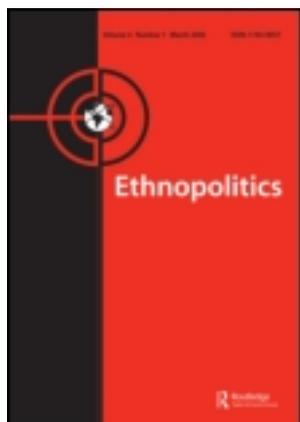


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India's Stabilizing Segment States

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ABSTRACT The post-independence history of India contradicts the segmental-institutions thesis. Non-ethnic federalism was met with popular resistance and segmental institutions emerged because of nationalist mobilization. These institutions stabilized India, which has remained intact. Central violations of segment-state arrangements have been the impetus for violent nation-state crises. The Gorkhaland movement in the Darjeeling area of West Bengal in India is used to explain the disconnection between India's experience and the segmental-institutions thesis. As the thesis predicts, progressively more-generous autonomy arrangements have helped regional elites to repress political competition in Darjeeling. However, limited political competition in Darjeeling curbs demands on the centre because regional elites' primary incentive to mobilize ethnic grievances is to outflank local political rivals.

Introduction

Roeder's (2007) *Where Nation-states Come From* (WNSCF) offers an original argument on the origins of nation states, claiming that they arise out of segmental subnational institutions. Segment states are, however, more than a stop on the road to independence. They are the crucial ingredient in nation-state crisis. If countries draw non-ethnic subnational boundaries and/or keep power centralized, crisis and secession are averted (Roeder, 2007, pp. 5, 11). Following this logic, WNSCF criticizes subnational autonomy arrangements as a means of resolving ethnic conflict, claiming these institutions speed country disintegration (*ibid.*, pp. 342, 351–352). Such an argument has the potential to be used as a justification for repression of minorities.¹ Therefore, the evidence backing it needs to be examined critically.

This paper raises questions about the theory and empirics laid out in WNSCF, motivating the critique by showing the divergence of India's experience from the segmental-institutions thesis. India's segment states are the product of nation-state crisis. Segment states have stabilized India. Delving further into the mechanisms of the segmental-institutions thesis, I examine the history of one subnational movement that has won progressively more local autonomy. Nepali-speakers in the state of West Bengal have a long-standing demand that the Darjeeling district be converted into Gorkhaland, which would be a new state within the Indian federation. Starting in the 1980s, Nepali

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subnationalism sparked a nation-state crisis, according to the WNSCF coding. During that crisis, the most extreme Gorkhaland activists called for independence. The creation of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council quietened demands for Gorkhaland until 2006, when the movement again became a political flashpoint. Examining the Gorkhaland movement highlights two points of misfit between the theoretical arguments in WNSCF and the broader literature on nationalist and separatist mobilization. First, WNSCF underrates the benefits of federation even for elites interested only in regional gains. Second, WNSCF implies that regional political hegemony makes nation-state crises more likely. In Gorkhaland, the opposite holds. The authoritarian tendencies of segmental institutions tend to stabilize centre/periphery bargains, even as they undermine the quality of democracy (Lacina, 2009).

Where Nation States and Nation-state Crises Come From

WNSCF argues that independent countries come from segment states. Segment states combine communal and territorial partitioning, carving out a fiefdom for a particular ethnic group. WNSCF explains that both a federal state and a segment state reserve rights to their residents. However, in a segment state:

peoples' political statuses are not simply a function of residence in a territorial jurisdiction as they are in a federal nation-state; the rights enjoyed by each people differ from the rights of other peoples within the common-state and vary as they move among the different segment-states. (Roeder, 2007, p. 44)

The reifying of identity through special rights and the institutional resources of a segment state aid nationalist mobilization. Segment states are therefore associated with more frequent nation-state crises. The argument is put in strong causal terms. The association between segment states and crisis is *not* due to such states being granted to the ethnic groups that are most likely to be restive in future. Instead, WNSCF argues for the counterfactual that 'if they had been empowered by segment-states, the authors of nation-state projects that did not get heard [in nation-state crises] would have been much more likely to provoke nation-state crises' (Roeder, 2007, p. 261). Or, as Roeder's paper in this issue puts it, 'a segment state increases the likelihood of a nation-state crisis'.

WNSCF acknowledges the possibility that reverse causality creates the statistical relationship between segment states and nation-state crises (Roeder, 2007, p. 283).² The problem is addressed by examining particular cases in detail: the Russian Empire, Soviet Union, and post-Soviet states. This review of India's experience, like Hartzell's study of Nicaragua, Mehler's study of Cameroon and Hoddie's analysis of Tibet, mirrors that exercise. India offers a particularly rich history in this regard because the federation was transformed from non-ethnic to ethnic federalism and has continued to add segment states over time. Thus, it is possible to determine the frequency with which segmental institutions are created in response to prior crisis and to compare levels of crisis before and after segment states were formed.

