurdish ethnic distinctiveness" (1998: 2).

Manipulation of existing cleavages:

Kurdish citizens are believed to be highly represented in policy-making within the Turkish political system from its formation on. Bozarslan indeed stresses that "(t)he political system was in fact competent and elastic enough to integrate

traditional Kurdish actors" and adds that "(i)n turn, those actors played a key role in the legitimization of the system" (1996: 142). Yet, the major point of criticism relates to the complaint that representation is awarded on the basis of allegiance to the existing system as it involves the rejection of a distinctly Kurdish discourse in advocating the grievances. A key criticism has been that this pattern was assimilationist in essence with the essential requirement that particular national identities be cast aside. (22) Underlining that Kurdish deputies occupy approximately one-third of seats in the parliament, Barkey and Fuller stress that these deputies "avoided directly addressing the problem, preferring at best to work behind the scenes or simply to focus upon the economic betterment of their regions" (1998: 98).

Indeed, Kurdish participation in the existing parties has traditionally been considerable. Particularly, the traditional families and leaders could secure representation across the political spectrum. Various channels of influence have been fostered by the mainstream parties in appealing to the Kurdish vote. These parties all rely on the activation of the tribal connection to a significant extent. Furthermore, appeals to religious orders and communities have been undertaken. Clientelism has also become the major bargain among the traditional elite and the mainstream parties considering the latter's dependence on ethnic or religious blocks of vote. (23) Houston indeed states that "(f)or the political parties, pulling in the vote (by local candidates, patron-client ties, populist policies, lentil crop price-rises, religious manipulation, circumcision ceremonies, etc.) subsumes their interest in the Kurdish problem" (2001: 98). Gürbey concludes that "(b)ecause of the intermingling of tribes and political parties and the political and economic consolidation of power resulting from that, there has been a lack of readiness among the traditional elite to make an active commitment in the interest of national ambitions" (2000: 74). Nevertheless, it

is essential to add that politicians embracing Kurdish nationalist discourse also stood as candidates in elections and won seats from mid-1970s on.

The social make-up of the eastern and southeastern regions hence presented political parties with opportunities for obtaining support. This sort of interest was initially revealed by the DP. In fact, the political discourse adopted by the DP displayed divergence from the pattern of political party activity in the east. The DP campaigned on a platform of easing certain secularist policies as well as cultural restrictions. Mc Dowall indeed states that "(w)ell aware of how many votes the shaykhs and their followers could deliver, the Democrats were quick to exploit this feeling and openly advocate religious freedom", with the actual result that the regions dominated by the Kurdish population once again became the strongholds of Islam (2000: 396 and 397). Furthermore, cooptation of the aghas to obtain the potential vote that each could deliver through mobilizing their own communities was another pillar of DP's strategy. The DP also managed in 1950 general elections to place in party lists members of regional families who had previously been in conflict with the official policies. A policy of reversing past state practices was undertaken with the formerly deported actors being allowed to return and to find in the party a new channel for political participation. The DP was able to mobilize the landlords who in turn mobilized the peasants through an anti-reformist discourse. (24) In fact, Bozarslan concludes that DP's success in 1950 made a degree of the integration of Kurdish notables possible (2000: 17). From then on, cooperation with the traditional local leaders was sought in ruling the region. In fact, bargaining with local leaders still continues to be the major strategy adopted particularly by the political parties. The pattern of utilizing the social structure of the region was fully employed also by the DYP as it was able to enroll the support of local aghas.

An additional channel for enrolling support has also become available with massive migration from the east and the southeast into the western parts of the country. Pointing at how the migrant Kurdish population in the cities tends to cluster, Güneş-Ayata and Ayata conclude that "the Kurdish ethnic community becomes an easy target for political mobilization and ethnic block voting" (2002: 140). This latter channel has most effectively been utilized by the political Islamists. Hence, political Islamist parties have managed not only to make significant inroads into the east and the southeast but also to successfully mobilize the Kurdish migrant population in other parts of the country throughout the 1990s. The population that migrated to the other parts of the country from the southeast and the east hence seem relatively more convinced that their grievances are represented by broad-based mainstream parties.

As mainstream parties largely managed to appeal to the population with grievances through using religious symbols or enrolling the support of traditional regional actors, the declining significance of policy commitments and practices surfaced as the major outcome. As far as the policy commitments are concerned, campaign promises of economic development have traditionally been located at the top of the agenda. Yet, considering the fact that the mainstream parties' appeal is not based on organizational strength, it is not surprising that their performance in the southeast and the east is one major factor accounting for high levels of electoral volatility. Appeals to symbols such as the religious ones and rhetorical stances rather than a dense network of institutional organization in the two regions bring about outcomes that are not enduring.

In his general evaluation of the performance of the parties in the Turkish party system, Özbudun points at their declining legitimacy and organizational capability (2000: 150). Nowhere is this pattern more evident than in the east and the

southeast. In fact, the organizational weakness of the mainstream parties and their low level of representativeness are particularly striking aspects of their presence in the southeastern and eastern regions. The almost complete discretion of the party leadership over the determination of the candidates and the denial of local autonomy to party branches prove to be major drawbacks for these parties. It is highly significant that the leaders of mainstream parties incorporate traditional leaders as well as candidates not residing in the region and preserving only loose connections to the district they might represent into the party lists. In the final analysis, "(n)or are local constituencies or embeddedness in local or regional party organizations important for a politician's position in the national party organization" (Kramer, 2000: 29). Hence, acquiring the assent of party leadership stands as the most promising route in a political career. In fact, the role assumed by the central executive committees of the parties enables candidates with no grassroots support to obtain remarkable positions. The selection of candidates who are indeed potential representatives thus becomes another channel over which public influence is marginalized. This extremely centrist tradition has thus permeated all the parties within the Turkish party system. Decisions emanating from the center are expected to be complied with by all party branches regardless of the circumstances reigning in that particular region. The highly centralized party structure then seems to widen the gap between the party and the constituencies. This stands in marked contrast to the Spanish and Canadian pattern of effective organization and autonomy at the regional or provincial level. When these factors combine, mainstream parties risk their position as major contenders in the east and the southeast.

Failure of the Kurdish nationalist parties to broaden their bases of support:

A similar pattern of invoking the existing cleavages is also resorted to by the Kurdish nationalist parties. As far as the HEP-DEP-HADEP sequence was concerned, appealing to a reserved constituency proved preferable. Horowitz states that "there is a difference between the ability of a broadly based party to count on the votes of a majority of a given ethnic group and the dependence of a party solely on the support of a single ethnic group to the exclusion of others" (2000: 295). It seems plausible to argue that while the Kurdish nationalist parties so far opted for the latter pattern of dependency, their failure to broaden the base of party support proves to be alarming. Considering the fact that HADEP support came almost exclusively from the eastern and southeastern electoral districts, ethnic voting provided a major pool with respect to the party's chances for obtaining support. Alienation of the majority constituencies stood as a serious risk that the party had to reckon with. DEHAP clearly acquired the highest nationwide percentage of the vote when compared to the previous parties advocating the Kurdish cause. Yet, the low level of the votes obtained in the parts of the country other than the east and the southeast in spite of the massive migration remains to be problematic for the party. Still, a good news for the party is that it managed to obtain the highest ever percentage of the vote in all the cities in the southeast and the east, except for a slight decline in Hakkari where the party still scored above 45 percent. Hence, while the party is further consolidating its position in the east and the southeast, a degree of concern surfaced as regards the party's performance elsewhere. Thus, DEHAP also faces the risk of being branded as a single-issue party that is exclusively dependent on ethnic voting.

Kurdish nationalist parties hence refrained from searching for cross-sectional support and did not engage in extensive efforts to alter their being branded as single-

issue parties until very recently. Their pre-election alliances with marginal left-wing parties were almost the sole efforts in extending their base of support. These parties all relied on ethnic voting as they did not seem to perceive a stake in enrolling other sections of the population in their efforts. It is evident that the Kurdish nationalist parties' almost exclusive ethnic emphasis in company with a failure to formulate policies on other sources of grievance damages their standing. The Constitutional Court's recent verdict on HADEP has indeed come at a time when the party began attending to such defects in its performance. Recently, DEHAP declarations and documents are indeed permeated by scant references to problems experienced across Turkey.

Among the Kurdish nationalist parties, HADEP was the first one to realize that systemic qualities had to be enhanced and the image of a separate existence from the PKK had to be displayed. On the whole, however, reluctance by the HEP, DEP and HADEP to explicitly condemn the PKK actions has particularly kept the party from appealing to larger constituencies. Relations with the PKK have been a thorny issue for all the three parties. Hence, it is highly critical that the Kurdish nationalist parties failed to take steps of the sort that the Reform Party did in Canada in broadening and diversifying its base of support.

Failure to install broadly shared understandings across the party system:

Turan attempts to prove that political polarization is more widespread among the party leaders, deputies and party militants than among the ordinary electorate and concludes that rather than an outcome of political culture, this situation is the product of a conscious effort on the part of party leaders to keep their supporters in line in order to avoid losing votes (2000: 373). While certain common points have characterized the approaches of the mainstream parties to the conflict under analysis,

the parties and the political elite have refrained from explicitly converging around common positions. The drastic consequences of lack of political determination in reaching an agreement were apparent. Pointing at the failure of Demirel and Ecevit to cooperate, Tachau indeed argues that the situation "sucked in a whole gamut of issues that had previously lain dormant on the periphery of society and politics such as Kurdish-Turkish ethnic divisions, Sunni-Alevi religious differences, and secularism versus religious piety" (2002: 44). Hence was the conflict fuelled. A non-partisan consensus among the mainstream parties on the urgency of addressing the problem or on the reduction of references to ethnicity in political discourse as well as in campaign commitments has not surfaced. Furthermore, mainstream parties and Kurdish nationalist parties were not able to declare in a concerted effort their convergence on the inadmissibility of resort to violence for political ends.

Such a failure to converge around broadly shared understandings is a major factor stimulating ethnic outbidding. The way in which ethnic issues were carried to the top of the political agenda by a number of parties made it extremely difficult for others to isolate themselves from the issue and urged them to take sharp positions. Indeed, ambiguity was reflected in the stances of various parties. Rather than offering alternatives, the parties chose to repudiate each other's policy proposals. Ideological contentions moved to the forefront. To cite an example, Özbudun particularly draws attention at how the AP accused the government led by the CHP in 1978 and 1979 for acting lenient towards communists and Kurdish separatists (2000: 37). Moreover, while in opposition, all the mainstream parties aired proposals strongly identifying state policies as part of the problem only to become advocates of those same policies when in government. The variation in the positions of the parties

with respect to the emergency rule or the village guards system when in government and when in opposition stands as the clearest example.

For some analysts, the problem is indeed deeper than it seems. Heper represents that opinion in stating that "Turkey's experience with democracy has been one of considerable progress towards the consolidation of democracy in the absence of a diffusion of democratic values among the political elite" (2002: 146). Learning to condone differences with the opposition and displaying respect with the others' right to rule hence surface as attitudes to be fostered among the political elite. (25) When political parties regard politics as a zero-sum game, all sorts of alliances may be perceived as means of survival at the helms of power. In fact, exploitation of cleavages has largely been resorted to with that objective. Hence, such perceptions of politics by the political elite also seem to have been reflected in their approach to the existing conflict.

Prospects for full membership in the EU and the reform process to that end seem likely to enroll the support of parties across the political spectrum. Indeed, except for the MHP and a variety of rather minor political parties, convergence around the goal of attaining full membership in the EU seems to be the closest approximation to a broadly shared understanding.

The limits of political inclusion at the local and national level:

Random signs of HADEP's incorporation into the existing party system have been forthcoming prior to the final verdict of the Constitutional Court. In line with his efforts at forming a coalition government in 1996, Yılmaz consulted with HADEP leader Bozlak. President Demirel also invited Bozlak to presidential office in the context of his talks with party leaders. President Demirel's meeting with the HADEP mayors in August 1999 in the presidential office was another major sign.

Yet, the main channel of HADEP's integration with the existing system has been provided by the local administrations. Local governance has been the major stake for the Kurdish nationalist parties since the collapse of the SHP-HEP alliance. This is the case in spite of the fact that HADEP mayors frequently complain about problems in relations with the local state authorities and the government in Ankara. Allegations of the transfer of municipality resources to PKK supporters (Cemal, 2003: 267) have proved particularly controversial. Although the party boycotted the 1994 municipal elections on grounds that the security forces were waging a campaign against it, HADEP candidates obtained various municipal posts as mayors in local elections of 1999. In total, HADEP managed to obtain 36 mayoralties in eastern and southeastern regions in the 1999 local elections. Moreover, municipal elections were won by HADEP in Aydın, Savuca; İzmir, Asarlık; Mersin, Akdeniz; and Adana, Küçük Dikili. Provided that the current levels of migration are sustained, the number of municipalities administered by the representatives of the major Kurdish nationalist party in the parts of the country other than the east and the southeast may be expected to increase. Indeed, DEHAP outlined 'Principles for Free and Democratic Participatory Municipality Administration' to guide its campaign for the approaching municipal elections (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, September 8, 2003: 1).

On the whole, an expectation central to the prospects for conflict management is that experience in municipal administration may exert a moderating influence on the Kurdish nationalists. In local administration, responsibility for policy actions and failures particularly falls on the ruling party. Shunning away from partisan practices in the allocation of resources and services is a major challenge. When serving in local administrations, the Kurdish nationalist party is presented with

a major opportunity to confirm its recently repeated claim that it is not an exclusively Kurdish party. There seems to stand a chance for the party to rectify its image as the 'separatists' among the broader sections of the public. Another expectation may be that as the number of nationalist parties competing for the Kurdish vote increases, these parties may uphold differing discourses. Some may indeed feel compelled to appeal to other sections of the population. Alternative political organizations committed solely to the political process may provide channels for moderation provided that pluralism becomes deeply embedded among the actors claiming to represent Kurdish grievances. Stimulating party competition at the local level where stakes are high may, for instance, provide a major boost to pluralism. Finally, the need to co-exist and cooperate with the central government brings local administrations in greater contact with the former and hence promotes dialogue.

Keeping the parties advocating sectional interests engaged in national politics has been a major means of conflict management across a variety of political systems. Under those circumstances, existing parties are more likely to display voluntary conformity with the system due to their opportunity for sharing power at the national level. Some of the sectional parties may face the option of cooperating with mainstream parties in spite of the compelling impact of ethnic outbidding. Enhanced coalition or blackmail potential may stimulate all the minor parties including those with a heavy emphasis on Kurdish nationalism to uphold systemic motives. Indeed, increasing coalition potential of the MSP and the MHP in the 1970s was one significant source of power for the relatively minor parties despite the fact that these parties' performance fell short of ensuring their systemic commitment. How minor parties might become crucial to the whole process was also particularly revealed in the formation of coalition governments in the 1990s. This fact may be expected to

convince the parties that they are critical to the political process and have the power to bring about changes. It then remains to be seen whether greater moderation may entail inclusion and a related upsurge of support for the Kurdish nationalist parties as has been the case in Spain with the HB.

It is essential to note that there have been grounds for the Kurdish nationalist actors to base their discourse on political exclusion. A widespread perception of the pre-determined nature of electoral competition is not expected to be particularly supportive of conflict management. Gürbey indeed underlines that "DEP representatives justify their participation in the parliament in exile by the fact that the Turkish government has rejected all peaceful means for the representation of Kurdish interests on both parliamentary and legal levels" (1996: 28). The design of the electoral system is the major factor which strengthens those arguments. Exclusion caused by the threshold seems to offset the opportunities created by regional concentration of the vote. On the contrary, the potential for outbidding may be curtailed through an electoral system design that encourages moderation and urges the political elite to become more responsive to popular choices. A system that takes into account the second choices or one that intensifies the relations between the voters and the candidates may indeed contribute to conflict management via compelling the parties to act moderately.

Monolithism and extremism among the Kurdish nationalist parties:

Complicating the prospects for accommodation is the lack of political actors representing the grievances by confronting the PKK through an unconditional rejection of violence. It seems plausible to conclude that the parties defined as moderate Kurdish nationalist have been neither widespread in appeal nor consolidated enough to confront the PKK's violent tactics. Coming to terms with the

idea of pluralism has been a major challenge for the actors in the Kurdish camp. Alternative voices in expressing grievances were perceived as divisions weakening the Kurdish cause.

The PKK influence over the Kurdish political activity has almost been total. Rather than posing an autonomous alternative channel for the expression of Kurdish grievances, the HEP, DEP and HADEP could not avoid being branded as the affiliates of the PKK. In fact, the PKK commanders were believed to play a decisive role in the determination of HADEP candidates (The Economist, April 3, 1999: 25). Yet, certain analysts argue that the parties prioritizing Kurdish nationalism were indeed more heterogeneous than they were perceived. Bozarslan qualifies that "the HEP and later the DEP regrouped different generations and types of political actors" as "(s)ome of them were already integrated in the system while some others were brought to the political arena by urban radicalism" (1996: 147). In Van Bruinessen's opinion, the HEP, DEP and HADEP were all more than fronts for the PKK as they represented a much broader political spectrum (2000(a): 9). Indeed, Şahin argued by late 2002 that the moderate wing of HADEP which truly aspired to an all-embracing party conflicted with the conservative wing of the party headed by Bozlak (Şahin, 2002: 1).

