

今日人类学民族学论丛

Anthropology and Ethnology Today Series

国际人类学民族学联合会第十六届大会文集

Book Series of the 16th World Congress of IUAES

黄忠彩 总编

Editor-in-Chief Huang Zhongcai

民族关系

Ethnic Relations

塞罗妮-隆 周建新◎主编

Edited by E.L.Cerroni-Long and Zhou Jianxin



知识产权出版社

全国百佳图书出版单位



今日人类学民族学论丛

Anthropology and Ethnology Today Series

国际人类学民族学联合会第十六届大会文集

Book Series of the 16th World Congress of IUAES

黄忠彩 总编

Editor-in-Chief Huang Zhongcai

民族关系

Ethnic Relations

塞罗妮-隆 周建新◎主编

Edited by E.L.Cerroni-Long and Zhou Jianxin



知识产权出版社

全国百佳图书出版单位

责任编辑：纪萍萍

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

民族关系 = Ethnic Relations: 英文 / (美) 塞罗妮 - 隆
(Cerroni-Long, E. L.), 周建新主编. —北京: 知识产权
出版社, 2011. 6

ISBN 978-7-5130-0574-6

I. ①民… II. ①塞…②周… III. ①民族关系-世
界-文集-英文 IV. ①D562-53

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2011) 第 091219 号

民族关系 / Ethnic Relations

MINZU GUANXI

塞罗妮 - 隆 周建新 主编

出版发行：知识产权出版社

社 址：北京市海淀区马甸南村 1 号

网 址：<http://www.ipph.cn>

发行电话：010-82000860 转 8101/8102

责编电话：010-82000860-8130

印 刷：北京中献拓方科技发展有限公司

开 本：720mm × 960mm 1/16

版 次：2011 年 6 月第 1 版

字 数：270 千字

邮 编：100088

邮 箱：bjb@cnipr.com

传 真：010-82000860-8240

责编邮箱：jpp99@126.com

经 销：新华书店及相关销售网点

印 张：10.75

印 次：2011 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

定 价：38.00 元

ISBN 978-7-5130-0574-6/D · 1220 (10341)

版权所有 侵权必究

如有印装质量问题，本社负责调换。

Preface

China won the right to host the 16th IUAES World Congress in July, 2003. After six years of preparation, the Congress will be held in Kunming, China during July 27-31, 2009.

The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) was established on August 23, 1948, when it merged, in fact, with the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES), which was founded in 1934. The latter was the product of various Congresses of Anthropological Sciences, starting in 1865.

The IUAES is one of the member organizations of the International Social Science Council (ISSC) and also of the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH). The IUAES is also a member of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). Its aim is to enhance exchange and communication among scholars of all regions of the world, in a collective effort to expand human knowledge. In this way it hopes to contribute to a better understanding of human society, and to a sustainable future based on harmony between nature and culture. The IUAES once noted a draft statement on the future of world anthropology in *"Current Anthropology"* (1979): "The scope of anthropology in terms of areas of human interest includes such critical issues of the contemporary world as problems of environmental management, pressure for the progressive reduction of disparities and the restructuring of the world order, the future of the nation-state, ethnic pluralism and the future of national society, and the harmonization of the roles and functions of institutions with the basic and derived biological and psychic drives of man". The IUAES itself consists of national and institutional organizations in more than 50 countries in all parts of the world, and also includes some hundreds of individual members. The research effort and involvement of the IUAES is principally arranged by its scientific commissions, of which, currently, there are twenty-seven, and each of which concentrates on some area of anthropological interest. They included ethnic relations, aging and the aged, women, children, youth, migration, epidemiology and Aids, tourism, primatology, linguistics, and so on.