Segment States in India

The theses of WNSCF do not fare well in India. Segment states there are almost uniformly endogenous to past nationalist mobilization.³ Of the 17 segment states WNSCF codes for

contemporary India (Roeder, 2007, pp. 355–356), only three of these states were sanctioned by the first Indian constitution.⁴ All of the others were conceded by the centre later, after nation-state crises.

India's early national leadership feared that subnational units based on ethnicity would be centrifugal and tried to develop a non-ethnic federation instead. During the framing of the constitution, a Linguistic Provinces Commission, including Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, considered redrawing the federation on ethno-linguistic lines. Nehru famously explained why the Commission recommended against such a reorganization:

[The Commission] has in some ways been an eye-opener for us. The work of sixty years of the Indian National Congress was standing before us, face to face with centuries old India of narrow loyalties, petty jealousies and ignorant prejudices engaged in a mortal conflict, and we were simply horrified to see how thin was the ice upon which we were skating. Some of the ablest men in the country came before us and confidently and emphatically stated that language in this country stood for and represented culture, race, history, individuality, and finally a sub-nation. (Harrison, 1956, p. 621)

Fearing exactly the kind of powerful segment states WNSCF describes, the constitutional framers maintained most of the multi-ethnic, colonial-era subunits, such as the princely state of Hyderabad and the British province of Madras. These states were non-communal, territorial partitions. Like the majority of Indian states in 1951, they had no majority ethno-linguistic group, no titular ethnicity, and no special ethnically or communally defined rights.⁵

Rioting in favour of language-based states plagued the country until the government conceded linguistic reorganization in 1956. Nehru reminded Parliament he was not in favour of linguistic states but said that he could not resist the popular tide. He cited the example of Hyderabad:

Some honorable members here may well remember that I delivered quite a number of speeches in Hyderabad opposing tooth and nail, if I may use the word, the disintegration of the State of Hyderabad. That was my view. I would still like the State of Hyderabad not to be disintegrated, but circumstances have been too strong for me. (Parliament of India, 1956, pp. 876–877)

In place of Nehru's vision of maintaining multi-ethnic states like Hyderabad, the 1956 state reorganization divided both ex-princely states and former British provinces on language lines and then assembled new states that had majority ethno-linguistic groups. In 1950, 27% of Indians lived in a state where they were in the linguistic majority. In 1957, 41% lived in such a state. The reorganization was understood by all political parties as a move towards ethnicity-based federalism (Parliament of India, 1955).

Thus, as in Nicaragua, Cameroon and Tibet, nation-state crises broke out where no segment states existed. Also, as in Nicaragua and Cameroon, segment states were the product of nation-state crises. Further underlining the endogeneity of segment states and conflict, 13 of 15 states created after 1956—all on ethnic lines—were formed in response to violence and/or sustained mass mobilization.⁶

Endogeneity between segment states and prior nationalist mobilization is also evident in the WNSCF coding of 17 of India's 25 states as segment states.⁷ The description of segment states above, as conferring legal rights on particular peoples, does not correspond to Indian states, with three partial exceptions.⁸ The remaining states do not offer citizens special, communally defined rights.⁹ As the legal rights enjoyed by Indian citizens do not differ as they move among these states, they should presumably all be coded as federal states. Indian states are also basically institutionally identical, offering the same resources for would-be nationalists.

WNSCF arrives at 17 segment states in India by excluding the states of the Hindi-belt of northern India:¹⁰ Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh (MP), Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (UP). These omissions suggest endogeneity between the presence of nationalist mobilization and the designation of subnational units as segment (rather than federal) states. The Indian government has worked hard to promote the notion that the Hindi-belt states are not ethnically defined, developing Modern Standard Hindi as a means of knitting these states together. However, the borders of the Hindi-belt states (with the exception of MP and UP) correspond to historically distinct linguistic areas. These non-Hindi identities have not been politically very important; it is quite common for these languages—for example, Rajasthani, Haryani—to be called Hindi in contemporary India, despite having no common linguistic origin (Shapiro, 2003). However, this quiescence is not due to the non-ethnic character of state borders or institutions, which are similar to those in the rest of the country. WNSCF's omission of India's least-rebellious states suggests there may be a mechanical—and therefore spurious—relationship between past ethnic mobilization and the designation of subnational units as segment states. This endogeneity is a likely result of defining segment states on the basis of the observed political salience of ethnicity, as reported by area specialists, rather than institutional features, such as rights of citizens, which is the criterion implied by the book's argument.