There have indeed been scarce attempts at coming up with alternative political organizations in voicing the grievances of the Kurdish population. Yet, these efforts have come under attack not only from the state authorities who questioned their systemic credentials but also from the PKK's monopoly over the Kurdish nationalist cause. Şerafettin Elçi who spawned controversies by openly declaring himself as a Kurd in 1979 in his capacity as a cabinet minister was the most prominent figure attempting to come up with alternative Kurdish political

organizations. He consistently aimed to keep his distance from the PKK by waging serious criticisms against it. Denounced as a moderate, Elçi condemns the PKK's armed struggle and rejects separation. Addressing the audience in Pera Palas Meetings, Elçi indeed stated that the Kurds should openly declare that they would not want to separate in return for which the Turks should get rid of their syndrome of separation (1995: 111). Elçi later stated that "we are seriously thinking about a joint state and a single citizenship" and qualified that "(n)o decentralized model of administration disrupts national integrity" (Gözde, 2000: 1). He rather suggests group rights relating particularly to self-government and educational reform (Elçi, 1995: 112) for the management of the conflict. Elçi indeed calls for the right of organization of political parties and cultural institutions and adds that "(i)f this right is granted, it will be a very positive step. Because then the true representatives can be seen" (İmset, 1995(b): 11). While being defeated in 1995 general elections on the list of the CHP for Şırnak, he formed the Democratic Mass Party (DKP) in 1997. The party could not escape being banned by the Constitutional Court by a 6 to 5 margin. It indeed defined itself as a 'movement of liberal minded Kurds and Turks who recant violence' (Gürbey, 2000: 78) and called for a federal solution. Toughest criticisms of Öcalan also emanate from Elçi's statements such as when he claimed that "(t)o accuse those who were defending the legitimate rights of the people as being discriminatory and primitive nationalists is not merely an injustice, it is the sign of an immoral, sick mind" (Gözde, 2000: 1). Moreover, Elçi insistently criticized all the political parties identified as Kurdish nationalists. Referring to the experiences of the HEP and the DEP, he in fact stresses that the Kurdish deputies missed a historical opportunity due to their lack of experience (Elçi, 1995: 115).

İbrahim Aksoy may be identified as another personality promoting moderate Kurdish nationalism. His attempts at forming an alternative party stand as the clear product of the failure of the existing parties to incorporate politicians expressing Kurdish grievances. Aksoy's meeting with European MPs led to his expulsion from the SHP. He then served in the HEP for a while. The formation of the Party for Democracy and Renewal (DDP) by him took place in response to DEP's decision to boycott the 1994 local elections. The perception of this decision as one taken in close conformity with the PKK objectives urged Aksoy and some other members of the DEP to continue their activities in a new political party. The DDP actually called for abidance by the international agreements and a general boosting of the quality of democracy and pluralism. Yet, Aksoy and his party could not escape legal prosecution either.

As mentioned in the preceding parts, another major actor advocating rights for the Kurdish population was Burkay's PSK. Being banned in Turkey and operating in Sweden, the party was formed by former DDKO and some TİP members. The PSK contributed to Kurdish mobilization by organizing the first Kurdish workers' association, KOMKAR. It was mainly committed to a federal framework with Burkay advocating Kurdish right to self-determination modeled along the Belgian example rather than separation (Gürbey, 1996: 25). (26) It is also remarkable that there were violent clashes between the PKK and the PSK between 1975 and 1980. The PSK criticized the PKK for targeting radical Turkish and Kurdish movements instead of what they regard as the reigning bourgeois system (White, 2000: 157). Burkay even wrote a critique of the PKK. Yet, he joined Öcalan in a press conference when the latter announced the unilateral cease-fire in 1993 in a rare show of unity. Burkay still criticized Öcalan's attitude since his capture as

'disastrous' by arguing that one "should never sacrifice a people for the life of a person" while voicing his wish that Öcalan would be freed (Gorvett, 2000: 2).

Thus, there has so far been a marked failure in producing intra-ethnic competition along conventional channels through bolstering moderate actors. Relatively moderate actors have been subject to legal prosecution which was not much of an encouragement. (27) Complicating their position further was their perception by the state authorities as anti-system political actors rather than preferable moderate proponents of Kurdish nationalism. These parties' references to the Kurdish nation were indeed considered to be attacks on the principle of national integrity. On the other hand, radicalization affected by the PKK urged these parties claiming to be moderate representatives of the Kurdish cause to further embrace particularistic positions. While this factor made them more vulnerable to legal prosecution, opting out for the opposite path would have drawn persecution in the hands of the PKK. This difficulty basically accounts for how the moderate proponents of Kurdish nationalism have been marginalized by the HEP-DEP-HADEP and DEHAP sequence.

Whether DEHAP and other parties that may emerge to succeed the HEP-DEP-HADEP chain can adopt a moderate stance and dissociate from violent alternatives remains to be a serious test. Failure of the PKK to fulfill its commitments may indeed stimulate the emergence of alternative organizations. Barkey and Fuller stress that "(m)ost Kurdish thinkers and activists are not likely to remain indefinitely satisfied with either traditional PKK policies or its authoritarian, closed, modus operandi" and add that the current diplomatic and political phase of PKK actions requires "a new cadre of Kurdish activists, more open, more educated, more European, and more flexible"(1998: 39). Yet, the record so far reveals that the PKK

is accorded a distinct status even by its fiercest opponents within the Kurdish camp. In spite of the fact that many members of Kurdish intelligentsia criticize Öcalan and the PKK, Kendal Nezan as the chairman of the Kurdish Institute in Paris sums up their approach in arguing that "(h)ad there not been the 'PKK violence', the 'Kurdish issue' would not have been located on Turkey's agenda to the extent that it has" (Cemal, 2003: 62).

A number of significant developments may still stimulate the emergence of novel Kurdish political actors. The expansion of the room for freedom of expression, increasing stakes in local and even national politics, the fact that KADEK's 'war of defense' does not legitimize any future attacks on alternative Kurdish actors and the burgeoning Kurdish civil society may be enumerated. After all, failure on the part of moderate Kurdish actors to engage in the contest for the expression of Kurdish demands is likely to hamper prospects for conflict management.

<u>The role of personalities in conflict management:</u>

Political personalities and party leaders are highly critical to any analysis of the role of the parties in relation to the unfolding conflict. Strict supervision by the party center and dominance of leadership discretion account for this influence. The personalistic style of rule by party leadership actually means that the personal opinion of party leaders becomes a major determinant of the party discourse. Thus, leadership changes lead to considerable shifts in party positions. Party leaders also formulate their discourse with a concern over preserving their position within the party. While defining Turkish democracy as a 'delegative democracy', Özbudun concludes that Turkish political parties "have not generally displayed mass party characteristics but rather have combined the features of cadre, catchall, and cartel parties" with strong clientelistic features and adds that a transition from a cadre party

model to a catch-all or cartel party model has indeed taken place (2000: 153, 74, 80 and 87). (28)

A highly personalistic style of leadership is reflected in the way the initiatives for conflict management are designed and aired in the Turkish political system. The 'Özal factor' presented the clearest example. Özal was perceived by a variety of analysts as a critical figure with respect to prospects for conflict management. He was given great credit for the partial lifting of the ban on Kurdish language. Özal's reference to his own ethnic background in 1989 was regarded as another significant step. His meeting with the Iraqi Kurdish leaders basically introduced another novelty into Turkish policy. Dialogue was established with the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (KYB) as a result of which liaison offices were set up in Ankara. All the more significant was the fact that Özal constantly kept contact with the HEP deputies, hoping to secure their contribution to conflict management. As the President, Özal was known to support the drawing up of an initiative for television and radio broadcasting in Kurdish as well as the teaching of Kurdish as a second language in schools (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 141). İmset, for instance, alleges that just prior to Özal's death, a reform package encompassing a comprehensive amnesty, Kurdish courses, and Kirmanji as well as Suryani broadcasting by the state television secured the approval of the MGK (1995(a): 84-85). Particularly controversial were Özal's references to federalism. Yet, Özal seemed to distance himself from the idea of the formation of a Kurdish state, arguing that it could not come into being without Turkey's assent. He even aimed to present Turkey as the country the Kurds should rely on for the protection of their lives and well-being. Gürbey argues that Özal's proposal for a presidential system was also partially grounded on the existing conflict

(2000: 67). In the final analysis, Özal seemed eager to discuss all sorts of alternatives even if to reveal that they would not be feasible.

Yet, it is particularly striking that various policies branded as hardline were also contemplated during the Özal period. Özal, for instance, extensively supported the migration of the population in the east and the southeast to other parts of the country as a major channel for integration. Özal report published in early 1993 (Cemal, 2003: 125-128) suggested the evacuation of villages and hamlets in the mountain areas of the southeast and the settlement of their residents in western parts of the country. Furthermore, Özal also referred to the centrality of a balanced plan by pointing at the danger that considering the fact that those who departed from the region were economically better off, the greater difficulties that the remaining poor people encountered might aggravate the potential for anarchy. Özal's suggestion was to create centers of attraction in certain regional cities through incentives for investment as well as settlements and hence to evacuate the rural areas. Further intriguing was the fact that the village guard system and the institutionalization of OHAL were all initiatives taken during the Özal government.

As a typical indication of personalistic style of rule, the party leaders chose to air their ideas prior to a discussion on them within the party. Hence, when the debate was undertaken and opposition within the party grew, the initial designs remained to be far from implemented. The Çiller period provides an illustration with the initiatives being waged for consideration only to be withdrawn shortly. The most spectacular example was the controversy surrounding Çiller's initial proposal for discussing the 'Basque model' and the way in which this was soon given up. Her proposal for a reform of the language laws to enable Kurdish language classes in schools and broadcasting in Kurdish were also quickly withdrawn. It was believed

that opponents within the party were able to block the initiatives. It could thus be argued that Çiller's backtracking from her initial proposals had to do with her need to sustain strong leadership over the party by consolidating her position. Another factor instrumental in accounting for these reversals is that Çiller succeeded Demirel who had a relatively hardline approach to the issue. In his capacity as the President, Demirel warned in December 1994 that the constitution did not specify ethnic background, language or religion in defining the basis of citizenship and rather promoted 'citizenship' as the defining criterion for membership in the nation. He then initiated a debate on constitutional citizenship. Particularly during his presidency, Demirel emphasized the need to end violence prior to the consideration of initiatives of other kinds such as the cultural ones and argued that taking things in another order might threaten national unity by appearing as concessions. It was along this established pattern that the discourse adopted by Çiller soon also hardened. Çiller's determination to stamp out violence became absolute. Her active campaign for the lifting of the immunity of DEP deputies was also striking in that sense. Nigogosian even argues that the expulsion of DEP deputies from the TGNA "seems to have been triggered in part by Prime Minister Tansu Çiller's desire to play to the nationalist vote in forthcoming elections" (1996: 40).

Another striking example is provided by how DSP's emphasis on developmental issues was formulated. The party's policy has been largely dictated by Ecevit's approach to the issue. In the stance of the party, the problem is mainly economic which necessitates the dismantling of the feudal system and the introduction of measures to address underdevelopment. Pointing at the impact of foreign influences in the course of the conflict, Ecevit resolutely rejected measures such as education in Kurdish or the granting of autonomy. In fact, Ecevit personally

became the cabinet member with responsibility for the southeast in 1997 with a particular emphasis on plans for economic development.

The central role assumed by the party leadership meant that most of the initiatives were neither enduring nor embraced by the different levels of party organization. The initiatives were mostly associated with the party leaders and their fate became intimately tied to the political fortunes of these leaders. Hence, the political will and determination in implementing them was dependent on constant fluctuations revolving around the leaders' position.

The Role of the Public and the Civil Initiative

<u>The limits of organized representation of interests:</u>

It is essential to embark on any analysis by stating that problems surfaced in the development of organized representation of interests. Legal provisions limiting the scope of organized activity and a dense network to monitor such activities have been the major reasons. (29) Malgil identifies an extensive bureaucratic process and arbitrariness by the state authorities as the final outcome in state-civil society relations (2002: 59). Political dialogue and cooperation between political parties on the one hand and associations, foundations or unions on the other hand were banned until the incorporation of 1995 constitutional amendments into the related laws. The ban was expected to deter the parties from defending particular interests. Furthermore, organization along racial, religious, sectarian, linguistic or communal advocacy of rights was also prohibited by law. While a recent upsurge in organized activity is evident particularly from 1990s on in company with the diversification of the field of activity, serious limitations still remain.

While pointing at a change in urban areas, Kramer identifies a pattern in stating that "(c)ivic activities that go beyond single-issue protest actions do not have a tradition in Turkish society" (2000: 23). Furthermore, incentives for organized representation of interests seem to be more compelling for some groups than for others. Hence, many analysts claim that effective organized participation has been confined to some dominant groups in the case of Turkey. Procedural restrictions fall more heavily on some organizations than on others. The motives of the existing organizations are indeed believed to make a difference with regard to whether cooperation or confrontation characterizes relations with the state. While the organizations of economic groups such as business and labor are believed to be

tolerated by the state, religious and ethnic associations are resisted or disallowed (Sunar, 1998: 370). Furthermore, Şenatalar indeed concludes that while the state has actively cooperated with organizations providing services in realms such as education, health or combating natural disasters, organizations explicitly defined as political such as those functioning to promote human rights have been kept at a distance (2002: 135).

Another significant aspect of the current analysis is that the extent to which civil society organizations manage to engage the individuals in their activities remains a central determinant of their contribution to conflict management. In doing that, these organizations may feel urged to compete with or even incorporate into their discourse alternative sources of allegiance such as ethnic or religious community, local and regional solidarity (hemşehrilik), or family ties. Arguing that civil society in Turkey is embryonic at best and drawing attention at how solely a small proportion of the population belongs to any formal civilian organization, Gunter states that "(w)hat social groups exist are usually of migrants from the same province, followed by trade unions and professional associations" (1997: 20). (30) The internal operation of civil society organizations, their transparency and their inclusiveness in representation also acquire significance. Tosun reveals how the executive boards and their chairman serve for prolonged periods of time in these organizations (2001: 391). Similarly, Üsterci points at how most of the civil society organizations operate under relations dictated hierarchically by the decisions reached in the executive boards and without much participation by members who are rather expected to vote and form the mass to be mobilized for organizational activities (2001: 414). In fact, civil society organizations differ with respect to the extent to which they aim to form a societal base or to remain as elitist and specialist endeavors

(Wedel, 1997: 147-154). Hence, there remains the risk that in close resemblance to the political parties, civil society organizations may fail to enroll large sections of the population in their efforts.

Yet, Çelikkan argues that the role of civil society organizations is likely to be redefined due to greater integration with the EU and globalization, with the impact of the former being displayed by the national program presented by Turkey which indicates a commitment to greater cooperation with civil society organizations in local administration (2002: 38-39). Commitment to strengthen legal and constitutional guarantees for the development of freedom to form associations indeed constitutes an integral part of the documents concluded with the EU or submitted to it (Malgil, 2002: 65). The 1995 reforms already allowed the associations to maintain increasing ties to political parties and other societal organizations. Hence, the role envisaged for the state in its relations with the society may shift from one centering on monitoring and regulation to one of active support for the organized expression of societal positions.

A variety of organized stances are revealed in relation to the conflict. Kramer claims that "the public debate over possible reforms of the established system continues to benefit much from the social and political commitment that business and labor organizations developed in the 1990s" (2000: 21-22). Opposition of the business community to the continuation of the conflict and their calls for a political solution intensified particularly in the 1990s. Increasing interest in the conflict was mainly caused by the economic costs associated with the pursuit of the military option as well as the problems encountered in relations with foreign actors. Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (TÜSİAD) reports on democratization and respect for cultural pluralism, Turkish Young Businessmen's Association

(TÜGİAD) missions to the regions of conflict in line with reports emphasizing the need for policy change, and the pressure exerted by some local business associations on the governments to take political steps stand as typical examples. The TÜSİAD report prepared by Professor Tanör called for the improvement of democratic standards through such steps as the lifting of restrictions on freedom of thought and opinion and the amendment of the 1982 Constitution. The report also called for the development of different languages and cultures and the formation of parties explicitly along ethnic lines. Social, cultural and economic reforms were also advocated by the Foundation for Economic Development (İKV) by 1994. The İKV report too called for cultural and broadcasting rights as well as the establishment of Kurdish institutes in Turkish universities. While reports by the business community as to the political, social and economic precautions to be observed by the political authorities were abundant, private sector investment in the region has not been forthcoming due to security concerns and greater feasibility of investment elsewhere in the country. Indeed, prominence is attached by the business community to the granting of political and cultural rights. Sabancı argued, for instance, that it would be of no use to establish factories in the region unless the cultural rights of the Kurds were acknowledged, yet later called for new investment in the east and the southeast and a central body for coordination (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997: 157 and 188). Furthermore, it is essential to note that "most Kurdish businessmen chose to invest, as they continue to do, in the economically more developed regions of the country, ignoring their own, more backward provinces" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 14). It has to be acknowledged that a degree of synergy between the state and the private enterprise may more effectively contribute to conflict management than periodic warnings that the prolongation of conflict extracts major economic costs.

Organizations aiming to promote respect for human rights have also taken vocal positions with respect to the unfolding conflict. Chief among these, and the most controversial, has been the İHD. Formed in 1986 by relatives and friends of radical left-wing prisoners, the İHD began to act against what it perceived to be violations of human rights. Plagemann indeed identified the İHD as the sole legal organization of the radical leftist groups until the expansion of room for political maneuver in late 1980s and the major channel for opposition in the OHAL region in the latter years (2001: 365 and 372). As will be analyzed in the coming sections, relations between the state and the human rights organizations are largely characterized by conflict rather than synergy. Furthermore, the vocal presence of the associations of the relatives of the servicemen who lost their lives in the conflict particularly from Öcalan's capture on led to greater polarization between various groups.

Less institutionalized efforts in dealing with the conflict were also undertaken. Well-known personalities such as Yaşar Kemal, Orhan Pamuk or Zülfü Livaneli have at times taken the initiative in calling for an end to the conflict. On a more organized basis, the branch of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly in Turkey took certain steps aimed at fostering reconciliation and dialogue. As an insider, Belge defines the organization as one that aims to activate civil society for a peaceful solution that can prevent 'the logic of the conflict' from prevailing and to obtain international support to that end through projects instituting accommodation among a variety of groups (1996: 137, 160 and 332). Similarly, Barkey and Fuller point at the Foundation for Research on Societal Problems (TOSAV) which has been funded by the EU and the US with the specific intention of detecting a common ground between the Turks and the Kurds living in Turkey (1998: 119). Such efforts declared

their mission to be the fostering of reconciliation. Yet, it is essential to note that public awareness of their activities and popular participation in them are rather scant. Those who have been directly affected by the problem through losing loved ones or experiencing significant damage of property indeed seem most likely to engage in organized search for solutions.