The theme of the 16th IUAES World Congress in Kunming, China is "Humanity, Development, and Cultural Diversity". The Anthropologists and Ethnologists around the world will present over 4,000 papers, which covered 33 sub-disciplines or research fields as follows: Aging and the Aged Studies, Aids, Archaeological Anthropology, Children, Youth and

Childhood Studies, Communication Anthropology, Development and Economic Anthropology, Educational Anthropology, Enterprise Anthropology, Ecological/ Environmental Anthropology, Ethnic Culture Studies, Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Identities, Food and Nutrition Anthropology, Gender and Woman Studies, Globalization Anthropology, Historical Anthropology, Human Ecology, Human Rights Studies, Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Development Studies, Legal Anthropology and Legal Pluralism, Linguistic Anthropology, Medical Anthropology and Epidemiology, Migration Anthropology, Museum and Cultural Heritage, Nomadic Peoples Studies, Physical Anthropology and Molecular Anthropology, Psycho-anthropology, Religious Studies, Sport Anthropology, Theoretical Anthropology, Tourism Anthropology, Urban Anthropology, Urgent Anthropological Research, and Yunnan Studies.

As the organizer of the 16th IUAES World Congress, The Chinese Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (CUAES) decided to edit and publish “Anthropology and Ethnology Today Series”—the paper collection series of the above sub-disciplines or research fields, for example, Physical Anthropology, Molecular Anthropology, Migration Anthropology, Museum and Cultural Heritage, Nomadic Peoples Studies, Linguistic Anthropology, Medical Anthropology, and Ethnic Culture Studies. We hope that the scholars from different parts of the world can share with all the achievements in the book series of this congress.

Zhou Mingfu, Executive Vice-president
Chinese Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

Huang Zhongcai, Secretary-general
Chinese Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

July 14, 2009

Contents

1. Introduction: Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations.....	E. L. Cerroni-Long	1
2. Ethnic Conflict and State Intervention: Colonialism in Motion	Magid Shihade	10
3. Risk of Art and Art of Risk: Korean Immigrant Artists in Russia, USA and Japan	Oleg Pakhomov	22
4. Crossing Boundaries: Ethnicity and Islamic Conversion in Belgium	Johan Leman, Christiane Stallaert, Priscilla Choi and Iman Lechkar	44
5. Inter-Ethnic Marriages in Korea	Hyup Choi	68
6. Ethnic Solidarity: Westernization and Nationalism in Japan	Yuki Hirano	79
7. Chuukese Migration to Guam: Toward Anthropological/Organizational Understanding	Ansito Walter, Marilyn C. Salas and Ning Li	87
8. Forest Land Allocation for Ethnic Minorities in Mountainous Areas of VietNam: An Anthropological Perspective	Tinh Vuong Xuan	113
9. Media Reception and Preservation of Ethnic Culture: A Case Study of the "Sea Gypsy" Peoples of Southern Thailand	Chongchit Sripun Robert	131
10. Culture and Ethnicity Theory.....	E. L. Cerroni-Long	156

Introduction: Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations

E. L. Cerroni-Long

Eastern Michigan University

Since the middle of the twentieth century, ethnicity has been playing an increasingly relevant role as the catalyst for national separatist movements, civil liberty struggles, and inter-group conflict. As a consequence, the analysis of ethnic relations has steadily become a major concern for social scientists interested in the processes directly affecting world peace and the protection of basic human rights. The attention given to ethnicity research by anthropologists, however, has so far been only uneven and often based on controversial theoretical elaboration (Cerroni-Long, 2009). COER, the IUAES Commission on Ethnic Relations I co-founded and chair is dedicated to addressing this issue (Cerroni-Long, 2008) by facilitating international exchanges of information and cooperative research efforts on the matter of ethnic relations, and by creating opportunities for the presentation and dissemination of the most promising research in this area.

Ethnicity research

Sociocultural anthropology has emerged as a discipline in the West from the experience of culture-contact catalyzed by colonialism and imperialism, and from an evolutionary intellectual paradigm relating cross-cultural differences to presumptive unequal progression on an arbitrarily-defined "ladder of civilization". From these rather inauspicious beginnings, though, this young discipline has moved on to contribute constructively to our understanding of human behavior, through the introduction and theoretical refinement of a set of concepts crucial to the analysis of social organization and by stimulating the collection of rich ethnographic documentation. Whether one sees sociocultural anthropology as comparative sociology or as the science of culture, it is clear that the ultimate validity test of a discipline aimed at the study of humankind is its global relevance. If we take seriously the concept of cultural relativism, we must acknowledge that our cultural

background is likely to color our cognitive processes. This implies that any intellectual endeavor, including anthropological theorizing or ethnographic description, is influenced by our culture-specific perceptions. It is therefore all the more important that our disciplinary practice be informed by engagement in an ongoing and sustained international and intercultural dialog.