India also diverges from WNSCF in its history with segment states. The segmental-institutions thesis suggests that India must have maintained its territorial integrity despite its segment states. Instead, India's 1956 state reorganization, contrary to Nehru's fears, is now seen as a remarkably successful stabilization measure. Of the ethnically defined states created in 1956, none has had a powerful separatist movement subsequently. Wilkinson (2008) shows that India has seen a dramatic reduction in the incidence of language-related violence over time and credits that to state reorganization. Kohli (1997) also describes reorganization as stabilizing. For example, he argues that the transformation of part of Madras into a Tamil-majority state marginalized the separatist 'Dravidian' fringe of the Tamil nationalist movement.¹¹

To simplify a complex picture, Tamil nationalism and a 'petit bourgeois' base among the urban backward castes provided the core support for a regional nationalist movement. The early demands of this self-determination movement were for greater power and control: over time, the broader movement came to include a separatist movement demanding a 'Dravidistan,' or a land for the Dravidian people . . . reorganization gave Tamil nationalists a Tamil state, taking a fair amount of the separatist steam out of the movement . . . the struggle of Tamil nationalists shifted to oust Congress from power within the state. For this, the Tamil nationalists utilized a political party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and sought to broaden their

power base . . . As the DMK settled down to rule, the predictable happened. Over time, the DMK lost much of its self-determination, and its anti-Center militancy. (Kohli, 1997, pp. 334–335)

Thus, the move from multi-ethnic Madras to a Tamil-dominated Madras had the effect WNSCF expected: Tamil nationalists came to power. However, the separatist stream of Tamil nationalism, the Dravidistan movement, lost its resonance once a segment state was formed.

By contrast, groups denied a state in the 1956 reorganization kept up mass mobilization in order to obtain their own states. For example, the centre did not create ethnic states in Punjab and Northeast India in 1956, arguing the threat of separatism from these areas was too dire (SRC, 1955). Subsequent violence extracted segment states. India's recent history also provides examples of nation-state crises escalating in the absence of segment states and subsiding once segment states were granted. For example, in 1966 the Mizo people of Northeast India rebelled; in 1986, the creation of the state of Mizoram was the central provision of the peace treaty that successfully ended the war. The states of Goa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Uttaranchal were all created in response to mobilization and violence that disappeared once statehood was established. By contrast, secessionist civil wars have frequently been precipitated by central violations of federalism: abrogation of written agreements in Nagaland (Hazarika, 1994) and Punjab (Dhillon, 2006), electoral manipulation in Kashmir (Bose, 2005) and Assam (Hazarika, 1994).¹² Finally, there are no examples in India of a state that was formed in the absence of popular mobilization but subsequently developed a movement demanding additional autonomy or independence.

Regional Elites' Incentives

Why are India's experiences so unlike what WNSCF describes? I trace the history of the Gorkhaland movement to understand better the misfit between WNSCF's thesis and India's experience. There are two advantages to focusing on the Gorkhaland movement. First, the movement can be observed under several different institutional arrangements. As Darjeeling gained autonomy, the role of these new institutions in local elites' political strategies could be seen. Second, unlike most subnational autonomy movements in India, the Gorkhaland campaign seems to be a likely fit for WNSCF's argument regarding nation-state crises. Each wave of mobilization for Gorkhaland was initiated in Darjeeling, rather than being a response to central malfeasance. Darjeeling's autonomy has expanded over time without ending mobilization for Gorkhaland, consistent with WNSCF's expectation. Before turning to this case study, I give an overview of how WNSCF's arguments diverge from other work on secessionism and the patterns seen in Darjeeling.

WNSCF downplays the popular appeal of successful nationalist movements and instead emphasizes the incentives and resources of regional elites to create such movements. However, from the point of view of the economics literature on endogenous borders, even regional elites with a boundless taste for consumption and power do not usually benefit from independence. Such regional elites can, in theory, always receive strictly more resources in a larger country because of gains due to scale, such as internalization of policy spillovers, a larger market and economies of scale in the provision of public goods (Buchanan & Faith, 1987; Alesina & Spolaore, 1997; Bolton & Roland, 1997;

Oates, 1999; Alesina, 2003; Hale, 2008). If inter-regional transfers can be credibly promised, efficiency gains can be used to compensate regions that might otherwise benefit from separation. Thus, for a political economist, even if the central government has no power and all regional elites are interested solely in maximizing their own resources, federalism can be self-sustaining.

There are two common explanations for secessionism in spite of the advantages of a larger country. The first is that the central state may not be able to promise credibly future largesse and/or future local autonomy (Hale, 2008; Fearon & Laitin, 2011). A second argument is that political competition induces regional elites to mobilize ethnic grievances as a reliable means of winning popular support (Brubaker & Laitin, 1998). When politicians are trying to outflank regional rivals, they cannot afford compromise with the centre:

If the formation of a competing [co-ethnic] party is merely apprehended, party leaders can still take risks for the sake of interethnic harmony. Statesmanship is not precluded. But if party competition is already keen, the obstacles to interethnic accommodation may prove insurmountable. (Horowitz, 1985, p. 357)

For example, Treisman (1999) describes separatism in post-Soviet Russia as being driven in part by regional political competition.