Despite all the limitations mentioned above, it is still essential to underline that an expanding platform for political discussion touching on what were once regarded as explosive issues has now materialized. Yet, certain efforts by the public became a part of the problem rather than contributing to conflict management. In addition to his emphasis on the political class, Gerger indeed offers the sharpest criticism of the universities, the press, the judiciary, the trade unions, and the institutions of civil society for having surrendered their autonomy to the state and forfeited their democratic mission (1997: 6). (31) The analysis undertaken in this study, however, concludes that failure to establish a synergy between the state and the society as well as polarization between the variety of groups within the society stand as the major stumbling blocks to an extensive public contribution to conflict management.

Noticing the vigor civil society actors recently acquired in the case of Turkey, it is essential to note that as long as a confrontational understanding of state-society relations and relations between different actors within the society prevails, societal actors are not likely to extensively contribute to conflict management. The perception of civil society in Turkey as being diametrically opposed to the state and the belief in the preservation of one group's existence at the expense of other organizations prove to be the major obstacles to an effective societal contribution. Polarization, mutual suspicions and polemical debates then occasionally characterize

the relations between the state and societal organizations as well as between various organized groups. When failure on the part of the political parties to assume a constructive role in conflict management is accompanied by a similar ineptitude by the public at large, prospects for democratic consolidation under conditions of conflict are extremely weakened.

Problems associated with the institutionalization of a state-society synergy:

The state has traditionally been located at the center of the Turkish political system. Özbudun believes that in the perceptions of the Ottoman-Turkish political thought and the people, "(t)he state is valued in its own right, is relatively autonomous from society, and plays a tutelary and paternalistic role" (2000: 128). Kalaycıoğlu in turn enlists the attitude of the bureaucrats in dealing with the periphery in addition to a popular perception of the state as an 'omnipotent control mechanism' functioning as a tool in the hands of the center in return for whose benevolence largesse could be extracted as factors detrimental to the development of civil society in Turkey (2002(a): 250). The state has been largely perceived as the ultimate caretaker that regulates and delivers a variety of services. Joint problem-solving has not traditionally been established. Yet, it is quite striking that particularly in the field of education, a number of foundations have recently become main actors with various projects stimulating large-scale popular contribution. These activities indeed set precedents in relation to how joint assistance to the management of conflict may materialize. Synergy between the state and the society becomes particularly essential due to another characteristic of the state in Turkey. It is highly significant that "if a strong state is assumed to be one that possesses high capability to regulate the behaviour of those under its jurisdiction, to extract and distribute resources effectively and efficiently from the society and territory over which it is

presumed to have power, and to create and declare symbols that elicit awe and deference, then the state does not seem to have much strength in Turkey" (Kalaycıoğlu, 2002(a): 251).

The extent of societal autonomy from the state and whether preserving this autonomy necessitates confrontation between the two actors prove particularly controversial. The Turkish case currently stands at a rather difficult position in relation to these issues. Sarıbay indeed points at a new layer of polarization by directing attention at how the struggle to shape democracy has been reduced to a conflict between those for the society and those for the state in the case of Turkey (2000: 447). While a variety of civil society organizations define their existence in opposition to the state, the latter also perceives the activities of some of the former as potentially disruptive. The scope of activity of the two is widely believed to be mutually exclusive. Kramer indeed identifies a growing divide between the established political class and the civil society as a recently apparent social cleavage insufficiently bridged by past state policy (2000: 11). Yet, it is particularly significant that the state does not seem to contemplate undermining the civil society either. Sunar indeed defines the state in Turkey as a 'passive exclusive' state which "resists the entry of disadvantaged groups in the official domain of the state regime but neither combats nor promotes civil society" (1998: 369). This study argues that there is the risk that a rift rather than synergy may characterize relations between the society and the state. Mutual suspicion of each other's motives has indeed motivated the state to place restrictions on civil society activity and has made societal organizations experience problems in relations with the state authorities. It is essential to note that this situation can not be expected to serve the prospects for conflict management or democratic consolidation.

As a striking example, conflict rather than synergy characterizes relations between the state and the İHD. Responsibility for the assaults on the İHD members and offices are put by the association on the state. A high number of members also face prosecution under article 169 of the Penal Code particularly on charges of assisting the armed organization. (32) In response, the association's criticism of state and governmental policies has taken the shape of publicly complaining about them rather than an exchange of opinion. The association indeed pointed at a conflict between the pluralist cultural and ethnic nature of the society in Turkey and the monolithic structure of the existing constitutional and legal system (İHD 15.Yıl Broşürü, 2001: 2). It was mainly the İHD's emphasis on torture and human rights violations in the conduct of the fight against the PKK that made the organization particularly controversial. The İHD defined the Kurdish problem as one in a chain of Turkey's basic problems of human rights and democracy and branded the conflict in the OHAL region as a 'war' in 1992, advocating the observation of the Geneva Conventions (İHD 15.Yıl Broşürü, 2001: 2). Recently, the organization actively extended support to, and even promoted, the students' campaign for education in mother tongue by stating that any individual living in Turkey has the right to expression in any language in line with Article 39 of the Lausanne Treaty and that the right to education in mother tongue is guaranteed by the international treaties to which Turkey is a party as well as the Copenhagen criteria (Devrimci Demokrasi, January 16-31, 2002: 1). It needs to be added that the İHD lists among its principles its unconditional support for the use of the right to self-determination by the nations and emphasizes its determination to take sides with the oppressed individual, nation, sex or class (İHD İlkeler, 2001: 1). Its condemnation of Öcalan's 'isolation' and continuous insistence on the need for availing Öcalan of the rights granted to other

prisoners were regarded by many as evidence of parallelism between the association and the PKK in defining the problem as well as advocating solutions. In a press conference revealing their report on Öcalan's conditions prepared in response to the application by Öcalan's family and a group of lawyers, the İHD complained of intense isolation, breach of the right to communication and reception of information, and limitation of the right to legal defense through restrictions placed on visits by lawyers and the family (İHD Öcalan Raporu, 2003: 1-2). The shooting of the İHD chairman Birdal came in 1998 following news reports of his alleged contacts with the PKK. However, in the course of his trial, Öcalan denied having any financial links to the İHD and solely admitted that he has declared his encouragement for İHD efforts such as the release of Turkish soldiers while adding that the PKK has been transmitting information to the İHD (Pirim and Örtülü, 2000: 117 and 134).

A dense network of organizations collaborate with the İHD in the pursuit of cases of human rights violations. The İHD established the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TİHV) to specialize on the cases of torture through opening up rehabilitation centers and instituting active cooperation with Union of Turkish Physicians (TTB). The Foundation for Societal Legal Research (TOHAV), on the other hand, offers legal assistance to victims of torture and human rights violations. Established in the same year with the İHD, the association for helping the families of those sentenced and imprisoned (TAYAD) aimed to defend the extreme left-wing prisoners' rights. The association was closed in 1990 and was succeeded by various other associations throughout the 1990s. Currently operating, TAYAD became a vocal actor in protesting 'isolation' and F-type prisons. Furthermore, local bars and lawyers also join such protests. Yet, it is crucial that despite the problems these organizations encountered in their operation, they still managed to broaden the scope

for discussions. The creation of the Human Rights Commission in 1990 within the TGNA and the reports prepared by it are regarded as benchmarks. The government also appointed a state minister for human rights. It was in October 1999 that İrtemçelik as the Minister in Charge of Human Rights convened a human rights conference in which the representatives of organizations such as the İHD or the Association of the Oppressed (Mazlum-DER) exchanged ideas with the government. Currently, a separate branch established within the Prime Minister's office is specifically responsible for monitoring the developments in the realm of human rights.

Expecting the state to take care of all the existing problems by acting on its own creates a problematic situation as regards prospects for conflict management. To cite a single example, the extension of assistance by different civil society organizations to the displaced or to those wounded in the conflict may ease the process of alleviating the costs imposed by the conflict. Wedel indeed argues that the displaced Kurdish people obtain support from fellow Kurds, the İHD, health union or HADEP in meeting their needs which makes her conclude that the effort to solve the problem through community solidarity reinforces ethnic cleavages (2000: 193). A concerted effort by the state and the society at large may indeed be expected to offset that effect.

In fact, state cooperation with some organizations progressed rather smoothly. It is particularly significant, for instance, that Kemalist organizations have pointed at the need for cooperation between the state and the civil society organizations in waging proposals for the settlement of the conflict in the southeast with concrete projects such as 'Bizim İdil Projesi' (Erdoğan, 2001: 253). In the occupational realm, the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges (TOBB),

Turkish Confederation of Tradesmen and Artisans (TESK), and Union of Chambers of Agriculture of Turkey (TZOB) have been identified as being supportive of the state discourse on a variety of issues whereas other organizations (with the Union of Bars of Turkey -TBB- being the most particular one) have experienced difficulties in marrying their functions as civil society organizations with their status as public institutions (Bora, 2001: 283).

Parallel institutionalization and polarization across the society:

Another essential determinant of the role the public is likely to play in conflict management and democratic consolidation relates to the nature of relations between different groups within the society. All the more significant is the fact that the Kurdish issue has surfaced as a major factor aggravating polarization between various groups. Respect for the plurality of standpoints has to be located at the basis of the contribution expected of civil society. Tolerance for the advocacy of divergent interests is essential to coexistence. Anomic relations between different groups are likely to pose major problems with respect to prospects for democratic consolidation under conditions of conflict. As the parallel institutionalization of those with grievances does not present a threat on its own, the convergence of various organizations around broadly shared objectives or their cooperation in widely encompassing efforts is likely to reduce polarization. When there are efforts by the existing organizations or groups to exclusively associate themselves with, appeal to and mobilize different sections of the population, polarization is more likely to become enduring. Such exclusive formulations and the resultant polarization indeed located various organizations at different ends of the political spectrum in the case of Turkey. Pointing at the fragmented nature of civil society in Turkey, Kalaycıoğlu stresses that "(a) plentitude of voluntary associations emerges with low participation

and a proclivity for viewing the rest of the society as untrustworthy, and intolerable" and displays no "eagerness to engage with other voluntary associations, deliberate issues with them or co-operate and co-ordinate their activities to promote their goals" (2002(a): 257). A natural consequence for some organizations is that they perceive the state as an ally to be mobilized against their competitors (Kalaycıoğlu, 2002(a): 258).

A significant example of such a confrontational understanding of relations may be presented. Certain political parties attempted to integrate the concerns of the associations of the relatives of the servicemen who lost their lives in the conflict into their discourse. Houston analyzes how the RP's youth branch, the National Youth Foundation (Milli Gençlik Vakfı), organized activities for the families of soldiers killed in the fight against the PKK and made this concern an integral part of its discourse (Houston, 2001: 148). The MHP's and the then RP's identification with the families of the servicemen or the perception of the İHD as the guardian of the 'terrorists' and the DEP as the 'terrorists in the TGNA' have all been signs of a growing polarization. Tosun indeed recalls how the campaign to expel the DEP members from the TGNA developed as a civil initiative (2001: 149). On the other hand, it was upon long debates within the İHD on whether it should stand as a reserved observer in the cases under scrutiny or uphold a more interventionist attitude in actively supporting the victims that the latter strategy was adopted (Plagemann, 2001: 368). This method of active involvement also contributed to the perception of the association by other societal organizations as siding with one of the parties to the conflict. For many, the association was selective in its attention to the issues and complaints. Occasional condemnation by the association of PKK activities targeting the teachers, journalists, passengers, or soldiers relieved of duty did not

help to cast out that image either. Polarization has also been reflected across different echelons of the society. For instance, Belge emphasizes how Kurdish intelligentsia has recently become more embedded in Kurdish nationalism and opted out to side with the 'nation' (1996: 57).

Ideological differences are also reflected in the way the civil society organizations are built. Many of these organizations are qualified as nationalist, secular, religious, Kemalist (33), Sunni Islamist, Alevi (34), Turkish, Kurdish or sectarian. These splits are encountered in the organization not only of the groups established for solidarity and assistance among particular communities but also of functional groups. It is argued that occupational interests as well as politics based on class and left-wing versus right-wing conceptions of nationalism resulted in interesting ideological stances in occupational associations (Seufert, 2001: 37). Commenting on their evolution since the 1970s, Bora identified the TBB, Union of Chambers of Engineers and Architects of Turkey (TMMOB), TTB, Union of Turkish Pharmacists (TEB), and Union of Turkish Veterinarians (TVHB) as having assumed a major role in the spread of leftist ideology and the TOBB, TESK, and TZOB as having engaged in clientelist relations with the right-wing political parties and governments (2001: 267 and 269). Some of the organizations identified with left-wing political activity by Bora have indeed formed a platform in the 1990s which led him to conclude that they have become the center of extra-parliamentary leftist opposition as they pointed at the danger of a drift towards chauvinism particularly in relation to the Kurdish question (2001: 279 and 293). (35) Organizations perceived as the promoters of left-wing ideology have been vocal in opposing the state discourse on the Kurdish issue and advocating democratic settlement of the conflict whereas those associated with right-wing political activity have mainly extended

support to state policies. In fact, the latter's active involvement in protests against Italy during the Öcalan crisis was remarkable.

Political and ideological differences also divided employers' associations. (36) The TOBB explicitly accused TÜSİAD of not displaying sensitivity towards national issues and acting along its own narrow interests (Bora, 2001: 290). On the other hand, with a membership profile completely distinct from that of TÜSİAD due to the dominance of members from conservative and rural background, the MÜSİAD references to patriotism mainly in relation to investment in less developed parts of the country and their insistence on the centrality of economic and developmental policies in the settlement of the conflict in the east display an attitude markedly different from that upheld by TÜSİAD (Vorhoff, 2001: 326 and 333). Furthermore, Öniş and Türem contrast the "comparatively liberal attitude toward the Kurdish issue and the question of minority rights and the tougher stance taken in support of secularism against the Islamist opposition" by TÜSİAD and point at how the organization declined from opposing state repression against MÜSİAD in late 1990s (2002: 449).

Other spheres of organized group activity also witness polarization along ideological lines and different identities. Of the two most vocal human rights associations, the İHD has originally been formed to declare solidarity with the left-wing political prisoners whereas Mazlum-Der has mainly focused on the problems experienced by the 'Islamist' groups. In fact, the constituent president of Mazlum-Der explicitly stated that the İHD practically dealt solely with violations of human rights affecting the left (Plagemann, 2001: 379). Furthermore, identifying the secularist-Alevi population as constituting the social base of the İHD with the participation of a high number of Alevi activists, Plagemann points at how contacts

with as well as applications by Islamist-Sunni victims and organizations have been relatively minimal (2001: 390). Various organizations also criticize each other's relations with the state. As a member of the İHD, Üsterci regards some civil society organizations as having assigned greater priority to dictating the state's demands on the society, legitimizing state actions, and protecting the state from sections of the society (2001: 407).

Nevertheless, channels may open up for the reduction of political and ideological polarization among the civil society organizations. Yerasimos contends that convergence between those favoring modernization by allying themselves with the state and the conservative circles who advocate democratization with a reduced role for the state around a common objective such as membership in the EU is possible (2001: 20). Various organizations are indeed considered to be incrementally dropping their particularistic positions. Plagemann points out that gradually upholding universally valid notions of human rights, Mazlum-Der increasingly began cooperating with what it once regarded as hostile organizations and expanded its scope of activity rather than focusing exclusively on matters of utmost concern to 'Islamists' (2001: 382-383). Yet, it seems highly unlikely that polarization between the variety of civil society organizations is to disappear in the short-term considering the fact that deep ideological cleavages characterize their stances on the nature of relations between the state and society as well as the basic principles of the organization of the state and the political system. Furthermore, communal groups promoting solidarity around a defined identity also seem to be resilient.

Considering the fact that Kurdish political activity is carried out through parallel institutionalization of some societal organizations, it should not be surprising to detect that similar symptoms with regard to societal participation are also

discernible across these organizations. Indeed, some authors claim that a parallel Kurdish nationalist network of civil society organizations is nonexistent. Kramer for instance draws a contrast with a parallel society of Islamic institutions encompassing religious orders and communities, Mazlum-Der, MÜSİAD and a network of religious foundations (2000: 22). Yet, it is essential to note that despite the legal restrictions they encounter, Kurdish organizations persistently resurface after periods of disruption of their activities. The proliferation of cultural and student organizations and unions in the 1960s and 1970s was the major channel through which Kurdish claims were initially waged. McDowall perceives the mass meetings and demonstrations organized by the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DİSK), TİP and Dev Genç in 1967 as 'the first real defiance of the state since 1938' and 'the first mass urban Kurdish challenge to the republic' by the modestly educated students and young professionals (2000: 408). Yavuz in turn identifies the DDKO as "the first organizational attempt to raise the consciousness of the Kurdish population by stressing the uneven economic development within regions of the country" and by organizing regular teach-ins (2001: 10). The DDKO indeed combined references to 'class' with a nationalist emphasis. Radical Marxist groups also supported these meetings. Prominent figures such as Musa Anter, Sait Elçi, İsmail Beşikçi or Tarık Ziya Ekinci were involved in DDKO activities and were later imprisoned. Even today, these personalities are respected by different Kurdish groups as having tremendously contributed to the Kurdish cause. It has to be added that an active press focusing almost exclusively on the problems of the east was also burgeoning by the late 1950s. First Kurdish publications titled as Yeni Akis (New Echo) and Dicle Fırat (Tigris Euphrates) appeared in 1960s.

A variety of organizations claiming to represent Kurdish nationalist concerns also surfaced in the 1990s. Barkey and Fuller indeed stress that "Kurdish political activism is reflected in the workings of human rights organizations, cultural associations, political parties, self-help organizations, local administrations, and movements of different political strifes, ranging from the traditional Left to Islamic movements" (1998: 17). Chief among these emerging actors was a nationalist Kurdish press that actually extended support to the PKK's campaign. In spite of the closures of İkibine Doğru (Towards 2000), Gündem (Agenda), Özgür Gündem, Özgür Ülke (Free Country), and Yeni Politika (New Policy) from 1992 on, these publications mobilized public opinion in the troubled regions. Furthermore, they have insistently managed to stage a comeback. Easy access to such publications is currently enabled via the internet. Roja Welat is another known newspaper. Cultural organizations aiming to teach Kurdish and raise awareness of Kurdish culture and history such as the Mesopotamian Cultural Association (Mezopotamya Kültür Derneği), Kürt-Kav or Kurdish Institute (Kürt Enstitüsü) were recently established.