The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) is the only institutional framework specifically aimed at encouraging the worldwide production and exchange of anthropological knowledge. The IUAES Commissions translate into action the internationalist aspirations characterizing the work of the Union. Consequently, their mission is rather delicate: channeling the interaction of the widest possible range of scholars who share a specific disciplinary interest, while at the same time containing the intellectual splintering that so often emerges within national scholarly communities. The fulfillment of this challenging mission seems particularly important in certain areas of our disciplinary involvement, and the study of ethnicity is most definitely one of them.

Ethnicity and anthropology

The history of anthropological involvement in ethnicity research is an uneven one. Until the mid-twentieth century, the topic received very little attention, and when it did, it was generally in reference to assimilation/acculturation and modernization studies. In fact, until the end of the 1960s, the anthropological approach was strongly influenced by psychology, and in those settings in which ethnicity was studied at all, the central issue was “identity”, especially in reference to processes of “acculturation” and to the mental strains such processes may create among immigrant “minority populations”. In other words, the model was one of ethnicity as a transitional phenomenon with chiefly psychological manifestations. In turn, this was a model correlated to a view of cultures as integrated wholes, politically operating as nation-states. From this point of view, ethnic identity was seen to derive from precarious attachment to “primordial loyalties” in situations of culture contact, variously caused by migration or invasion and inevitably leading to the acculturation of minority groups to the dominant culture.

The 1960s, however, witnessed the culmination of liberation movements in colonial settings—ongoing since the end of World War II—and the proliferation of civil-rights struggles by minority groups in many multiethnic societies. As a consequence, ethnicity captured both the popular limelight and the attention of social scientists. Thus, by the end of that decade, many anthropologists turned to a model borrowed from political science, in the

sense that ethnicity was now seen as a “situational” strategy, aimed at negotiating relations across groups perceived as culturally different. The year 1969 is usually chosen to mark the turning of the theoretical tide because it is the year of publication of Fredrik Barth’s edited volume *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Barth, 1969), one of the most influential anthropological publications of the post-war period and the text spelling out most clearly the “situationist” approach. In fact, this approach had been introduced in the earlier works of other anthropologists, such as Edmund Leach, but worldwide political fragmentation trends provided a favorable historical milieu for its rapid establishment (Cerroni-Long, 2009).

To a large extent, the situationist model is still very influential, but in recent years it has undergone a subtle transformation because of two factors. First of all, the enormous growth of ethnic-related political conflict has called worldwide attention to the socio-economic correlates of intracultural diversity. Secondly, the steady increase in migratory flows across national boundaries—themselves often caused by ethnic conflict in specific areas, and augmented by the globalization of capitalism—have convinced many anthropologists that the orthodox disciplinary definition of culture has lost validity. As Barth himself stated: “We now realize that global empirical variation in culture is continuous, it does not partition neatly into separable, integrated wholes. In any population we may choose to observe we will also find that it is in flux, it is contradictory and incoherent, and it is differently distributed on variously positioned persons.” (Barth, 1994: 14)

The fact that this view of cultures as the unstable, incoherent site of social fragmentation and contestation has been chiefly proposed by scholars operating in those areas of Europe and North America which constitute the core centers of expansion for world capitalism has led other anthropologists to call attention to the cultural and historical specificity of theory building. Indeed, this “new historicism” may be one of the most interesting contemporary trends in anthropology, and an effective response to postmodernism.

Whether or not one sees postmodern social science as the product of an intellectual paradigm that is just as profoundly influenced by consumer capitalism as the previous evolutionary paradigm was influenced by industrial capitalism, it is important to realize that trivializing the cultural component of ethnicity has profound implications. Among them is the disregard for the rights of indigenous populations victimized by Western colonialism, whose aspirations to self-determination are specifically based on claims of cultural autonomy. Theoretical views of ethnicity are inextricably linked with theoretical models of culture, and inevitably involve the treatment of politically volatile issues such as

nation-building and regional separatism; this gives particular urgency to making sure that the scholarly dialog on this topic be truly multicultural and international.