By contrast, WNSCF argues that local ‘political hegemony’—elimination or marginalization of competitors—emboldens secessionism (Roeder, 2007, p. 83). One reason why segmental institutions are undesirable, according to WNSCF, is that these autonomy concessions make it easier for regional elites to consolidate local power. They can then launch even more formidable challenges against the centre.

In Darjeeling, regional elites’ incentives with regard to independence and local political competition are incongruent with WNSCF’s depiction. As WNSCF predicts, autonomy concessions have been used to repress local political competition. However, local political hegemony does not make difficult demands. They do not face any pressure from rivals in Darjeeling and they know that independence would end the flow of central largesse. Both the national government in New Delhi and the West Bengal state government in Kolkata encourage the anti-democratic features of Darjeeling’s autonomous institutions for this reason.

The First Calls for Autonomy

Darjeeling—of tea fame—is a district in the Indian state of West Bengal, bordering Nepal and the Indian states of Bihar and Sikkim. Darjeeling is both India’s conduit to Sikkim and part of the narrow corridor between Northeast India and the Indian heartland. That geographic position is a point of leverage in Darjeeling’s dealings with the centre, as are its lucrative tea and tourism industries.

In 1835 parts of what is now Darjeeling came under the control of the British East India Company (Sen, 1989). At the time, the district was thinly settled by animist Bhotias and Lepchas and Tibetan Buddhists. Demography changed quickly after 1845 when the British began growing tea and importing workers from Nepal for the tea gardens. In 1835 the population of Darjeeling town was about 100 people. By 1849, the town had more than 10,000 residents (Sen, 1989) and by 1872 its population was 94,712 (Subba, 1989,

p. 4). Settlers from Nepal brought two languages—Newari and Nepali—as well as Hinduism to Darjeeling.

Since the 1950s, ethnically Nepalese Indian citizens in the Darjeeling area have referred to themselves as Gorkhas, attempting to differentiate themselves from citizens of Nepal, large numbers of which live in India (Subba, 2003). The term 'Gorkha' harks back to the mid-1800s, when the British began heavy military recruitment in Nepal and referred to these soldiers as Gurkhas.¹³

In 1907 and 1934, Darjeeling's European residents formed the Hillmen's Association and asked that a separate administrative unit be carved out for the Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha areas of British India (Chakrabarty, 2005). Political mobilization in Darjeeling did not really pick up, however, until decolonization was imminent. At that point, the Hillmen's Association, emphasizing the pre-Gorkha, tribal populations of Darjeeling, asked for total autonomy from independent India and ethnic electorates within Darjeeling to ensure continued European control. A rival movement, the All India Gurkha League (AIGL) founded in 1943, grew out of union and communist movements among tea garden workers. The AIGL's original demand was that Darjeeling become a part of the neighbouring state of Assam, where Gorkhas would have a larger population share than in Bengal (Thapa, 1997). The AIGL also flirted with the notion that Darjeeling, Sikkim, and perhaps even Assam should become part of Nepal. Neither the AIGL's nor the Hillmen's Association's proposal carried the day, however, and at independence Darjeeling was included in the state of West Bengal without any special autonomy.

The Hillmen's Association quickly faded as many Europeans left Darjeeling after independence. During nationwide reorganization of Indian states in 1956, the AIGL requested that Darjeeling become a separate state or a centrally administered unit (Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000). The AIGL aligned with the Communist Party of India (CPI) in making these demands. The parties had shared roots in the trade union movement and the CPI's platform supported nationalist movements on the grounds that they were part of the progression from feudal to bourgeois to socialist society (Prakash, 1973). However, Darjeeling's demands were opposed by the state government of West Bengal, which was controlled by the India National Congress (INC) party, also the ruling party in New Delhi. Darjeeling was passed over during state reorganization.

Despite that setback, the AIGL continued to hold political sway as the voice of Gorkha politics. The leadership of the AIGL also consolidated in the late 1950s. A violent labour strike in 1955 split the party. The AIGL activist wing won the upper hand and expelled from the party its three representatives in the West Bengal state legislature. In the 1957 state legislative elections, the expelled members ran as independents and two lost their seats. In the most important of Darjeeling's three constituencies—that centred on Darjeeling town—Deoprasad Rai, the new AIGL candidate, narrowly won over both the incumbent and a CPI candidate (Table 1). He 'subsequently attained a stature of an indomitable regional leader of All India Gorkha League from Darjeeling' (Bomjan, 2007, p. 112). Rai went on to win the next six elections for that seat with an average margin of victory of 17%. Rai twice served as a state cabinet minister, as well.