A monolithic Kurdish position?:

As far as the Turkish political system is concerned, a variety of cleavages have increasingly become critical in accounting for public attitudes and voting behavior. Kalaycıoğlu points at the emergence of a heterogeneous mass who could easily be mobilized for political protest in various combinations of the left-right, secular-Islamist, Alevi/Shi'ite-Sunni, Kurdish chauvinist-Turkish chauvinist cleavages and adds that as in the post-1961 period societal cleavages in Turkey were rather cultural than economic and/or functional, political issues assumed a cultural content such as religion, education and ethnic groups (2000: 401 and 409). It is possible to argue that while these cleavages always existed, it was easier to see their

autonomous existence from each other particularly from 1990s on. Support for parties that engage in outbidding in relation to ethnic and religious differences has indeed boomed throughout the 1990s. Güneş-Ayata and Ayata argue that in the case of Turkey "religiosity and religious voting have become entrenched, often overlapping with class as well as ethnic and regional motives and identities" and add that this overlapping of cleavages is "reinforced by the reaction from the periphery against the homogenizing, standardizing, and centralizing pressures of the modern state" (2002: 138). Prior to their apparent nature and their intense impact on the party system in the 1990s, cleavages were believed to have exerted their impact through surrogate issues. McDowall particularly undelines that in the 1970s, "Left-Right ideology, ..., also constituted both a vehicle and camouflage for other contests: Turk versus Kurd, Sunni versus Alevi, Sunni versus secularist, artisan/trader class versus rural migrant and urban proletariat" (2000: 412). Furthermore, Sakallıoğlu even qualifies that the salience of Islam was conjuncture-specific as "Islam for Turkey's Kurds became 'the identity of resistance' to the regime at a specific point of time when communal Islam provided the parameters of a shared identity" (1998: 12). It seems possible to argue that rapid industrialization, urbanization, economic and social change jointly served to deepen the ideological rift as well as the cleavages underlying it. Urban politics gradually assumed greater centrality in relation to the political processes. Kalaycıoğlu underlines how difficult it became from 1970s on for the center to control political life unless it attended to the problems in large cities and how the costs of negligence of the urban concerns were aggravated due to the intensification of protest behavior (2000: 394).

Yet, increasing salience acquired by the cleavages also introduced a significant degree of diversity into the Kurdish camp. Pointing at their centrality to

Kurdish life, Yavuz defines 'aşiret' as tribal organizations which are "kinship-based, territorially oriented, and religiously shaped solidarity groups" (2001: 3). The self-defense function performed for so long by the tribes has solidified them as objects of allegiance particularly in response to the fact that tribes have actually been battling against each other. The conflict that forms the focus of the current analysis has indeed deepened the role of tribal connections with some tribes siding with the PKK and others with the state. The tribes are likely to sustain their resilience since even the PKK which radically and ideologically opposed them upon embarking on its activities aims to enlist their support. Currently, the organization believes in the existence of patriotic tribes as opposed to reactionary ones collaborating with the state and attempts not to alienate the former. The PKK also manipulates tribal blood feuds in the regions of conflict. On the contrary, tribal connections offered the most assured protection from the PKK. Barkey and Fuller identify the village guard system as 'the most important violent counterreaction to the PKK among the Kurds' (1998: 71). Tribal allegiances are hence sustained by the village guard system regardless of what the major motives in participation are, i.e. protecting the superior role of the aghas, acquiring a stable income guaranteed by the state, or staging outright rejection of an exclusive nationalism.

Aşiret divisions coupled by linguistic, religious, regional and socio-economic cleavages caused enormous diversity among the Kurdish population. It is thus possible to expect the Kurdish population speaking Kirmanji and those speaking Zaza to display different political orientations. Similarly, the Sunni, Alevi, Shi'ite, and Yezidi Kurds have different political stances, coupled with the sectarian divisions within each group. Of the two different branches of the Sunni belief, for instance, the Kurds are predominantly Şafi rather than Hanefi. Güneş-Ayata and

Ayata believe that Kurdish nationalism has wider appeal among the Şafi population whereas the Hanefi population tends to vote for religious right-wing parties such as the FP (2002: 143). Religious orders presented an additional source of division. Moreover, urban and rural Kurdish attitudes display remarkable divergence. Geographical characteristics of the region and how these kept the region's population isolated from each other also account for the divisions. Divergence of political orientations of the Kurdish population in the southeast and the east when compared to those in other parts of Turkey is also remarkable. Finally, class serves as another base for mobilization and has indeed been skillfully manipulated by the PKK in eliminating potential rivals.

Widespread violence posing the Sunni population against the Alevi population in the period between 1975 and 1980 proved particularly divisive. The latter's strict commitment to secularism and left-wing ideology made them active participants in the leftist parties and organizations. Such participation brought them increasingly in conflict with the parties on the right of the political spectrum. Pointing at the lack of separate vocal Alevi organizations for decades, Kramer stresses that "Alewite discontent with Turkey's social and political situation is restricted to either civil society or violent leftist political terrorism" with organizations such as Dev Sol or TİKKO aiming to appeal to Alevi youth (2000: 59). Pro-Alevi parties were founded in 1960s and late 1990s. Yet, the Alevi population mainly extended support to the mainstream parties. Güneş-Ayata and Ayata argue that the Alevi vote was split among the CHP, DSP, and center-right in view of different perceptions over who might be the bulwark against the political ascendancy of the Islamist parties and qualify that due to social class differentiation and residential separation that peaked with early migration to the cities, "the Alevi

community can no longer be regarded as a cohesive voting bloc as had been the case in the past" (2002: 147 and 147-148). This cleavage became all the more significant with respect to its political consequences when the RP, FP and MHP aimed to attract the Sunni vote particularly in the towns where the Alevis and the Sunnis co-exist.

The Alevi tendency to insist on the centrality of secularism and to extend support to leftist or social-democratic parties is also reflected among the Kurdish Alevi population. It is believed that "Alevi Kurds strongly supported the reforms of Mustafa Kemal and became the incubator of leftist ideology in Turkey, whereas the Sunni Kurds supported the anti-Kemalist Islamic movement of Necmettin Erbakan" (Yavuz, 2001: 4). (37) Van Bruinessen also stresses that "at no time until the present did Kurdish Alevis in significant numbers join forces with Sunni Kurds against the Kemalist regime" (1996: 4). Furthermore, the Kurdish Alevis are believed to be more supportive of the left-wing rather than Kurdish nationalist parties. Barkey and Fuller even argue that in cities of mixed Turkish-Kurdish population such as Malatya, Erzincan, Elazığ and Maraş, the "Alevi-Sunni friction can be more important than Kurdish-Turkish friction, cutting right across ethnic lines" (1998: 69). For the Kurdish nationalists, finding inroads into electoral districts predominantly populated by the Alevis proved to be a highly difficult task. It was only in the latest elections that DEHAP was able to obtain the highest percentage of the vote in Tunceli. Prior to that, Tunceli has been a stronghold for the leftist and social democratic mainstream parties. In Erzincan, on the other hand, the AKP, the MHP and the RP respectively managed to come out as the winners in the 2002, 1999 and 1995 general elections. A similar pattern reigned in Adıyaman where political Islamist parties dominated in the 1990s after a SHP win in 1991. The RP, FP, and AKP respectively won the latter three elections. The winners in Malatya were also these three parties. While the RP

and the AKP respectively obtained the highest vote in 1995 and 2002 general elections in Elazığ and Kahramanmaraş, the FP won in the former and the MHP in the latter in 1999 general elections. As far as 2002 general election results are concerned, DEHAP vote was considerably lower in the above-mentioned cities: 11.98 percent in Adıyaman, 4.18 percent in Malatya, 1.61 percent in Erzincan, 7.10 percent in Elazığ and 3.18 percent in Kahramanmaraş. The sole exception was provided by Tunceli where DEHAP vote climbed up to 32.58 percent, making Kurdish nationalists the major contender for the first time.

The extent to which the Alevi-Sunni cleavage will remain a central factor accounting for political behavior is quite controversial. Events in 1993 in Sivas and in 1995 in Gaziosmanpaşa were believed to have aggravated tensions. For some analysts, though, there is the waning influence of this cleavage as it is overshadowed by others. Houston claims that "the splitting of Alevi politics along ethnic lines-Turkish-speaking Alevis are now being wooed by the extreme nationalist and anti-communist [MHP] with claims that Alevism represents the embodiment of pure, pre-Islamic Turkishness- is an indication that the historic Sunni-Alevi antagonism is being overlaid, even undermined, by the intense politicization of Turkish and Kurdish identities" (2001: 105). (38) In fact, McDowall argues that "(p)olitical outlook dominated all other considerations, and the Alevi-Sunni distinction, for example, which remained important in Turkey was of little consequence in Europe" (2000: 457 and 458). Whether such changes in the diaspora set a precedent for Turkish politics remains to be seen. Yet, there are signs that the Alevi population is still perceived as presenting a monolithic bloc of voters. For some analysts, a degree of crafting by the state authorities was evident from the outset. Defining the 1990s as the years of Alevi revival, Van Bruinessen argues that "(b)oth the Kurdish movement

and the government courted the Alevis, and both did their utmost to prevent the other from taking inroads among them" and adds that "(t)he growing influence of the PKK among Turkey's Kurds, by the late 1980s increasingly also among Alevi Kurds, gave the authorities another incentive to allow and even stimulate the development of Alevism as an alternative 'ethnic' identity" (1996: 2 and 7). Hence, the Alevi vote became an all the more important prize for a variety of actors. There also seemed to surface the expectation that such religious differences might indeed cross-cut the ethnic cleavages. Whether ethnic solidarity among the Kurds can outweigh solidarity among the Turkish and Kurdish Alevis is of particular significance.

Ideological contentions also surfaced as major sources of division among Kurdish groups. Class and religious commitment posed the main axes. The Hizbullah formulated its own distinctly religious and nationalist stance by targeting the PKK members and sympathizers as if to display how the approach to the issue of religion might further divide the Kurdish cause. The extent to which references to Islam should be undertaken as a base for legitimacy considering the deep impact of religion on the lives of the people living in the east and the southeast had to be reckoned with by all Kurdish movements. This factor urged even the PKK to deviate from its initial position to incorporate religious references into its discourse when faced with the risk of being branded as heretics. For some analysts, on the other hand, the deep commitment to Islam and the rise of Kurdish nationalism were manifestations of the same trend. Yavuz indeed concludes that after the rebellions in the 1920s and 1930s, "politicized Sunni-Islam evolved as a surrogate Kurdish identity in Southeastern Anatolia" (2001: 8). Hence, the appeal of anti-system alternatives to the inhabitants of the region is rooted by some analysts in a deeper discontent.

The class factor also urged various Kurdish groups to confront each other. The PKK waged its initial attacks against what it regarded to be the established Kurdish groups. While occasionally manipulating traditional sources of authority in the Kurdish society for its own benefit, the PKK formulated part of its political discourse on the eradication of traditional actors in Kurdish life. Öcalan criticized alternative efforts at establishing a Kurdish nationalist party as the bourgeoisie exclusion of socialist concepts (Cemal, 2003: 225). From then on, this has indeed become the theme embraced by a variety of Kurdish movements. Güney indeed states that tribal and religious leaders of the southeast "had been alienated by the radical leftist discourse of the Kurdish parties like DEP and HADEP" (2002: 127). On the contrary, the leftist stance of various Kurdish groups has been harshly criticized by relatively conservative Kurdish actors.

Socio-economic differences among the Kurdish population also contributed to the rather sharp discourse upheld by the PKK. The PKK aims to keep the elite members of the society at a distance from the organization whereas the have nots and the poorest sections of the Kurdish society form the constituencies it identifies its struggle with (White, 2000: 155). Hence, rather than attempting to bridge the gap, the organization clearly affiliated itself with a certain section in conformity with its declared ideological commitment. The PKK has particularly appealed to the peasant population with the objective of mobilizing them against their landowners. The fact that Öcalan and the members of his organization were not from traditional elite families was presented as another justification of the organization's cause. The class conflict emphasis by the movement was indeed an attempt by Öcalan to capitalize on the existing socio-economic reality. Emancipation was promised to the downtrodden which actively stimulated a further division within the Kurdish camp. Promises by

the organization of empowering the women and making them equals with the men also served as an attraction point. In fact, the PKK's declared commitment to defend the rights of the economically disadvantaged seems to have made it more of a serious contender in certain parts of the east and the southeast than in others. The appeal of Kurdish nationalist ideas was hence affected by the level of socio-economic development. Pointing at the fact that HADEP obtained votes below its national average in cities such as Gaziantep, Urfa and Adıyaman which are located mainly in the western half of southeast Anatolia and are enjoying the benefits of the GAP as well as better economic prospects, Güneş-Ayata and Ayata conclude that the impact of socioeconomic development on voting behavior materialized through reduction of ethnonationalist sentiment and diversification of political loyalties (2002: 143).

Lack of homogeneity in linguistic terms also created tensions within the Kurdish camp. Any movement claiming to advocate Kurdish nationalism had to appeal to the symbols of a variety of groups in order to avert dividing the Kurdish cause. White warns that "(s)ince the PKK is an overwhelmingly Kurmanci-Kurdish body, its 'reinvention' of Kurdish identity as a Kurmanci-Kurdish entity creates a potential ethnic minefield for its nationalist project" (2000: 207). The presence of a considerable number of Zaza-speakers within Turkey hence surfaced as a major divide. Belge in fact underlines how Zaza-speakers issued various publications in 1990s arguing that they were a separate nation (1996: 388). (39) Hence, the PKK was urged to incorporate Zaza language and symbols into its operation. Even this approach failed to halt controversies over linguistic issues. Oran points at protests by Kirmanji speakers in Turkey upon the decision of the Institute Kurde de Paris to publish its periodical in Zaza along with Kirmanji and Sorani and the beginning of Med-TV's broadcasts in Zaza (2000:156).

The rural-urban dichotomy also affected the appeal of Kurdish nationalism. Based on the local election results of 1999, Güneş-Ayata and Ayata conclude that HADEP vote is higher in urban centers than in rural areas (2002: 140). HADEP members also confirmed that the party seemed to obtain fewer votes in the villages (Cemal, 2003: 487). Considering the fact that traditional figures of authority were more powerful in rural areas whereas the ideological discourse on the protection of the rights of the downtrodden could find more receptive ears in urban areas, a pattern of divergence in the appeal of Kurdish nationalist ideas became apparent. Barkey and Fuller indeed argue that "(i)solation and an often pastoral way of life in many areas contributed to the development of a strong clan and tribal structure that perpetuated political and regional divisions" (1998: 6). Furthermore, it is essential to note how underground activity or revolutionary organizations found it difficult to penetrate into such areas (Bulloch and Morris, 1992: 176). Yet, a recent trend seems to be underway with DEHAP having staged a major increase in its votes across the east and the southeast. Recent electoral outcomes seem to reveal that the increase in the party's votes in the two regions can be accounted for by an upsurge of support in the villages and hamlets that the party was not able to reach in the previous elections rather than a boom in city centers. The extent to which Kurdish nationalist parties can further permeate into the rural areas where it proves more difficult to counter the authority of the traditional actors remains to be seen.

Migration stands as another crucial factor accounting for the emergence of a multitude of attitudes within the Kurdish camp. Kurdish political attitudes particularly outside the eastern and the southeastern regions reveal significant differences. Low-level of support for HADEP in large cities despite the presence of substantial numbers of voters of Kurdish origin is a remarkable aspect of the debate.

Perhaps the most significant factor in accounting for the political preferences of migrants in the cities is that they mostly live in shantytowns. The delivery of services to such settlements proves to be highly problematic. Hence, clientelistic networks gain all the more centrality to the way in which the needs of the population are met. Whoever offers and extends these groups the necessary organization for the provision of services is thus likely to exert an impact on their political preferences. The RP, for instance, has succeeded in doing just that at the height of its power. Hence, issues of resource allocation are likely to urge the migrants to enter into relations with a variety of groups who are not necessarily of the same ethnic background as themselves. Yet, at the same time, radicalization may also be witnessed when the migrants encounter different life-styles which enhance their attachment to their own identity. Hence, integration and radicalization seem to stand as two major possibilities. (40) While Wedel refers to her Güzeltepe research in concluding that even after 15 to 20 years the migrants were not able to integrate politically, socially or culturally to city life (2000: 191), it is quite difficult to extrapolate from this example that Kurdish nationalist parties enjoy a large pool of support among the Kurds in the cities outside eastern and southeastern regions. It rather seems to be the case that both integration and radicalization present opportunities for diversifying political preferences. Radicalization may indeed also divert political support to parties other than those promoting Kurdish nationalism.

TABLE 23:

The percentage of the total vote obtained by HADEP and DEHAP in major western cities (1995, 1999 and 2002 general elections)

Electoral Districts	General Elections		
	DEHAP (2002 general elections)	HADEP (1999 general elections)	HADEP (1995 general elections)
Mersin	9.60	8.84	7.87
Adana	9.27	7.37	6.66
Antalya	2.79	2.48	1.87
İzmir	District 1: 6.01 District 2: 4.35	District 1: 5.11 District 2: 3.59	District 1: 4.21 District 2: 3.15
İstanbul	District 1: 5.02 District 2: 4.66 District 3: 6.78	District 1: 3.70 District 2: 3.50 District 3: 4.88	District 1: 3.79 District 2: 3.33 District 3: 3.81
Ankara	District 1: 2.68 District 2: 2.14	District 1: 1.71 District 2: 1.41	District 1: 2.86 District 2: 2.17

Mersin and Adana are the two districts where Kurdish nationalist parties obtained the highest percentage of the vote as far as electoral districts outside the east and the southeast are concerned. (41) Yet, it is obvious that parties advocating Kurdish nationalism encountered problems in sustaining the allegiance of the migrant population even in these cities. Güneş-Ayata and Ayata argue that since "in large cities lifestyles are more diverse, traditional mechanisms of social control are weaker, the ethnic Kurdish communities are more stratified, and interaction with non-Kurds are more frequent both in the workplace and in public", "(f)actors such as upward social mobility, religious community affiliations, workplace networks, clientelistic ties, and the development of new identities and loyalties in the urban context tend to divide the ethnic Kurds' votes among various competing political parties" (2002: 145). Such integration makes it more difficult to identify a monolithic 'Kurdish' position. Radicalization of popular attitudes may become another

possibility. Yet, while migration may result in the radicalization of political stances, it is not necessarily the case that these attitudes find expression solely in extending support to Kurdish nationalist movements. Other potential objects of political allegiance emerge. Islamist parties, for instance, may aggravate radicalization with their advocacy of a different order.