The era of Rai's political hegemony was a time of limited mobilization for autonomy in Darjeeling. After 1956, the AIGL's focus shifted to promoting the Nepali language throughout India (Bhandari, 2003; Chakrabarty, 2005). The party also scaled back its demands regarding Darjeeling, passing resolutions for autonomy within West Bengal. Yet little progress was made towards autonomy even under state governments in which

Table 1. Competitiveness of elections for the West Bengal State Legislature from Gorkha constituencies, 1951–2011

Year	Darjeeling		Kalimpong		Jore Bungalow/Kurseong	
	Winner	Margin (%)	Winner	Margin (%)	Winner	Margin (%)
1951	AIGL/INC	22	CPI	20	AIGL/INC	44
1957	AIGL	1.1	Independent	16	CPI	6.0
1962	AIGL	24	AIGL	20	CPI	0.60
1967	AIGL	19	INC	10	AIGL	6.7
1969	AIGL	15	AIGL	15	AIGL	17
1971	AIGL	18	AIGL	12	CPM	0.86
1972	AIGL	17	INC	5.1	AIGL	1.5
1977	AIGL	11	AIGL	15	INC	3.6
1982*	CPM	0.53	AIGL	32	CPM	0.47
1987*	CPM	84	CPI	84	CPM	55
1991	GNLF	14	GNLF	39	GNLF	15
1996	GNLF	25	GNLF	37	GNLF	17
2001	GNLF	43	GNLF	28	GNLF	30
2006	GNLF	20	GNLF	25	GNLF	28
2011	GJM	69	GJM	81	GJM	60

*Boycotted by GNLf.

Source: Data from the Election Commission of India (ECI, 2012).

Rai held a cabinet post. In 1976, a Darjeeling Hills Areas Development Council was formed but was given a merely advisory role in development planning (Chakrabarty, 2005). Despite the lack of autonomy concessions, the AIGL did not escalate its demands or tactics. Its mobilization consisted of little more than periodic memoranda to New Delhi or Kolkata.

Political Competition and Statehood Demands

In 1981, Deoprakash Rai passed away. After his death, the AIGL fell into internal disorder (Bomjan, 2007). The 1982 state legislative elections in the Darjeeling and Kurseong constituencies were each decided by less than 1% of the vote, the most closely contested elections in these seats to date (Table 1). The AIGL's faltering created a political opening for a new champion of Darjeeling's autonomy. The political vacuum was ultimately filled by the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), led by Subash Ghising, who had served in the military and was also a popular author. The GNLF won its struggle for ascendancy against the AIGL, other upstart Gorkha parties, and the Darjeeling chapter of West Bengal's ruling party at the time, the Communist Party (Marxist) (CPM). The struggle involved escalating demands for autonomy and confrontation with the centre, as well as internecine violence.

In 1980–1981, four local political parties, including the GNLF, called for Darjeeling to become a federal state, going beyond the AIGL's demand for autonomy within Bengal. The GNLF also won public attention by introducing a range of new issues into Gorkha mobilization. The party called for repeal of a 1950 treaty between Nepal and India, claiming (incorrectly) that the treaty undermined Gorkhas' legal standing as Indian citizens (Lal, 1987; Sonntag, 1999; Subba, 2003). Ghising even talked of secession, claiming

that Darjeeling was a no-man's-land under arcane treaties of the British East India Company (Dixit, 2003).

The GNLFF also escalated the movement for Darjeeling's autonomy on the tactical front with a blockade of timber industry shipments, general strikes, election and tax boycotts, and public burnings of copies of the Indo-Nepalese Treaty of 1950. Clashes between police and protestors motivated the centre to deploy paramilitaries to Darjeeling (Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000). However, the primary violence was between local political parties, which traded arson, kidnappings and killings, and fought for control of hospitals, food and commodity distribution, labour unions and tea gardens (Lal, 1987). One estimate of the toll from 1986 to 1988 is 300 people killed and millions of dollars of property destroyed (Crossette, 1989; Shrestha, 2003).

By late 1986 the state government admitted that it had no authority in parts of Darjeeling. The majority of civil servants in the region had resigned their posts in solidarity with the GNLFF or in protest at the lack of protection they had from the state (Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000). Other Gorkha political parties increasingly recognized the GNLFF as the head of the Darjeeling movement.

Autonomy for Darjeeling

In January 1987, West Bengal's chief minister (the state executive), Jyoti Basu, and the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, began developing a plan for negotiations with the GNLFF. The two leaders seemed to have little doubt Ghising would bargain and clearly did not believe he wanted independence. They offered Ghising an autonomous district council; he countered with demands for a larger geographic jurisdiction and control of more funds. The centre prodded Kolkata to make more concessions, fearing that 'delay [would] ... trigger off [*sic*] large scale violence resulting in ouster [*sic*] of Mr. Ghising from leadership and his inability to carry all sections of hill people with him to the negotiation table' (Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000, p. 38). In 1988, a trilateral agreement set the terms for the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC). The DGHC was an apex body for district, village and municipal governments with authority for development funds and economic planning. The new council had no police or legislative powers but did come with a huge infusion of central development funds. In the 1988 accord the GNLFF formally renounced the demand for Gorkhaland state (Bomjan, 2007, p. 119) and agreed to surrender its arms in exchange for rehabilitation for fighters.

The terms of the settlement and the manner in which it was implemented seem designed to repress political competition in Darjeeling. DGHC elections were supervised by a political appointee rather than the State Election Commission. In the 1989 council elections the GNLFF took 26 of 28 seats (Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000, p. 121). In the second and third DGHC elections, GNLFF intimidation of candidates and poll irregularities went unchallenged. GNLFF candidates also won all the state legislature seats from the Darjeeling Hills between 1991 and 2006, by an average vote margin of about 27% (Table 1).

Ghising used the DGHC to develop a vast patronage network unhampered by New Delhi and Kolkata. Chakrabarty (2005, p. 188) describes the tangible impact of the DGHC as a visible power concentration in the GNLFF:

The Chairman [Ghising] and the Executive Councilors enjoy all the frills of cars/ jeeps with red lights, etc., enjoyed by ministers in West Bengal and elsewhere. The Council is seen to be the governing agency in the district with control over

most of the departments ... there has been a tendency to equate the DGHC with the GNLf.

Such political dominance allowed the GNLf to concentrate all government resources under its own authority. The party dissolved or obviated levels of government below the DGHC and even horizontal regulatory institutions, such as the district's School Service Commission. The last external audit of the DGHC was performed in 1992, a failure that neither the state nor the centre chose to press. The Council's meetings were also suspended for years at a time, in violation of the law creating the DGHC, without central or state intervention (Chakrabarty, 2005, p. 188).

Defending Ghising's Power

Ghising did make periodic demands on the centre and state governments, parrying criticism of the DGHC by pointing to gaps in its jurisdiction and budget. In 1994, Ghising petitioned the Supreme Court to review Darjeeling's status under the 1950 Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty; in 1998 he referred the treaty to the International Court of Justice (Express News Service, 1998). These gestures combined rhetorical flourish with a minimal chance of alarming New Delhi or Kolkata. Ghising's threats of new popular agitations extracted minor expansions of the DGHC's functions and funding (Sonntag, 1999, pp. 432–433; Sarkar & Bhaumik, 2000, p. 26; Chakrabarty, 2005, p. 189). However, Ghising's demands did not undermine Kolkata and New Delhi's shared interest in preserving his power within Darjeeling. Concerned that the GNLf might not be able to control another election, Ghising convinced the state government to postpone repeatedly the 2004 DGHC polling. Kolkata finally dissolved the council and appointed Ghising as caretaker, giving him sole control of the institution's resources.

Protection of Ghising's power was in Kolkata's and New Delhi's interest because his challengers invariably raised the issue of Gorkha statehood. For example, the pro-Gorkhaland leaders of Darjeeling's CPM and the AIGL were both murdered in 1989, shortly after Ghising agreed to drop the statehood demand in exchange for the DGHC. In 2000, an upstart political party, the Gorkhaland Liberation Organization (GLO), called for a Gorkhaland state and threatened a guerrilla campaign against the centre. The GLO leader was arrested in 2001 for alleged involvement in a plot on Ghising's life, though a case was never brought against him. C. K. Pradhan, who led the GNLf military wing in the 1980s and was also an advocate for Gorkha statehood, was murdered in 2002:

Pradhan's widow, establish[ed] a breakaway party, the Gorkha National Liberation Front (C) ... The party holds the West Bengal government and Ghising responsible for Pradhan's death because he was a strong supporter of Gorkhaland ... Maximus Kalikote, the youth leader of GNLf(C), charges the West Bengal government and the local [DGHC] government of being hand in glove in Pradhan's murder ... Other leaders in the region believe that the West Bengal government fears replacing Ghising will restart the Gorkhaland movement. (Shrestha, 2003, p. 12)

Ghising rode out the storm over Pradhan's death—aided by the state's repeated delay of DGHC elections—and the GNLf(C) became largely defunct.

The Fall of Subash Ghising

Ghising's rationale for the suspension of DGHC elections was that the council needed to be added to the 6th Schedule of the Indian constitution, a list of tribal councils. Both New Delhi and Kolkata were receptive. A plan to include the council in the 6th Schedule was announced, along with a central government promise of 1.5 billion rupees in new funding for the revamped DGHC. However, 6th Schedule status requires a constitutional amendment, so the new designation was not immediately effective.