The motives behind migration also seem to offer an explanation for political preferences. Whether search for better economic opportunities or escape from the conflict has motivated the move to urban areas becomes a major determinant of political behavior. Focusing on the Kurds living outside the east and the southeast, Robins detects unevenness in degrees of integration across different cities and different time periods in stating that "(f)or those who moved to İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara and other cities before the 1960s, assimilation was rapid; for those who arrived after the 1960s, but before 1989, migration is likely to have been a deliberate act based on a desire to secure a higher standard of living, but with no such large-scale migrations hindering assimilation" whereas "(t)hose who left the east and southeast after 1989, when the insurgency and the brutal response of the state and its allies intensified, are more likely to have been obliged to leave due to village destruction, intimidation, and the loss of traditional economic roles; they also are more likely to have been politicized as a result of their experience of tension and conflict, and they are still relatively unassimilated" (2000: 64-65).

The gradual loss of pluralism:

Hence, electoral preferences are valuable in revealing the lack of a monolithic commitment to Kurdish nationalism. An analysis of HADEP's performance may indeed be taken as a reliable indicator of support extended to a specific understanding of Kurdish nationalism. HADEP was able to obtain 4.2 percent of the

vote in 1995 general elections, with a high level of support in many eastern and southeastern electoral districts as opposed to a poor performance in the districts in other regions of the country. HADEP increased its votes to 4.7 percent in 1999 general elections. A more impressive performance was staged in 2002 general elections when DEHAP came out as the sixth party with 6.16 percent of the total vote. Since the party's first participation in general elections in 1995, HADEP has managed to significantly increase its votes in many districts. Iğdır, Diyarbakır, Batman, Van and Hakkari emerged as major strongholds for both HADEP and DEHAP with these parties winning every general election since 1995. In Kars, Ağrı, Şırnak, Mardin, and Muş, a shift to the party was evident from 1999 general elections on. Finally, it was in 2002 general elections that HADEP was able to win in Bitlis and Tunceli for the first time under the banner of DEHAP. While the party did not contest in March 2003 elections in Siirt, party officials claim that the 61 percent turnout rate testifies to the strength of DEHAP due to its call for abstention. Yet, the party's performance in the other eastern and southeastern electoral districts has been less impressive. In Şanlıurfa and Bingöl, the party obtained second place only in the most recent elections. In Erzurum, Kahramanmaraş, Erzincan, Elazığ, Ardahan, Adıyaman, Malatya, Kilis and Gaziantep, on the other hand, the party's performance has been even less remarkable. In Kahramanmaraş, Erzincan, Malatya and Kilis, the party obtained a percentage of the vote that was below its national average. It is hence essential to consider the fact that political preferences differ across the two regions. Çarkoğlu and Avcı indeed conduct a factor analysis as a result of which they place Tunceli in a separate cluster indicating that marginal parties have traditionally been powerful there and locate ten provinces of the east and the southeast in another cluster which comprises south of Ağrı, Bingöl, and Muş as well as the west of

Adıyaman and Şanlıurfa by stressing that pro-Kurdish and personalistic right-wing parties are highly supported there (2002: 130). Yet, a particularly significant point seems to be that competing under the banner of DEHAP, HADEP obtained its highest ever vote across the east and the southeast in 2002 general elections, except for in Hakkari where a slight decline is evidenced despite the party's still outstanding performance. Furthermore, party officials insist that intimidation and disenfranchizement due to displacements lower the party's votes.

It is indeed essential to emphasize that lack of monolithism does not necessarily ensure greater pluralism. It has to be acknowledged that the problems plaguing Kurdish efforts at fostering alternative organizations had the most drastic impact of stifling opposition to the PKK and reducing prospects for pluralism. As was analyzed in the previous parts, physical extermination of alternative Kurdish organizations was affected. It hence needs to be stressed that preserving an autonomous existence from the PKK remains to be the main challenge confronting various Kurdish actors. Current efforts at reflecting greater respect for pluralism by the KADEK leadership may indeed be strategic moves to allow for coexistence only with the organizations that KADEK can tolerate. The fact that this show of tolerance came about following a focus on political activity in Europe is tremendously important.

TABLE 24:

The percentage of the total vote obtained by HADEP and DEHAP in the eastern and

southeastern provinces (1995, 1999 and 2002 general elections)

General Elections

Electoral Districts	HADEP (1995 general elections)	HADEP (1999 general elections)	DEHAP (2002 general elections)
Diyarbakır	46.3	45.9	56.1
Erzurum	6.1	5.9	9.8
Kars	6.8	17.5	19.5
Kahramanmaraş	2.7	1.7	3.1
Iğdır	21.7	29.7	32.4
Bitlis	10.0	13.7	29.5
Erzincan	1.2	1.0	1.6
Elazığ	3.9	4.9	7.1
Bingöl	7.1	12.8	22.1
Batman	37.2	43.4	47.1
Ardahan	6.5	7.8	15.8
Ağrı	17.9	33.7	35.1
Adıyaman	9.5	7.5	11.9
Van	28.0	35.7	41.0
Şırnak	25.9	24.0	45.9
Tunceli	16.9	13.3	32.5
Şanlıurfa	13.7	16.5	19.3
Mardin	21.9	25.2	39.6
Malatya	2.9	2.3	4.1
Kilis	0.9	0.8	2.2
Siirt	26.6	22.1	-
Muş	16.7	31.8	38.0
Hakkari	54.2	46.0	45.1
Gaziantep	6.7	5.4	8.0

<u>Public perception of enduring violence:</u>

As far as the Turkish case is concerned, organized popular condemnation of violence failed to reach the levels witnessed in the Spanish context. Barkey qualifies that "(i)f the political toll from the Kurdish revolt has yet to assume regime-threatening proportions, it is because most of the hostilities have been confined to the eastern and south-eastern areas of the country, leaving the more prosperous western areas relatively undisturbed" (1993: 57). Regular and conventional coverage of the casualties by the media and the press seemed to have fostered a sense of getting used to living with the conflict among the people not directly affected by it. Still, complete isolation from the disruption caused by the conflict was far from being the case. Migration to city centers in the troubled regions or to major cities across Turkey as well as PKK attacks in the cities in western parts of the country enlarged the scope of the problem as every region became embroiled in the heightening tensions.

A popular reaction was believed to be growing in response. It is essential to note that "(t)here has been a resurgence in Kemalist secular nationalism in reaction both to Kurdish nationalism and to the rise of Islamic forces and parties" (Barkey and Fuller, 1998: 117). Increasing appeal of particularist Turkish nationalism as a reaction to Kurdish nationalist resurgence gradually became more discernible. Aggravation of violence indeed stands as a central factor in accounting for public endorsement of a more reserved attitude towards the Kurdish grievances and failure to press for political and cultural initiatives. Kalaycıoğlu points at the emergence of a highly visible increase in chauvinism and xenophobia by underlining that "(t)he upsurge of ethnic nationalism in the Balkans and the Caucasus, and the PKK's increasing activities in Turkey (with backing from neighboring countries and Cold War allies of Turkey) further contributed to an overall cultural divide between those

who identify themselves as Kurds and others in Turkey" (1997: 7). Hence, short of a victory, resort to violence seems to serve the contrary purpose of hardening the positions of other societal actors.

On the other hand, the extent to which the Kurdish population in Turkey identifies with or supports the PKK seems rather difficult to determine. The complex nature of the problem is further aggravated considering the fact that public support for the PKK may have different sources. Intimidation inflicted by the organization or objection to state policies and practices in the region may be alternative causes for extending support to the PKK. In fact, the continuation of the conflict did not seem to make life easier for the inhabitants of the region. 'Revolutionary taxation' drained the resources of every business or household. Rejection of abidance by revolutionary taxation or by compulsory recruitment for armed struggle had costs of its own. On the contrary, association with the PKK invited trouble with the state authorities. Both the armed forces and the PKK aimed to obtain support from the villagers. Furthermore, geographical characteristics of the region and the search for security have urged the inhabitants to take sides. Separating fear and concern over security from voluntary support seems to be crucial in determining the potential course in which the conflict may evolve. Barkey and Fuller in fact stress that "the Kurds in fact have not yet had an opportunity to freely demonstrate just whom it is they do want to represent them" (1998: 181). Considering the methods the PKK resorts to such as extortion, abduction of children or seizure of property, it is difficult to draw a line between voluntarily extended support and support extended to ensure survival. Here, a pattern quite distinct from the Spanish case emerges. Survival without supporting ETA is possible in the case of Spain as the organization mainly targets local politicians, Spanish politicians, Spanish servicemen and not the masses. Furthermore,

state authority in the Basque region has never been threatened to the point of crumbling due to the rather limited nature of violence in the confined territory under contention.

Recruitment and propaganda activities for the PKK both inside Turkey and abroad were fulfilled by the ERNK. Hence, popular mobilization was mainly organized by this branch. The PKK has particularly been able to mobilize the Kurdish population in Europe. The fact that over half a million Kurds are believed to reside in Germany has been central to this process. Barkey and Fuller stress that "the fact that the diaspora communities tend to be of the working class and unintegrated in the European societies they predominantly live in further facilitates the PKK's task" (1998: 48). Self-awareness has indeed largely been fostered or reinforced on European soil. Van Bruinessen particularly underlines that "(a)mong the Turkish 'Gastarbeiter' who had migrated to western Europe since the late 1950s, there were many who 'discovered', in the course of the past few decades, that they were not Turks but Kurds", particularly following the influx of young and politicized Kurds as asylum seekers after the 1980 coup (2000 (b): 99 and 100). In fact, it seems plausible to argue that it has been the PKK's effective operation in Kurdish diaspora in Europe which fuelled the conflict in Turkey. It was particularly crucial that the PKK alone was able to mobilize the migrants and the refugees through student and worker unions, information offices and publishing ventures it assembled and through capturing a variety of community associations in Europe in the 1990s since these elected PKK sympathizers as officers (McDowall, 2000: 457). Cultural activities aimed at refining Kurdish language and culture were also carried out in Europe through Kurdish institutes founded in Paris, Brussels and Berlin particularly. (42) To testify to the organization's far-reaching impact on the Kurdish population living

across the world, it is essential to note that Öcalan's capture aroused protests across Western Europe, Russia, Iraq and Iran.

Inside Turkey, the PKK gradually intensified its efforts at mobilizing the masses. In its congress in 1990, the organization decided to stimulate popular movements even by appealing to the village guards and the individuals cooperating with the state. The way in which the funerals of Kurdish politicians, businessmen, lawyers or journalists were turned into demonstrations in support of the PKK was a prime example. Mass demonstrations particularly acquired momentum in the early 1990s. These activities mainly served to make the civilian population confront the security forces. Barkey and Fuller indeed argue that "(t)he PKK sought to provoke the state into engaging in counterinsurgency tactics that were violent and indiscriminate" with "the goal of radicalizing Kurdish attitudes, forcing the Kurds to choose sides and banking on the fact that decades of ill treatment would make the PKK the natural repository of the local population's loyalties" (1998: 28-29). A typical reflection of that intention was revealed in Nevruz in 1992. The related upsurge in violence was associated with Öcalan's calls for mass uprisings. Such instances of confrontation of the masses by the security forces served to radicalize the Kurdish opinion. The policy of village evacuations carried out by the Turkish security forces became another particularly radicalizing development as the PKK succeeded in capitalizing on the grievances of these people. Most recently, the PKK was associated with the petitions for education in Kurdish language submitted by the students. The main debate centered on whether these were organized or individual efforts. Recent calls by the PKK for *serhildan* were the latest in a chain of attempts at mobilizing the masses. As mentioned in the previous sections, KADEK launched a campaign calling for demonstrations, boycotts, lock-outs and protests for extending

support to Abdullah Öcalan. Furthermore, the campaign for general amnesty directed by DEHAP aims to draw attention at the conditions of Öcalan and other leaders of his organization. Most recently, KADEK announced a 'Campaign of Struggle for Peace and Democratic Solution' on September 20, 2003 and called for a spirit of *serhildan* to consolidate the achievements of thirty years of struggle (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, September, 23, 2003: 1).

The eruption of the conflict at a period of lack of diffuse support for democracy:

A particular difficulty in enrolling popular support for conflict management is presented by the problem of sequencing in the context of the Turkish political system. A total simultaneous transformation involving the state, nation and even culture was indeed underway from 1923 on. Yeğen draws attention to the "transformation of a non-western, de-central, a-national and non-secular social formation (the Ottoman Empire) into a western, central, national and secular one (the Turkish Republic)" to the exclusion of religion, tradition and the periphery (1999: 559 and 567). Soon added to this combination was the impulse for democratization.

It needs to be reiterated that in newly democratizing political systems, any disruption in the capacity of the system to devise solutions caused by an unfolding conflict puts public confidence in democracy at risk. Turkey provides a typical example to the fact that the eruption of conflict at the early stage of democratization where democracy is far from having built diffuse support may function as a major barrier to democratic consolidation. The initiation of the latest transition to democratic civilian rule in 1983 has indeed coincided with the launching of the PKK campaign in 1984. Violence erupted during democratic transition and at a time when poor democratic performance since the beginning of multi-party politics period left democracy devoid of the diffuse support it required for consolidation.

A related fact has been that rather than voicing organized discontent and demands, many groups have delegated the task to some established institutions. Accounts of how the military took the initiative in mobilizing civil society associations as well as the judiciary and the universities in the February 28 process are particularly striking in that respect (Heper, 2002: 139 and Tachau, 2002: 50). (43) Underlying these attitudes is the fact that the diffusion and acceptance of democratic political values among the population are still far from complete. Low levels of interpersonal trust as well as social and political tolerance have indeed been underlined (Kalaycıoğlu, 2002(b): 64-65 and Sarıbay, 2000: 453). The predominantly election-based and elite-directed nature of political participation (Kalaycıoğlu, 1998: 196) hence failed to assist conflict management at such a critical juncture.

NOTES:

(1) Kirişçi and Winrow display detailed figures on state investment and expenditure in the eastern and southeastern regions (1997: 127).

(2) Even by 1997 and in his capacity as the deputy prime minister, Ecevit stressed that the southeastern region was heading back to normality and proposed tax breaks and cheap electricity to boost investment (The Economist, October 11, 1997: 37).

(3) For a defense of how the Lausanne Treaty indeed granted linguistic rights to all citizens in article 39/4 and 39/5 by allowing for the use of any language in private discourse, commerce, religion, press, publications, public meetings and oral use before the courts, see (Oran, 2000: 153).

(4) See McDowall, 2000: 187-192.

(5) It is particularly striking that data relating to self-identification are rather scarce in the case of Turkey. The 1965 census which asked the people to identify their mother tongue produced the result that 2.2 million identified Kurdish as their mother tongue whereas it was identified as the second language by 1.2 million people. Similar officially revealed figures were not later forthcoming. Estimates and projections as to the figures on the total Kurdish population living in Turkey and its territorial distribution indeed fall within a wide range.

(6) In a very recent declaration, Osman Öcalan is quoted to have "stated that Kurds could not be limited by only a region, that the Kurdish population was widespread all over Turkey and that there were Kurds in a number of economical and social organizations" (Kurdish Observer, November, 19, 2002).

(7) Cornell questions the utility of autonomy and federalist schemes in the case of Turkey from a different perspective by arguing that in a context where inter-

communal tensions are low, "(a)ny solution that would institutionalize ethnic distinctiveness would therefore risk fueling ethnic antagonism" (2001: 8).

(8) Kirişçi and Winrow indeed claim that while the Çeto's tribe revolt (1920) and Milli tribe revolt (1920) were believed to be inspired and supported by the KTC's activities, the fact that the leader of the Koçgiri tribe was a member of that association advocating the implementation of Article 64 of the Sevres treaty testified to the limited yet factual appeal of Kurdish nationalism even then (1997: 85 and 90).

(9) The variety of demands voiced during the rebellions also testified to the complex nature of accounting for them. Among Sheik Said's demands were the creation of a Kurdish government, the proclamation of Sultan Abdülhamit's son who was not of Kurdish origins as the King of Kurdistan, and the restoration of the caliphate as his fatwa stated that "jihad is an obligation for all Muslims without distinction of confession or tariqa" (McDowall, 2000: 194 and 197).

(10) The desire of the authorities to levy taxes, recruit people into the army, and apply laws as well as regulations seemed to be central to the confrontation between the authorities and the tribes in what was then termed as Dersim area (Mango, 1994: 987).

(11) The major uprisings in the Tunceli region were listed as Nasturi uprising (1924), Raçkotan and Raman operation (1925), Sason uprisings (1925-1937), Koçuşağı uprising (1926), Mutki uprising (1927), Bicar operation (1927), Asi Resul uprising (1929), Tendürük operation (1929), Savur operation (1930), Zeylan uprising (1930), Oramar uprising (1930), and Pülümür operation (1930).

(12) Öcalan also refuses to characterize the rebellions of the 1920s and 1930s as separatist or nationalist and argues that they were a reflection of the resistance of established interests (Pirim and Örtülü, 2000: 342).

(13) Barkey concludes that "(t)he cease-fire announcement was designed to put the Turkish government on the defensive, start a new dialogue within Turkey, galvanise a new Kurdish political movement embracing all the different factions of the Kurdish political spectrum and prepare the groundwork for an intensified military campaign if the Turkish state failed to respond to the PKK's initiative" while "(t)he government, especially the army, interpreted the cease-fire as a sign of PKK's weakness and proof that the military campaign had been successful" (1993: 53-54 and 57).

(14) Throughout its existence, the PKK opted for collaboration with the marginal radical groups within Turkey. Under the banner of Revolutionary Forces Platform (DBGP), the PKK joined certain Turkish extreme leftist groups to carry out armed activities in the Black Sea Region in 1998. This effort followed the failure of its scheme of cooperation with the DHKP-C upon the latter's announcement that the PKK resorted to methods not appropriate for revolutionary relations. Öcalan also confirmed during his trial that the organization has developed relations of logistical support with Türkiye Devrim Partisi, TİKKO, DHKP-C and Devrimci Halk Partisi, particularly in the Black Sea region (Pirim and Örtülü, 2000: 114). Such cooperation secured the PKK's penetration into the urban areas.