The 6th Schedule proposal was unpopular with most Gorkhas, who considered the designation as 'tribal' to be demeaning. The classification also had the potential to eliminate some of the special legal privileges of lower caste Gorkhas. Seizing an opportune political moment, Bimal Gurung, Ghising's second-in-command, broke from the GNLF in October 2007 to form the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (Gorkha People's Freedom Front (GJM)). The GJM's platform was blocking the 6th Schedule, removing Subash Ghising from power and obtaining Gorkhaland state. The party engineered blockades of roads to Sikkim, general strikes, tax strikes and sieges of government buildings. The GJM's rise has been less violent than that of the GNLF in the 1980s, although there have been clashes between the two parties and between Gorkhas and other communities in areas claimed for Gorkhaland.

Responding to the GJM threat in late 2007, the central government tried to ramrod the 6th Schedule amendment through the national legislature, asking a joint session of parliament to pass the bill without following the usual procedures of referring the bill to the upper house or to the parliamentary standing committee on home affairs. When the opposition balked at this fast tracking, the delay proved fatal. Massive protests forced Ghising to resign and flee Darjeeling in March 2008.

Making of a New Hegemon

The GJM is the new dominant power in Darjeeling, as evidenced by the huge margins of victory for its candidates for the West Bengal legislature in early 2011 (Table 1). The party's command of the Hills was also obvious when I attended GJM rallies and marches in 2007–2008. Every household was expected to have one member in attendance and captains kept track of attendance.

The GJM's elimination of its political rivals has run in parallel with a ratcheting down of its demands. For example, in spring 2010, rumours that the GJM would accept a new Hill Council led to a revival of the AIGL, which pledged itself to continue the statehood movement. A few months later, Madan Tamang, the leader of the AIGL, was murdered while in the company of state police escorts. Investigators have released cell phone recordings in which Bimal Gurung and other top GJM leaders seem to be plotting the assassination. Nicole Tamang, a GJM leader, was arrested for the murder and then escaped from state custody:

The All India Gorkha League had already alleged that Nicole was allowed to flee as the state reached an understanding with the GJM after it dropped its demands to include [the areas of] Dooars and Terai in the proposed hill council. 'The theory sounds ridiculous,' said a senior official of the state police. 'But one thing is baffling. Nicole's escape was facilitated and [state police officer] Pahari could have a role in that. He was responsible for a serious lapse. It's intriguing that no action has been taken against him'. (Bandopadhyay, 2010)

In July 2011, the GJM signed an agreement with New Delhi and Kolkata for autonomy arrangements well short of statehood. The Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) has legal control of more aspects of administration than the DGHC had, although the DGHC's de facto domain covered most GTA responsibilities. Like the DGHC, the GTA has no true legislative power and does not have jurisdiction over the police (Government of West Bengal, 2011). In March 2012, the GJM dropped a demand for the territorial jurisdiction of the GTA to exceed that of the DGHC.

The summer 2012 GTA elections gave fresh evidence of the GJM's political hegemony in Darjeeling. The party won all 45 seats in the GTA, 28 of these in uncontested elections. (Nicole Tamang was among those elected.) Darjeeling-based parties, including those in favour of Gorkhaland, accused the GJM of suppressing competition:

Representatives of the Communist Party of Revolutionary Marxists (CPRM) also accused the GJM of giving up the demand for Gorkhaland in the rush to get elected to the GTA ... They said the polls were a complete farce where only the GJM candidates were allowed to contest—a contention also echoed by the leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). 'There was no atmosphere to conduct elections in the hills. We were forced to withdraw our candidates because of the continuous threats of the GJM,' said Jibesh Sarkar, acting secretary of the party in Darjeeling. (Singh, 2012)

The ruling party in Kolkata, the Trinamool Congress, also withdrew its candidates. Despite alleged irregularities, both the chief minister of West Bengal and the national home minister attended the GTA swearing-in, with Bimal Gurung as the new chief executive. The home minister trumpeted the centre's promise of two billion rupees of development funds to the GTA over the next three years, adding that 'if more money is needed for development, we will give you [*sic*]' (IANS, 2012). The chief minister weighed in with promises of a university and hospital renovations.

Regional Elites and the Gorkhaland Movement

The history of the Gorkhaland agitation is inconsistent with the assumptions of the segmental-institutions thesis. In Darjeeling, local autonomous institutions were a response to crisis in the 1980s rather than the precursor to crisis. Mobilization for autonomy is primarily a tactic of local political competition. The AIGL settled for modest terms when it was politically unrivalled in Darjeeling. Both the GNLF and GJM negotiated for less than statehood, let alone sovereignty, once secure from local competitors. By contrast, autonomy demands escalated owing to weakening of the hegemonic party after Rai's death and Ghising's missteps. When a weakened hegemon makes political space available, challengers immediately demand greater autonomy for Darjeeling. The reliable popular response to such appeals suggests the durability of both the Gorkha identity and the Gorkhaland demand.