(15) As a first sign, limited groups of PKK members have turned themselves into Turkish authorities in October 1999.

(16) In publishing the book titled as 'Din Sorununa Devrimci Yaklaşım' (Revolutionary Approach to the Problem of 'Religion') under the pseudonym Ali Fırat, Öcalan refered to Islam's potential progressive role in anti-imperialist struggles in the Middle East as evidenced by the case of PKK (Sakallıoğlu, 1998: 13-14). This presented a typical effort in the direction of greater invocation of religious themes.

(17) Gunter stresses that in a taped message at a meeting in 1994, Öcalan stated that "(t)oday our struggle resembles the first days of Islam. At the end of our fight, we could achieve a situation similar to that of the Prophet Muhammad and his four caliphs" and added that "a solution to the Kurdish problem might mean Kurdistan could become the cradle of international Islam" (1997: 37).

(18) Öcalan is quoted to have branded Barzani as a 'Turkish stooge' and Talabani as an 'agent of Iraq' (Bulloch, J. and Morris, H., 1992: 169).

(19) Pointing at the fact that the conservative camp does not constitute a monolithic bloc, Bozarslan also depicts Adnan Menderes, Turgut Özal, Aydın Menderes, Yusuf Bozkurt Özal and Cem Boyner as the leaders in that camp who "desire a Kurdish representation qua Kurdish" (1996: 143).

(20) It might also be argued that the party's steps to move to the center were incrementally evident from the 1980s on as the radical supporters of political Islam resigned to form the Grand Unity Party (BBP) (Çınar and Arıkan, 2002: 25). Among the symptoms of such a transformation could be enumerated Bahçeli's personal traits; his success in communicating with the rural electorate; his policy of renewal as if to cast the image of militancy apart; his pursuit of harmony rather than a confrontational approach in the conduct of affairs at the state level; his constant emphasis on shunning away from destabilizing the political system despite the party's difficult position on issues of Islam and politics, the fate of Öcalan, privatization and leadership of the coalition government; the erosion of support for the center-right parties; and the party's emphasis on an Anatolian version of Islam blending nationalist and religious elements together.

(21) Article 81 of the 1983 act on political parties outlaws the affirmation by parties that there exist minorities in Turkey based on national, cultural, religious, sectarian,

racial and linguistic differences; and prohibits the parties from protecting languages or cultures other than Turkish or from using languages other than Turkish in any of their activities.

(22) Robins for instance argues that one could prosper within the Turkish state only by suppressing his/her Kurdish identity (1993: 661). Yet, for Kirişçi and Winrow, allegiance to multiple identities was rather the route preferred by various Kurdish politicians (1997: 125).

(23) Outbidding and clientelism have not been confined to approaches to the Kurdish issue as they also characterized the policies of the mainstream parties towards other groups within the population. The commitment by Çiller to the President of Cem Foundation just prior to the 1995 elections that she would do her best to allocate 80000 DM out of the 1996 budget or the contention between the SHP and the DSP over the rights to be granted to the Alevi population (Schüler, 2001: 146 and 149) surfaced as examples of attempts at mobilizing the existing blocks of vote.

(24) In return, redistribution of land was attempted following the 1960 coup by the expulsion of 55 aghas from the region. Yet, McDowall claims that "the aghas resorted to delaying tactics and enlisted the help of their political friends to soften the terms of exile and expropriation" which culminated in their return to their lands with full authority with the formation of civilian government in 1961 (2000: 400).

(25) Turan claims that the legacy of political culture of the single-party period continued to affect governmental behaviour as was reflected in the governments' belief that political power could be used without restrictions, opposition could only function within the confines determined by the governing actors, state resources were completely available to the governing actors and lack of tolerance for the opposition within the party ensured harmony (2000: 372). Turan also links periodic troubles in

Turkish democracy to conscious policies pursued by the political parties and their members based on the conviction that failure to win elections would impose unbearable costs (2000: 384).

(26) Gürbey warns that the emphasis placed on 'federation' by the PSK has been followed by the citation of cases such as Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, the USA, Russian Federation and finally the Cyprus settlement in the 1960s with its bi-zonal and bi-national emphasis (2000: 84).

(27) Leaders of relatively moderate Kurdish organizations have been subject to legal prosecution. Elçi presented a typical example in being sentenced to two years and three months for making Kurdish and secessionist propoganda.

(28) Özbudun employs the term 'cartel party' to denote a situation where the parties become so dependent on state subsidies and assistance that they act as agents of the state (2000: 87). Özbudun also argues that "(t)he prevalence of vertical clientelistic networks and machine-type politics helps to explain the failure of political parties to develop organizations based on horizontal loyalties, such as common class or group interests", with the parties choosing to shift from one potential base of electoral support to another (2000: 82 and 83).

(29) In his analysis of civil society in Turkey, Yerasimos argues that instead of locating the individual at the center, substitute communities have been fostered in the form of nationalism and secularism as the project of modernization assumed greater importance than democratization (2001: 18).

(30) Kalaycıoğlu states that "(a)bout half of the voluntary associations in Turkey are co-operatives and unions, about 12 per cent are religious associations, (the majority of which are associations for mosque construction), about 13 per cent are regional

and local solidarity associations, approximately 12 per cent are educational, and 9 per cent are sports associations" (2002(a): 254).

(31) Gerger goes further in criticizing trade unions, Alevis, educated and 'Westernized' sections of Turkish women for being integrated into the existing system; big business for engaging solely in cosmetic reforms directed at foreign audiences; the Turkish left for their commitment to the Kemalist model; and political Islamists for their nationalistic fervour (1997: 9).

(32) The İHD provides a detailed list of the assaults targeting it, the branches closed as a result of the legal process, and the cases brought against it in its first fifteen years of activity (http://www.ihd.org.tr/ihd/15yil6.html).

(33) Declaring their commitment to secularism, modernism and nationalism, Kemalist civil society organizations clearly formulated their existence in opposition to the groups they regarded as political Islamists, separatists, or anti-secularists. Erdoğan points at a polarization between Kemalists and Islamists on the one hand and Kemalists and those supporting the idea of a Second Republic on the other hand, and adds that with their members and offices being physically targeted, these organizations also wage the criticism that the state apparatus has been invaded by 'counterrevolutionaries' (2001: 245 and 249).

(34) The proliferation of Alevi foundations, associations and publications in the 1990s has been particularly remarkable. Schüler presents a detailed account of the demands voiced through joint declarations by a variety of Alevi actors from 1989 on (2001: 142-148). In the business realm, Vorhoff identifies the Republican Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (CUSİAD) as an organization promoting Alevi solidarity around commitment to Kemalism and Republicanism particularly vis-à-vis the rise of MÜSİAD (2001: 344-345).

(35) Consensus particularly on the developments in the southeast has not been complete in either camp and even within the specific organizations. The TBB and Diyarbakır bar have occasionally experienced problems in their relations with the latter complaining that it has been deserted in its efforts. The TOBB report of 1995 which represented a significant divergence from the established policies of the organization also proved highly controversial within that organization. Some actors within the organization condemned the findings in the report whereas total endorsement of the report by the TOBB never materialized (Bora, 2001: 286-287).

(36) Vorhoff points at the emergence of various business organizations representing different political standpoints. In addition to the divergence of positions held by TÜSİAD, Autonomous Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD), and CUSİAD, other organizations of differing ideological and political emphasis have been formed. The Nationalist Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MİSİAD) which has been identified closely with the MHP, National Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (USİAD) which has been upholding a left-wing nationalist discourse, and regional associations of industrialists and businessmen have also articulated their political positions despite the attempts by TÜSİAD to unite them within a loose confederation around the ideals of secularism, democracy, human rights and modernism (Vorhoff, 2001: 347 and 348).

(37) Estimates of the percentage of Kurdish Alevis in the total population are various. Nigogosian believes that of the estimated 20 million Alevis, 3 to 4 million are Kurdish (1996: 44). Olson and Bozdağlıoğlu, on the other hand, claim that "15 to 20 percent of the Kurdish population of 10 to 12 million is Alevi" (1996: 167). Barkey and Fuller present a higher figure in arguing that "nearly 30 percent of Turkey's Kurds are Alevi" (1998: 67). While Tunceli, Elazığ, Varto and Muş are

believed to be predominantly inhabited by the Kurdish Alevi population, both Kurdish and Turkish-speaking Alevis are major components of the population in Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Erzurum and Erzincan (Schüler, 2001: 173). Kurdish Alevis are also estimated to form a remarkable minority group in Bingöl (Schüler, 2001: 173).

(38) In analyzing the results of her field research in 1993/94 in Güzeltepe in İstanbul, Wedel concludes that while leftist Alevi identity dominated the self-assertion of people living there in the 1970s, the dominant identity assumed an ethnic, i.e. Kurdish, emphasis in the 1980s (2000: 188). Wedel perceives the breakdown of the Turkish left and the growing influence of the PKK in these people's region of origin as factors central to this shift (Wedel, 2000: 188).

(39) Cornell states that it is in Tunceli and Bingöl that most Kurds are both Zaza-speaking and Alevi whereas the majority of the Kurdish population in Turkey is Kırmanji and Sunni (Cornell, 2001: 3).

(40) In exploring the potential for integration, Wedel points at how "(u)sing high figures of Kurds in the West, Turkish media, politicians and researchers argue that the so-called Kurdish problem would fade away in the melting pot of the metropolises as a consequence of migration and intermarriage" (2000: 181).

(41) Güneş-Ayata and Ayata claim that nearly a third of the population in Adana, Mersin and Antalya are of Kurdish origin (2002: 144).

(42) Van Bruinessen even argues that "Kurdish institutes, Kurdish print media and Kurdish language courses that operate in western Europe, largely impervious to control by the Turkish state, have provided the Kurdish movement with instruments of a nation building comparable to those traditionally employed by states" (2000 (b): 102).

(43) Seufert indeed reveals how joint meetings have been organized and declarations have been issued by functional organizations such as Türk-İş, DİSK, Confederation of Employers' Unions of Turkey (TİSK), TOBB and TESK upon encouragement from the military (2001: 34).

Conclusion: Conditions for Democratic Consolidation under the Circumstances Posed by Ethnic Conflict

It seems possible to conclude from the analysis of the experience of democratic political systems with ethnic conflict that such conflicts delimit the prospects for democratic consolidation in various ways. Such an impact on democratic consolidation seems to be inevitable regardless of the multiple meanings of the term. Democratic consolidation as denoting political institutionalization is seriously hampered in democracies experiencing ethnic conflict basically due to lingering demands for the revision of the institutional structure and the rules of the game particularly by those with grievances. Moreover, such conflicts lead to a continuous flux in the rules as, for instance, emergency measures need to be undertaken to cope with the conflict. When rules and institutions prove far from enduring, various actors are less likely to adopt attitudes and behavior essential to play by the rules of the democratic game. Furthermore, democratic consolidation may be understood as a stage in the evolution of a democratic political system where concerns over self-preservation are minimized. On the other hand, ethnic conflict and the demands for revision attached to it aggravate such concerns which in turn confine the room for political discussions. The conflict is hence likely to bolster the emphasis by a variety of actors on the preservation of the existing system and open the channels for influence for actors who may have a claim to sharing power with the elected authorities.

Endorsement of democracy by the political elite as the sole game in town may also be complicated under conditions of conflict. Those claiming to represent the grievances will be likely to assume an anti-system discourse by challenging the established rules and institutional structure while the rest of the actors may be

expected to openly compete with each other in confronting the former set of actors. Convergence around democratic norms and other principles by the variety of political parties as well as their leaders may hence become difficult to attain.

The internalization of democratic rules by the public is also complicated under conditions of conflict. Keeping the appeal of anti-system discourses at a minimal level in spite of the powerful opportunities for mobilization presented by identity claims remains a serious task. The public may be expected to assume a central role in pressurizing the anti-system alternatives to comply with the channels provided by the existing framework. Yet, the conditions created by the conflict are likely to prove polarizing with various groups articulating their positions at the expense of others. Furthermore, relations between the groups expressing grievances and the state may assume a confrontational nature.

The conflict also poses the risk of hampering the effectiveness of the state through confronting it with an increasing number of challenges, with the most explosive one relating to security. Provision of rule of law and rule enforcement may become more difficult under conditions posed by the conflict. Failure to address the emerging problems may pose a major constraint on state effectiveness which is an essential component of the definition of democratic consolidation. Furthermore, considering the fact that "political actors' support of democratic procedures may be contingent on the solution of substantial problems" (Plasser, Ulram and Waldrauch, 1998: 17), intractable ethnic conflict may be perceived by the public as an indicator of the failure of democratic political systems in devising solutions. Democratic political systems that have failed to build up diffuse support are indeed most likely to face major difficulties.

It is essential to note that of all these potential difficulties created by ethnic conflict, none is exhaustive. The confinement of the impact of each is possible. Institutional certainty may be established through broadly shared understandings among the political elite and the political parties. Enrolling active public support for conflict management may bolster state effectiveness by ensuring mutual empowerment and synergy. Effective addressing of the problems is in turn likely to secure the internalization of democratic rules by the public. Finally, giving every political actor the prospect of a share of power may convince them that democracy is the only game in town. Violence is hence likely to be sidelined as a channel for the articulation of grievances.

Political systems which manage to consolidate their democracies in spite of an ongoing conflict are indeed the ones which tackle the tasks outlined above. In fact, conflicts examined in the context of this study stand as major factors in accounting for democratic decay in the case of Sri Lanka as well as democratic breakdown in the Nigerian case. Yet, despite the voicing of similar grievances by a variety of groups, democratic consolidation has materialized in the case of Canada and Spain. A central qualification is that a considerable degree of uncertainty still permeates the Spanish and Canadian political systems with the articulation of demands for revision by an increasing number of actors. Hence, while various initiatives fell short of completely halting the inflating demands in these two cases, democratic mechanisms still managed to become institutionalized and widely embraced. In the case of Turkey, on the other hand, the conflict stands as a major barrier to democratic consolidation. Thus, a number of cases including the Turkish one display that low quality or intensity democracies may co-exist with an ongoing conflict. Considering the operation of democratic mechanisms under the constraints imposed by the conflict as

an achievement, low quality/intensity democracies may be encouraged as preludes to consolidated democracies. When shifts in popular and political party behavior accompany conflict management efforts, democratic quality is likely to be enhanced.

It is essential to note that even significant steps towards instituting conflict management initiatives may fall short of bringing about democratic consolidation. Regardless of whether they have succeeded in the drawing up of the essential initiatives for conflict management or not, the common experiences of the cases analyzed in this study which have so far failed to consolidate their democratic political systems is that they suffer from the conditions mentioned below:

- as far as the party system is concerned, resort to ethnic outbidding by the mainstream parties and ethnic mobilization by the nationalist parties prevent them from converging around a set of principles,

- a degree of polarization characterizes public involvement in conflict management with highly confrontational stances in the relations of organized groups with the state and with each other,

- violence seems to have become an enduring aspect of politics, with ordinary people being threatened either through communal violence or random targeting of civilians.

Along similar lines, the political systems that have managed to consolidate their democracies under conditions of ethnic conflict seem to share certain common characteristics:

- a variety of political, socio-economic, military and cultural initiatives have been drawn up and implemented,

- mainstream political parties have been able to converge around broadly shared understandings rather than massively exploiting the 'ethnic' issues and moderate

nationalist or regionalist parties have legitimately established themselves as interlocutors in conflict management,

- the public has assumed a major role in conflict management through organized condemnation of violence and advocacy of support for the political community with a low level of polarization characterizing relations between different groups in the society as well as their relations with the state,

- the exclusion of violent alternatives from the party system and their condemnation by the public has served to confine the scope of violence.

Yet, consolidated democracies are not completely free from challenges either. Improvements in substantive conditions are indeed essential to bolstering their performance. In spite of the fact that they are relatively secure from threats of breakdown, a 'maximalist' understanding of democratic consolidation may be the ultimate destination for political systems that have managed to consolidate their democracies despite the ongoing conflict. Democratic deepening and qualitative improvements hence surface as new challenges. Thus, while the cases seem to reveal that democratic consolidation and ongoing ethnic conflict in a certain political system do not preclude each other, a delimitation effect seems to be inevitable.

Furthermore, the examination of the experiences of consolidated democracies also reveals that implementation of a variety of initiatives does not completely halt the conflict. Inflating demands waged by different groups and calls by various groups for the granting of symmetrical rights may be expected to follow. As far as the Spanish and Canadian cases are concerned, the implementation of political, socio-economic, military and cultural initiatives has not completely met the demands they were intended to address and has rather stimulated similar demands from other groups. In both of these cases, the institution of different tracks of rights for different

communities has proved particularly controversial. Increasingly vocal advocacy of rights by groups that have until then been satisfied with their status in the system has become an integral part of the political agenda. While the central conflicts seem to have been relatively successfully managed, other sources of contention involving various groups have surfaced. The intractable nature of the conflicts is thus evident. In the case of Spain, the controversy over regional governance, the rising nationalist demands across regions and Aznar's deteriorating relations with moderate regionalist parties signal that the conflict is likely to be enduring. Following the Liberal victory over the PQ in April 2003 elections in Quebec which has been regarded as the defeat of secessionism by federalism, the Quebec Liberal Party leader Charest made a commitment to a more decentralized federal system. Hence, significant developments are likely to follow in the Canadian context. The intractable nature of ethnic conflict is all the more apparent in political systems experiencing problems in democratic consolidation. Inter-communal ethnic violence continued during April 2003 elections and afterwards in Nigeria. Similarly, inter-communal tensions and ethnic outbidding prove to be resilient in Sri Lanka even during the fragile ceasefire. Under such circumstances, management of the conflict through the confinement of its scope and impact poses a more reasonable expectation than its resolution.

Still, it could be concluded that the combination of a number of factors enhances prospects for democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict:

- a political system capable of drawing up and implementing diverse initiatives through an integrated strategy of conflict management,

- a party system where there is an agreement on certain essential principles among the parties which limits the resort to ethnic outbidding and where a degree of pluralism in every camp provides opportunities for moderate discourses,

- active public involvement in conflict management characterized by synergy rather than polarization between the variety of groups and in their relations with the state,

- a drop in violence which may be expected to enhance the likelihood of bolder initiatives which in turn clears the way for a convincing case that violence does not necessarily stand as the main channel for the expression of grievances.

It hence becomes possible to conclude from what the cases reveal that democratic consolidation under conditions of ethnic conflict is a challenge that requires collective action. Defections prove rather problematic. The greatest risk seems to exist when the political parties and the public engage in free-riding such as when they refuse to take an active role in the incorporation of those with grievances into the system or when they themselves engage in non-democratic practices. Hence, political party and public support for the initiatives and for the isolation of violent actors within the system surfaces as the major component of the required collective action.

As far as the political parties are concerned, attitudes and behavior expected to share the costs associated with the conflict and be conducive to democratic consolidation may be enumerated as follows: achieving organizational strength in the troubled regions; performing continuous and effective party activity in the regions of conflict; displaying responsiveness to the demands of the public in candidate selection; institutionalizing decentralization of power within the party and a degree of autonomy for local party branches; attaining a nonpartisan consensus among the existing parties on some broadly shared principles; securing contributions by mainstream parties to the integration of sectional parties into the existing system; ensuring efforts by sectional parties to diversify their base of support and policy discourse; providing channels for the emergence of moderate regional, nationalist or

provincial organizations which could be regarded as legitimate interlocutors by an increasing number of systemic actors; and keeping the parties advocating sectional interests engaged in the periodic political contest.

Public contribution to conflict management and democratic consolidation may also be expected to materialize in line with a set of attitudes and behavior. State-society synergy rather than enmity, mutual respect between different groups advocating a variety of interests, multiple channels for the delivery of services, widespread public awareness of and participation in organized representation of interests, cross-cutting cleavages as well as pluralism and moderation across all camps, enhanced understanding between groups voicing various grievances through common efforts, popular attachment to political community rather than intense polarization along parallel institutions, diffuse support for democracy, and organized calls by the society for an end to violence are essential for the public to share the costs associated with the conflict and to act in a manner conducive to democratic consolidation.

It has to be acknowledged that conflict management and democratic consolidation are both long-term endeavors. Instituting initiatives is obviously the central step in conflict management. While some of these initiatives may be expected to bring about quick results, others may reveal their effect in the longer term. The halting of violence may be expected to exert a rather swift impact particularly if violence is under the monopoly of a single organization. Furthermore, the drawing up as well as the implementation of initiatives and the halting of violence jointly display political will and determination to contribute to conflict management. On the other hand, contributions by the parties and the public may be classified as relatively long-term efforts basically because they involve an attitudinal shift by a number of

actors. It is particularly crucial that democratic "(c)onsolidation thus denotes the continuous marginalization or elimination of behavior patterns or attitudes incompatible with the base line of democracy and stabilizing of those in harmony with it" (Plasser, Ulram and Waldrauch, 1998: 8). (1) A change of mindset and perception among the political party actors or the public is more likely to spread across a wider time range. Shifts in political elite attitudes and discourse, party organization and objectives, public allegiance to the political community, and perceptions by a variety of groups of the state and of the other groups materialize over an extended period of time. Indeed, where the degree of polarization is extreme, practical outcomes of the initiatives and the halting of violence are indeed likely to make the major contribution to altering the attitudes and behavior.

Furthermore, this study also reaches the conclusion that adopting a uniform model of conflict management in line with which democratic consolidation will proceed does not seem to be plausible. Initiatives are indeed context-dependent with a variety of factors ranging from the group size to the nature of cleavages making a difference with respect to their final impact. In fact, no set of models stand that can uniformly be employed in every political system to produce the same effect. Rather, contextual circumstances surface as the chief determinants. The value of this type of a comparative analysis seems to be rather heuristic with the experiences of other political systems solely offering a pool of institutional as well as attitudinal and behavioral choices for a variety of political actors ranging from the elite to the popular level. The uniquely systemic variables then need to be attended to as there is no 'Spanish', 'Canadian', 'Nigerian' or 'Sri Lankan' model to be adopted. The cases only serve to reveal under what set of circumstances the choice of certain initiatives, attitudes or behavior is likely to produce the intended outcomes.

<u>Ethnic Conflict as a Major Impediment to Democratic Consolidation in the Case of</u>

<u>Turkey:</u>

It can indeed be stated that the conflict has evolved into a major barrier on Turkey's road to take the significant steps towards democratic consolidation in a variety of ways. When democratic consolidation is taken to denote commitment to play by the rules of the game, it is essential to stress that an increasing number of actors on the Turkish political scene have recently begun boosting their systemic credentials. This is mostly reflected in the discourse adopted by political parties. Hence, to the extent that democratic consolidation is perceived to denote the widespread belief that democracy stands as the only game in town, progress in that realm seems to be significant. Many actors previously identified by their anti-system stances now attempt to cast that image aside. Even the political Islamist contenders and the Kurdish nationalists currently declare their intention of abiding by the 'democratic' rules of the game and not challenging the existing boundaries of the system. The change undergone by the MHP, the emergence of the AKP which defines itself as a conservative democratic party diverging from the previous pattern of exclusive resort to religious symbols, and the commitment voiced by HADEP to territorial integrity and democratic coexistence prior to its closure are signs of an increasing willingness on the part of the parties to pose themselves as system-oriented political actors. The charges of preserving organic links to an anti-system armed organization as well as providing assistance to it brought against the HEP, the DEP, and the HADEP and the charges of transmitting misinformation on the party's organization brought against the DEHAP testify to the extent to which the systemic credentials of these actors have been under close scrutiny. The fact that DEHAP has refrained from posing itself as a single-issue party by focusing on a variety of topics

in its 2002 election campaign has been one recent indication of the shift towards systemic activity. Even political actors excluded from the system such as the KADEK reveal their objective of transforming themselves into legitimate systemic actors. Thus, it can be stated that openly declaring one's existence in opposition to the existing democratic system is regarded as a costly endeavor by an increasing number of actors. As far as the conflict under analysis is concerned, the extent to which such verbal commitments to democratic co-existence are backed up by the deeds of the related actors provides the real test. While, for instance, a significant change in tone permeates the discourse of DEHAP, its continuous calls for attention to the conditions of Öcalan and its active leadership in the campaign for general amnesty make it highly likely that systemic credentials of the party will be extensively questioned for some time to come. Furthermore, the extent to which KADEK or organizations aiming to replace it will transform their occasional conditional commitment to renunciation of violence into complete halting of armed struggle remains to be another key determinant.

Endorsement of democratic values by the political elite is another key component of the definition of democratic consolidation. Outbidding by the political parties and the political elite indeed served to severe the existing relations. Kalaycıoğlu in fact points at how "(t)he competition for the fringe votes turns into a contest on 'who is more religious?' and 'who is more chauvinistic among the leaders?' " (1997: 10). The mainstream parties defied each other's approach to the conflict whereas the parties advocating Kurdish nationalist positions have encountered various setbacks in their relations with the former. Yet, the most remarkable change in the 1990s was that "(u)nlike the 1970s, when extremists in the parliament were small in number and the vast majority of the voters defined

themselves as centrist, parties representing antithetical political poles now sat in the parliament and participated in coalition governments" (Tachau, 2002: 43). This fact makes it compelling that the search for compromise and consensus becomes a central characteristic of the existing party system. The prospect for Turkey's full membership in the EU may indeed give this transformation in attitudes a further boost. Indeed, most of the mainstream parties seem to converge around the urgency of taking the steps that may clear the way for full membership. Indeed, a common position held by the mainstream parties and the DEHAP as the main political party communicating Kurdish nationalist grievances centers on commitment to the process of EU candidacy. Hence, the bid for membership in the EU may present an axis of convergence for different political actors.

Constant revision of rules and procedures surfaces as another challenge to consolidation of democracy in the Turkish case. Efforts at redefining the existing consensus have frequently been witnessed. This constant flux has served to complicate the prospects for democratic consolidation by making a broadly shared understanding among the political actors almost unattainable. Kalaycıoğlu indeed states that it is impossible to talk of a common understanding among political elites on matters such as where political sovereignty rests and how it will be used, political regime as well as electoral law designs, laws on political parties, the structure of public administration, the independence of the judiciary as well as its role in the political system, and the protection and the implementation of rights and freedoms (2000: 407). Even when the parties agreed on the need for revision, they specified the inevitability of functioning in coalition with other parties as a major constraint limiting their room for maneuver. At least that was the factor the parties in government referred to when accounting for their policy reversals or failures.

Coalition governments have been the norm from 1991 on until 2002 general elections, with even minority governments being in charge. Consensus was difficult to attain under such circumstances. To cite a single example, the parties continuously complained about the 1982 constitution, yet failed to agree on pushing through reforms. Hence, lingering institutional uncertainty and flux has largely been fostered by political party attitudes and disagreements. This lack of consensus is significantly aggravated by the ongoing conflict. For one thing, the existence of the conflict stimulates constant calls for revision by the actors voicing grievances. Particularly contested have been issues such as the electoral threshold and the territorial as well as administrative organization of the state. While the former is being criticized for causing political exclusion, the latter is believed to have resulted in extensive centralization. Thus, strengthening political institutions and achieving widespread consensus on their operation is the major challenge ahead particularly under conditions presented by the conflict.

Considering the fact that an effective state is a precondition for democratic consolidation, it has to be acknowledged that the conflict largely served to hamper state effectiveness. Since the PKK began its campaign in the southeast and the east in 1984, there have been times when the authority of the state over those regions seemed to be on the verge of crumbling. State performance in the provision of rule-enforcement, the reduction of socio-economic disparities and the distribution of justice were constantly subject to criticisms. It is a particularly striking aspect of the Turkish case that the re-democratization process from 1983 on coincided with an upsurge in Kurdish nationalism under deep influence of an armed organization. The significant challenge posed to the performance of the system at such a critical juncture when diffuse support for the democratic regime has not yet solidified meant

that restoration of state effectiveness in confining large-scale and enduring violence became an essential condition of democratic consolidation.

As far as democratic consolidation is believed to denote public endorsement of the values central to democracy, fostering such values is likely to become a complex endeavor under conditions of conflict. High levels of tolerance, respect for rule of law, nonviolent conflict resolution, and cooperative social relations are difficult to sustain particularly when the conflict intensifies. Furthermore, prospects for democratic consolidation may be affected to the extent that existing cleavages contribute to increasing polarization and volatility. Özbudun indeed underlines that "(t)he increasing salience of religious and ethnic issues represents an overall increase in ideological polarization, especially since such issues are more difficult to resolve and are less amenable to rational bargaining than socioeconomic ones" (2000: 78). Polarization may pose groups within the population against each other and allow the parties as well as other actors of organized representation to further drive them apart by appealing to particular symbols. Electoral volatility may also be transformed into a major barrier to democratic consolidation. Sayarı states that "(t)he fluidity of electoral competition has undermined political stability, effective governance, and policy continuity" and adds that problems in the institutionalization of the party system caused by this fluidity in turn hamper the strengthening of mechanisms for governability, representation and accountability (2002: 180).

Still, the major adverse impact of the conflict on democratic consolidation materialized through the suspicion with which initiatives expected to serve conflict management were approached. Particularly when violence is ongoing and widespread, concern over the survival of the system is accompanied by a fear of change. Initiatives in conflict management are hence likely to cause concern with

respect to their potential outcomes and may fail to obtain significant popular support. Demands for security and order may outweigh active support for democratic progress. Yet, in his analysis of the prospects for democratic consolidation, Kalaycıoğlu argues that there is ground for optimism by stating that "(f)ive decades of experience with multiparty democracy has created a responsible electorate, widespread values of pluralism to an unparalleled extent with any previous era of Turkish history, and a distinct mass dislike of oligarchic rule" (1997: 11). Hence, initiatives intending to address the grievances underlying the conflict may gradually be expected to obtain broader popular support.

The situation in Turkey is currently precarious in that things can evolve in either of the two directions, i.e. the deterioration of the conflict or its containment. Two potential scenarios may indeed be envisaged for the Turkish case. A first possibility is one where unconditional end to violence combines with initiatives. Such a combination is more likely to trigger constructive contributions to conflict management by the parties and the public. The halting of violence may in turn be expected to exert a relatively swift impact considering the fact that a single organization seems to possess almost complete monopoly over the use of violence within the Kurdish nationalist camp. Another possibility is presented by violence being sustained. Recent declarations by KADEK seem to reveal that this path may well be taken. In such a case of the resumption of violence, initiatives are less likely to be met with enthusiasm by the public and the bulk of the existing political parties. The self-perpetuating nature of violence is likely to reinforce ethnic outbidding by the parties and polarization within the society at large.

It is hence the central argument of this study that Turkey currently presents a valuable case for the analysis of prospects for democratic consolidation under

circumstances of ethnic conflict. It can be argued that Turkey has undergone a period where cautious steps in the drawing up of conflict management initiatives combined with a precarious cessation of violence since Öcalan's capture. While the party system and the public at large are currently distant from supporting such a context, unconditional cessation of violence stands as a major precondition if only to invalidate the widespread rationalization that no major reforms can be contemplated prior to the halting of violence. Marrying unconditional as well as enduring cessation of violence with the drawing up of initiatives may be expected to serve prospects for democratic consolidation by preparing the ground for an attitudinal shift on the part of the political parties and the public. Convincing the political elite as well as the public that reforms are not indeed concessions requires such a major breakthrough. Provided that violence is halted, initiatives may be thoroughly forthcoming. Yet, they have to be accompanied by affirmative progress in either one or both of the variables relating to the party system and the public. Indeed, coinciding with the precarious cessation of violence by late in 1999 was the gradual formulation of initiatives for conflict management. Still, the lingering threat of resumption of violence is the strongest constraint. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that the initiatives have recently been diversified from the previous pattern of exclusive military and economic emphasis, party and public support for conflict management still falls dramatically short of assisting this process to the full extent.

Nevertheless, as far as the approaches of the variety of actors to the conflict are concerned, free-riding characterizes the actions of democratic as well as anti-system actors in the case of Turkey. The collective action essential to securing democratic consolidation through conflict management has so far been disrupted by defections. The political parties, the public and even the PKK as the major

perpetuator of violence in the Kurdish camp have all declined from taking the necessary steps to alleviate the costs imposed by the conflict. While the implementation of an integrated strategy of conflict management necessitates major contributions from all the existing actors, these actors seem to have refrained from meeting the costs. The drawing up of initiatives by agents of the government and the state has hence been perceived as the sole means of meeting the incurring costs by the actors operating within the system and anti-system actors.

Free-riding among the main Kurdish actors: It has to be admitted that the PKK has recently undergone significant changes in parallel with what was identified as a 'strategic shift' in the previous parts of this study. It is particularly striking that the 'democratic unity republic' project aired by Öcalan in his defense presented to the State Security Court (2) called for the integration of the PKK into the existing democratic system. Öcalan defined territorial unity, a common homeland, political unity and independence under a democratic republic, linguistic as well as cultural freedom, the renunciation of armed combat, and the need for the PKK and other illegal organizations to adapt themselves to the legal political process as the major components of his 'democratic unity republic' project and concluded that the solution was not political but rather had linguistic, cultural and libertarian dimensions (Pirim and Örtülü, 2000: 340-348 and 343). In fact, Öcalan seemed to express that he increasingly began to question the utility of armed struggle and separation in the 1990s. He indeed underlined how he began focusing on the democratic system upon noticing how options of separate state, federation, autonomy and similar approaches might fail to provide solutions (Pirim and Örtülü, 2000: 295). Yet, failure by KADEK to assume its role under such a strategic shift by giving up arms unconditionally stands as the most striking aspect of the current situation.

Inconsistencies in Öcalan's statements as well as in previous PKK declarations as to the objectives of the organization, Öcalan's monopoly over the way the conflict evolves through the link established between his condition in İmralı and the policies to be upheld by KADEK, and continuous issuing of threats of resumption of violence all reveal that KADEK currently stands distant from contributing to conflict management and democratic consolidation in spite of its calls for a democratic republic.

Lack of precision with respect to the ultimate objective of the organization and inconsistencies as to the means to be employed are particularly apparent. It was only late in 1998 that Öcalan told in an interview with MED-TV that "(o)ur history has shown the following: by leaving Ankara we became a party, by going into the Middle East we became an army; when we go out into the world, we shall achieve a state" (White, 2000: 183). While Öcalan made numerous references to the renunciation of violence during his presence in Rome, every announcement of the cessation of violence came with conditions attached. Rather than specifying in detail what steps his organization was ready to take to realize his 'democratic unity republic' project, Öcalan was vocal in listing his demands from the state. During his presence in Rome, he announced a peace plan encompassing the end of Turkish military action in the region; the elimination of the village guard system; return to the villages; autonomy within Turkey's boundaries; equal democratic rights for the Kurds and Turks; recognition for Kurdish identity, culture and language; and freedom of religion (White, 2000: 184). In such a context, however, it is difficult to evaluate how KADEK's recent declaration of a war of defense or of the end of unilateral ceasefire may conform to the objective of preserving unity in a democratic republic. Indeed, KADEK declared that the Middle East faced a choice between war

and peace as surpassing the regressive regimes of the region through democratic struggle would rather be legitimate while acknowledging that the Kurdish nationalist movement was in need of democratic change and transformation more than any other actor (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, April 24, 2003: 1 and 2). (3) In fact, violence intensified since the inception of the recent operation in Iraq through attacks on state officials, security forces and villagers in the east and the southeast. The current upsurge of KADEK activity in Iran, the allegations that the U.S. administration is negotiating for the organization's withdrawal from northern Iraq and for the eventual renunciation of armed struggle, and the claims that recent legislation in Turkey for the re-integration of KADEK militants into society led to clashes within the organization by excluding the leadership cadres are all likely to become determinants of whether armed struggle will continue to be a major aspect of the ongoing conflict. Hence, the odds that the eventual role to be tailored for KADEK will surface as a major determinant of conflict management in the case of Turkey are high.