Conclusions

The segmental-institutions thesis is inconsistent with India's history. Crisis preceded the creation of segment states in India. Examination of WNSCF's coding of Indian states suggests the very distinction between segment states and federal states is endogenous to

prior nationalist mobilization. Segment states have stabilized India, which has remained intact. The Gorkhaland movement shows why local autonomy does not have the effects WNSCF anticipates: the theory overstates regional elites' incentives to obtain independence and downplays the role of local political competition—and, thus, of popular sentiment—in nationalist mobilization.

WNSCF makes an important contribution when it shows that segmental institutions can be used to squash political competition and democracy. However, this study sounds a major note of caution on the central policy prescription in WNSCF. Like my colleagues' pieces on Nicaragua, Cameroon and Tibet, my analysis of India suggests that segment states are highly endogenous to crisis. The statistical portions of WNSCF do not address this endogeneity and therefore do not show that segment states alter the probability of nation-state crises in cases other than those the book treats qualitatively. Thus, WNSCF does not give reason to eschew federalism or minority autonomy on the grounds of avoiding crisis. Nonetheless, I share Roeder's ambivalence towards ethnic subnational autonomy, not because of a threat to state integrity, but because of the potential to reify the power of the elites who win autonomy concessions from the centre.

Notes

1. Hoddie's paper in this collection provides an example, quoting Han Chinese rhetoric towards Tibet.
2. In the statistical analysis of nation-state crises, the book argues that 'Since most segment-states predate the first time period of this data set, it is not possible to engage in meaningful comparisons of the [country-ethnic group] dyads before and after introduction of segmental institutions' (p. 283). In the WNSCF replication data, there are 122 segment states and only 42 of these segment states were created after 1955, when the data begin. However, it is worth noting that the correlation between segment states and nation-state crises is negative and statistically significant in the subsample of ethnic groups that can be observed with and without segment states, i.e. in regressions that include dyad fixed effects.
3. Other South Asian segment states, such as the former East Bengal (Wilkinson, 2008) and the ethnic federation in Burma (Walton, 2008), were also the product of nation-state crises.
4. The three contemporary segment states in WNSCF that were recognized in India's original constitution are Assam, Orissa and West Bengal.
5. WNSCF lists the ex-princely states ('Type B' states in the 1950 constitution) as segment states between 1947 and 1956; most of the former British provinces ('Type A' states) are not listed as segment states in the same period. Coding the ex-princely states as segment states is probably appropriate before the Indian constitution came into effect in 1950 and in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, which has special constitutional autonomy. However, it is not clear that the formal institutional features of the other Type B states fit the definition of segment states. Citizens of Type B states had no unusual rights or any legal status as a people. Both Type A and Type B states had elected legislatures with chief ministers as the head of government. The distinction between Type A and B states was that a Type A state had a governor appointed by the national president whereas a Type B state had a rajpramukh. The constitution does not describe a rajpramukh as appointed by the president but instead defines him as 'the person who for the time being is recognised by the President' as rajpramukh (Article 366). The first rajpramukhs were all chosen from among members of the ex-ruling family or families. However, the ex-princes had no constitutional claim to the office of rajpramukh. In sum, the Type B states were not communal partitions and did not have more de jure autonomy from the centre than other states.
6. The 15 new states are Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttaranchal. The states formed in the absence of prior crisis are (arguably) Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh.
7. WNSCF's list stops in 2000. Three new states were inaugurated in 2000, bringing the total number of Indian states to 28.

8. The exceptions are the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Mizoram and Nagaland. Indian states are often quite discriminatory but this discrimination is by means of residency requirements and de facto rather than de jure measures (Weiner, 1978).
9. Some features of Indian federalism might be exceptions to this statement: for example, in each state only particular castes and tribes are eligible to run for reserved seats in the legislature. However, all of India's states have these features, not just the 17 segment states listed in WNSCF.
10. Two states, Goa and Sikkim, are excluded on population grounds.
11. The Dravidian movement is best characterized as a particularly radical form of Tamil nationalism, not as an alternative nation-state project. The movement's primary focus was not outreach to other South Indians but an effort to distinguish between 'authentically' Dravidian Tamils and Tamil-speaking Brahmins, viewed as assimilated Aryans (Pandian, 1998).
12. Central reversals of local autonomy arrangements have also preceded civil wars in Pakistan (Dunbar, 1972) and Sri Lanka (Shastri, 1990).
13. Gurkha was a kingdom in Nepal circa the 1700s (Sinha, 2003).

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