It is a chief argument of this study that the PKK/KADEK remains to be a central factor in accounting for why the conflict poses a major barrier to democratic consolidation. The ground the PKK was losing in its confrontation with the military in the east and the southeast, the growing emphasis on democratization within Turkey, and the PKK's increasing presence in Europe urged it to transform itself whereby Öcalan's offer of serving the Turkish state through advocating a 'democratic republic' and posing himself as the only person capable of confining violence surfaced as the major components of the strategic shift. Yet, continuities prove to be dominant. Above all, the PKK's monopoly of power and its refusal to co-exist with other Kurdish nationalist actors was a critical factor accounting for why the system failed to generate alternative actors voicing the same grievances. The

PKK traditionally attempted to base its legitimacy on the existence of a charismatic leadership offering ultimate protection as well as the alleviation of a people's plight. In fact, the organization still largely sustains unity through invoking Öcalan's charismatic leadership. The way KADEK continued to link the whole course of the conflict to Öcalan's conditions rather than taking the initiative in a possible transformation has to be reckoned as a central factor. Reluctance to stave off the effort at conflict management from personalities that have so far been standing in the frontlines weakens the prospects for major breakthroughs. It seems plausible to reiterate that the whole process has become hijacked by a 'tyranny of the captured' to borrow from Beckett's 'tyranny of the dead' referred to in the previous parts of this study.

Evaluating the record of the PKK, it is possible to argue that expansion of the room for free discussion and mobilization of international pressure on Turkey have been the most tangible achievements. Still, the organization was urged to downstate its objectives by gradually backtracking from some of its initial commitments. It has to be acknowledged that it is quite difficult for the PKK/KADEK with such a record in relations with other groups and in tolerance for pluralism within its own ranks to be transformed into a democratic alternative. KADEK or the organizations replacing it will nevertheless be most likely to insist on revealing their indispensability to the whole process. While the need to obtain the support of the European public and governments may moderate the organization's political discourse to a certain extent, signals of a major transformation are currently not evident. Moreover, there remains the possibility that a future split within the organization may lead to the emergence of more radical fractions. The extent to which the invocation of Öcalan's leadership

can keep the organization together in strict commitment to its previously determined stance needs to be closely monitored.

It is indeed possible to claim that the extent of the gap between the expected role to be performed and the actual role assumed by the main perpetuators of violence surfaces as a significant determinant of the prospects for conflict management and democratic consolidation. Attitudes expected of KADEK or the organizations replacing it to share the costs associated with the conflict and to act conducive to democratic consolidation may be listed as follows: realization that insistence on the democratic republic project necessitates the unconditional halting of violence; disassociating efforts at conflict management and discussions on Öcalan's fate; observation of greater harmony between the reformulated objectives and the deeds; consent for the rise of alternative actors and greater pluralism within the Kurdish nationalist camp; and commitment to democratic principles in operation and relations with other Kurdish groups. Actual attitudes displayed by PKK / KADEK have rather been markedly different. Continuous threats of the resumption of armed struggle, a recent declaration of an end to unilateral ceasefire and a renewed wave of assaults have been undertaken by the organization. Öcalan's conditions have acquired top priority for KADEK with the organization issuing threats attached to demands relating to his well-being. Inconsistencies between declared objectives and actual deeds have been sustained with continuity dominating over change. Indeed, a single organization still claims monopoly and aims to unite all actors under the leadership offered by Öcalan. Finally, KADEK's relations with the opposition inside and with other Kurdish nationalist groups seem not to be significantly different from those of the PKK in spite of the calls for greater unity.

The attitudes and behavior displayed by other actors representing Kurdish grievances are also critical to conflict management. Particularly during his stay in Rome, Öcalan appealed to various Kurdish groups for greater unity of purpose and action in order to cast aside the hostility displayed by his organization towards pluralism. This process was initiated when the PKK invited all Kurdish organizations to a national unity conference in July 1998. The emergence of an alternative not directly affiliated with the PKK/KADEK and explicitly acknowledging their past mistakes might have earned the Kurdish nationalist movement greater legitimacy across Turkey's political system. The fact that it is currently more difficult for any actor to impose absolute homogeneity on the Kurdish camp and that political actors in Turkey are more likely to prefer communicating with a distinct actor may pose windows of opportunity for the rise of moderate actors. Sharing the costs imposed by the conflict necessitates that moderate proponents of Kurdish grievances as well as alternative voices of Kurdish discontent distance their discourse from that of PKK/KADEK even by isolating the latter. Failure to engage in the contest for the expression of Kurdish demands indeed surfaces as a major defection from meeting the costs.

Political Parties and the Public as Free-riders: The parties as well as the public largely failed to make contributions to conflict management efforts in the case of Turkey. By their failure to organize and channel societal demands, political parties set the stage for the fulfillment of this function by other agents of organized representation of demands. Indeed, the TÜSES survey of 1998 displays that 40,1 percent of the respondents believe that none of the existing political parties can manage to solve the country's problems whereas those who claim that no existing party can prevent the major danger facing Turkey, i.e. terrorism and security as

identified by 39,3 percent of the respondents, total 33,9 percent (Erder and Polat, 1999: 97, 99 and 63). Under such circumstances, the civil society organizations and the public may be expected to assume a greater role. Yet, these latter actors seem to be embroiled in the very same problems experienced by the political parties. Both the parties and the organized groups of interest representation indeed opt out for a zero-sum game understanding of competition for power and influence. Outbidding characterizes relations between the political parties whereas political and ideological polarization is the major trait of the organized groups' relations with each other as well as with the state.

Political parties in the Turkish party system seem to have failed in assisting conflict management and bolstering prospects for democratic consolidation. It can be argued that the extent of the gap between the expected and the actual role of the political parties is a central factor accounting for this situation. Performance of political parties in the Turkish party system indeed remarkably diverges from attitudes expected of the political parties to enable them to share the costs associated with the conflict and be conducive to democratic consolidation. The parties have been free-riders in the sense that their preference for seeking support through activating traditional 'connections' rather than effective organization or operation has become the major source of problems relating to representativeness and volatility. The practice so far reveals that prior to the autonomous contestation of Kurdish nationalist parties in general elections and the upsurge of support for them, successful penetration into the east and the southeast has been undertaken by the DP which engaged in the mobilization of traditional sources of authority with an anti-system discourse; the YTP which enrolled in the party's efforts many local people with a grasp over the problems of the region; the CHP in the 1970s which

concentrated on the issues that mattered to the region such as socio-economic development; the SHP which established an alliance with the party most closely associated with Kurdish nationalism; and the RP which made extensive use of its members from the east and the southeast in formulating the party's discourse, engaged in efforts to offer the delivery of services to the downtrodden, and appealed to Islamic symbols through an anti-system discourse. It is essential to acknowledge that none of these efforts entailed an enduring organizational restructuring of the parties' presence in the regions of conflict and all proved to be highly volatile. Thus, they all failed to present a lasting model to be adopted by the parties in appealing to the specified regions. Hence surfaces the question on whether a mode of organization and selection of candidates more sensitive to local needs is likely to produce better chances for the mainstream parties in the regions of conflict.

A degree of inertia also seems to characterize party activity. Özbudun underlines that "(m)any local party organizations, particularly in the relatively less developed regions, remain inactive between elections and do little or nothing to give their members a political education or indoctrination", with members' participation in party activities being most remarkable in the MHP and the HADEP (2000: 80-81). Central determination of the candidates under almost exclusive leadership discretion as well as denial of local autonomy to party branches contribute to that inertia. Personal policy approaches acquire dominance over the stability which is likely to be provided by institutionalized approaches. Parties' operation as patronage mechanisms (Kalaycıoğlu, 1997: 9) is another major common trait negating the appreciation of the urgency of developing long-term objectives and concomitant policies. Particularly alarming has been the fact that broadly shared understandings among political parties and elites have not traditionally been forthcoming. Ethnic

outbidding by the mainstream parties is accompanied by their failure to create institutionalized incentives for the integration of Kurdish nationalist parties into the existing system. In return, failure of Kurdish nationalist parties in achieving cross-sectional appeal and casting aside the image of a single-issue party has been remarkable. On the other hand, moderate proponents of Kurdish nationalism enjoy limited appeal due to legal restrictions and engage in ethnic outbidding in competing with the influence of radical nationalists. Allegations of political exclusion by Kurdish nationalist parties have also been strengthened by mechanisms which were intended to moderate the political discourse such as the ten percent electoral threshold. The future legal status of DEHAP as well as a potential transformation within the Kurdish nationalist camp such as through the emergence of new actors are likely to produce the central controversies with respect to political inclusion.

As far as free-riding by the public and the civil society is concerned, it is essential to underline the rapid growth of civil society organizations particularly in the 1990s. Yet, it is more striking that the multitude of organizations occasionally place themselves at the conflicting ends of the political spectrum and fail to institute a synergy with the state. Defining the growth of civil society as an evolutionary process, Tunç and Aktaş depict the fourth phase as one in which concern over the possibility of state intervention suffocating the civil society is on the rise (1998: 78-79). It can possibly be argued that current discussions on state-society relations in the context of Turkey center on such concerns. Previous restrictions on organized representation of interests and recent polarization accompanying the proliferation of civil society organizations have particularly disabled the public in providing full-fledged assistance to conflict management. Some organized groups reject every step taken as too little whereas other reactionary groups rule out every initiative as

concessions. These two tendencies are obviously difficult to reconcile. Hence, popular perception of some initiatives as concessions or as mere symbolic gestures may drain them of the essential support. The emergence of sectional organizations and the rift between various organizations further complicate societal contribution to conflict management. While a variety of opinion on conflict management surfaces, practical assistance to the state in instituting the essential mechanisms is rather difficult to institutionalize. Examining these patterns of organized participation, it does not seem perplexing that a military solution was initially the sole option envisaged for the management of the conflict.

It is essential to note that attitudes of the public and the civil society organizations in the case of Turkey display marked differences from the contribution these actors are expected to make to conflict management and democratic consolidation. Little practical cooperation seems to exist between the state and the society except for the exchange of opinion. Societal autonomy is mainly preserved through a rift between the state and the society. Polarization and anomy largely characterize relations between groups advocating a variety of interests. Particularly in regions of conflict, the state surfaces as the major agent for the delivery of services and encounters competition from radical actors aiming to mobilize the population in support of their political ends. Previous restrictions on organized interest representation have resulted in low level of awareness and participation by the public, with some groups enjoying greater incentives to become organized. In spite of a variety of cleavages, a degree of monolithism and conformity has been imposed on the Kurdish camp mainly through the violence perpetuated by the PKK. The impact of intra-ethnic cleavages has in fact materialized in the form of radicalization: moderates have gradually been marginalized whereas leadership of the movement

has shifted to the radicals as has been the case in Sri Lanka. An upsurge in reactionary Turkish nationalism followed in return. Hence, parallel organization of the representatives of a variety of groups further aggravated polarization. Despite the fact that problems remain intact with regard to the extent to which the public can assist conflict management, gradual expansion of the scope of public debate over the conflict has been most remarkable. Yet, the remaining challenge seems to revolve around ensuring the organized participation of citizens which may produce alternative approaches to conflict management and assist the political authorities and other agents of the state in the implementation of an integrated strategy of conflict management.

Lack of all-encompassing organized condemnation of violence surfaced as a final setback to active public contribution to conflict management. While lack of communal violence stands as a major asset, the fact that violence could target anyone in line with the strategic shifts proved to be intimidating. Random choice of targets hence became another major factor stimulating war-weariness and public inertia particularly in the east and the southeast. In addition to that, relatively rare occurrences of violence in other parts of the country induced differing attitudes across regions. The organization's attempts at spreading violence through targeting tourism resorts or shops in İstanbul indeed displayed a deviation from its established pattern of activity. The violence factor also divided the Kurdish camp. In fact, Barkey and Fuller warn that "(s)ome Kurds argue that the emergence of the PKK actually worsened the situation for the Kurdish cause overall: it polarized the situation and reduced yet further the already limited organizational freedoms that the Kurds had gained as they sought to build national consciousness over the long term in nonconfrontational ways" (1998: 42-43).

It is essential to reiterate that as far as the constraints on the implementation of conflict management initiatives are concerned, the Turkish case seems to stand apart from the rest of the cases analyzed here with respect to the extent to which factors exogenous to the political system acquire centrality. In addition to the problems associated with free-riding, three distinct constraints on Turkey's capacity to bring about intended outcomes exist. The extensive impact of the Kurdish population living outside Turkey surfaces as one major constraint. A second constraining factor which reinforces the impact of the first one is that the prospect for membership in the EU acquired a momentum of its own. The diaspora impact has indeed been equally visible in other cases such as in Sri Lanka. What sets the Turkish example apart from such cases, however, is that a remarkable portion of the Kurdish migrants from Turkey is spread across the EU countries. The ground is then prepared for a linkage between the search for group rights and the process of candidacy for full membership. In fact, strengthening of the perspective for membership in the EU serves to reinvigorate the initiatives whereas trouble in relations with the union may pose a setback. The EU response to Turkish demand for accession hence acquires even greater centrality from this point on. Finally, the potential future status of northern Iraq is most likely to affect the developments in the Turkish context. (4) Robins indeed confirms the perception of the Kurds in Iraq as the 'pace-setters of Kurdism' (1993: 658). The American presence in Iraq and the final settlement on the territorial division of authority are of particular centrality to Turkey's conflict management efforts. Current KADEK presence in northern Iraq is the major cause of concern for Turkey. Hence, the impact that developments in northern Iraq will exert on KADEK is likely to become a major determinant of the prospects for conflict management within the Turkish political system. The KADEK presence in northern

Iraq is likely to elevate the conflict in Turkey to the top of the agenda in relations with the U.S. in resemblance to the conflict's standing as a major topic in relations with the EU. Allegations that the current act on the re-integration of KADEK militants into society are American-driven and that the U.S. administration is planning to negotiate a political role for KADEK are presented as signals in that direction. While such exogenous factors may facilitate conflict management, there is also the possibility that they may confine the free interplay of factors endogenous to the system such as the drawing up of initiatives, containment of violence, and active assistance by the parties as well as the public. Yet, it also seems plausible to argue that effective performance in relation to endogenous variables may limit the impact of exogenous influences. Hence, conflict management initiatives such as the implementation of reform packages, schemes for return to villages, plans for the integration of a defined section of KADEK militants into societal life, reform of the village guard system and intense economic efforts at regional development acquire prominence as the contemplated steps.

For many analysts, the current conflict is basically a reflection of the democratic deficit in Turkey's political system. Such an understanding envisages that better operation of democratic mechanisms addresses the conflict. Still, for others, recognition of identity claims is the key to conflict management. Recently, there also seems to be greater convergence around the idea that deeper integration with the EU is likely to ensure conflict management. While Oran argues that "in this 'globalized world', if the basic material needs (to find work) and cultural aspirations (recognition of Kurdish identity and language) of the Kurds are simultaneously met, they might get off at the 'cultural autonomy station', instead of going as far as the 'very last station' " (2000: 158), Cemal confidently states that membership in the EU will

marginalize those advocating independence through resort to violence (2003: 554). On the whole, while it is highly rational to expect better economic prospects, guarantees on linguistic and cultural rights and steps towards full membership in the EU to constitute major steps in conflict management, the experiences of political systems examined throughout this study reveal that other factors also stand as key determinants. It is essential to reiterate that if the initiatives are to serve their intended purpose, certain supporting conditions need to be fostered. Defections need to be avoided with the political parties, the public and even the groups who have been the major perpetuators of violence engaging in a rather balanced sharing of the costs. Avoiding free-riding and defections is indeed the only means of ensuring a context supportive of conflict management. Such a transformation may also be expected to make the conflict management process less vulnerable to exogenous developments such as problems in relations with the EU. Hence, the major conditions for democratic consolidation to proceed in spite of an ongoing conflict are the continuation of initiatives, the elimination of violence, and the assumption of constructive roles by the parties and the public in assisting conflict management.

NOTES :

(1) Plasser, Ulram and Waldrauch formulate behavioral adaptation as involving "willingness to tolerate, negotiate, and compromise as well as moderation, reconciliation and, above all, acceptance of rules" by the political elite and as encompassing "diffuse legitimacy, the absence of alternatives, confidence in the democracy's ability to survive, and the refusal to support or participate in political practices perceived as semiloyal or disloyal" among the public (1998: 36 and 37).

(2) Pirim and Örtülü present a full text of the legal defense presented by Abdullah Öcalan to the State Security Court (2000: 293-361).

(3) The KADEK's proposals for a solution on the basis of democratic unity in the case of Turkey encompass the calls for a change in the constitution as well as in electoral laws; the drawing up of constitutionally guaranteed affirmative action policies for those discriminated against; the integration of opposition groups to the political processes; the incorporation of a separate chapter for the solution of the Kurdish problem into the new constitution; the urgent implementation of the project for a return to the villages; the enhancement of the powers of regional administrations and their constitution through elections; and the provision of Kurdish participation in the central government through special laws (Yeniden Özgür Gündem, April 24, 2003: 2-3).

(4) Resurgence of Kurdish nationalism has indeed traditionally been affected by cross-border developments. The return of Molla Mustafa Barzani to Iraq was of particular symbolic significance for the Kurdish population in Turkey. The fact that he urged the Iraqi regime to reach an autonomy agreement in 1970 made him an all the more prominent pioneer in the eyes of the Kurdish population in the region. The extension of autonomous status in 1974 as well as the de facto autonomy enjoyed by

the Iraqi Kurds since 1991 are believed to have intensified the power of Kurdish nationalist ideas among the citizens of Turkey. The Kurdish uprising in Iran in 1979 in the wake of the fall of the Shah, the 1988 inflow of Kurdish refugees from Iraq, and the elections for a Kurdish Assembly in northern Iraq in 1992 all exerted an impact in shaping Kurdish opinion across the region. Another event of symbolic importance was the Kurdish refugee flow from northern Iraq following the Gulf War whereby over 500,000 Kurds were estimated to have fled Iraq. Kirişci indeed highlights that "the 1988 and 1991 mass influx of Kurdish refugees from northern Iraq played an important role in precipitating open discussion about Kurds in general as well as Kurds in Turkey" (1998: 229). The war on Iraq in 2003 and the discussions on the future status of the country also stimulate further debate on the Kurdish question in Turkey. Furthermore, this cross-border impact has been bolstered by the fact that the PKK has always managed to retain its position as a part of the regional equation.

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