Dimensions of ethnicity research

Since initial discussions among the founding members of the Commission on Ethnic Relations have all emphasized the fundamental importance of clarifying our research focus, several themes were identified as being so central to our concerns that they should be articulated separately, to provide us with the overall parameters of research. These related issues include:

- endogenous and exogenous representations of ethnicity
- the self-determination of indigenous populations
- territorial context of ethnic conflict
- ethnogenesis and ethnodevelopment
- ethnic separatism and nation-building
- the impact of language on ethnic relations
- the religious dimension of ethnic relations
- ethnic diasporas and transnationalism
- ethnicity and immigration policies
- the political dimension of ethnicity
- ethnic diversity and the law
- ethnic and subcultural diversity
- education in ethnically heterogeneous societies
- ethnic identity and multiple allegiances
- the commodification of ethnicity
- the concept of race in ethnicity research
- cultural hegemony and ethnic discrimination
- phenotypical and expressive factors in ethnic relations
- the interplay of gender and ethnic factors in social stratification
- the role of NGOs and international organizations in addressing ethnicity

It is also understood that the clarification of the concepts used in our research remains a priority. Terms such as ethnogenesis or ethnodevelopment have come to mean different things to different people, and, indeed, even terms as basic as culture and ethnicity do not enjoy consensual understanding within the anthropological scholarly community.

As a matter of fact, the definition of ethnicity or ethnic group, is itself a matter of

scholarly debate. COER nonetheless needed to develop at least a “working definition” for its research focus, and, after lengthy scholarly discussion, it was agreed that *an ethnic group is any human community viewing itself as culturally distinct from others with which it is fundamentally related at the sociopolitical level* (www.emich.edu/coer/Objectives.html). Such communities may be large or small, dominant or marginalized. They may exist within the boundaries of a single state or have members in more than one state, and their relations with each other may be symmetrical or asymmetrical, harmonious or conflictual, cooperative or exploitative. It is also recognized that ethnic identity is socially constructed, so that markers of group membership may vary over time and/or be perceived differently in different circumstances, individuals may choose to identify with different communities at different times and places, and their very group identification may be accepted or contested by both outsiders and insiders.

Finally, while no particular theoretical position in the study of ethnic relations is endorsed by COER, it is also recognized that sociocultural background and political ideology are all likely to influence definitions of ethnicity and ethnic research practice. Consequently, as the Commission coordinates the exchange of information on the dynamics of ethnic relations, it also encourages the self-reflective assessment of the epistemological matrices, within which such information is collected, analyzed and interpreted. The closing piece in this collection attempts to provide an example of such a reflexive theoretical analysis, encouraging its cross-cultural validation.

Representing ethnicity

Because of the cultural specificity of the way ethnicity research results are interpreted, it seems fundamental to clarify cross-culturally the way ethnicity itself is represented. This approach bring to the fore some specific questions. How do ethnic groups come into existence? Do all ethnic groups ultimately aspire to sovereignty? How does belonging to an ethnic group affect behavior, identity, and collective representation?

The relationship of ethnicity and nationalism to democracy has been defined as one of the central questions of our age. Similarly, sorting out the relationship between cultures, subcultures, and ethnic groups remains a core theoretical issue in anthropology. In spite of the growth in the cultural heterogeneity of nation-states triggered by globalization, there is little agreement among social scientists on how best to respond to it in terms of policies that protect the cultural rights of minority groups without fostering separatist movements. Multicultural education has been seen as a particularly promising strategy toward the

establishment of genuinely pluralistic forms of governance. However, the link between power—social, political, economic—and cultural hegemony seems to be very strong, and cultural dissonance in hierarchical, centralized polities sets into motion a powerful centrifugal process. This process often leads to the self-segregation of any group seeing itself as “different” from the mainstream, and this in turn precipitates ethnogenesis, ultimately resulting in secessionist aspirations. Because of this, multicultural education often seems part of an accommodationist strategy, aiming at defusing conflict by focusing the attention of non-dominant populations on issues of cultural identity, rather than on the ongoing realities of socio-political inequality. Furthermore, the way multicultural education has been developed and applied seems to vary along a broad spectrum. Indeed, multiculturalism in general is defined and applied in very culture-specific ways, and these differences correlate to the various ways ethnicity itself is perceived, expressed, and represented by in-group and out-group members within any national setting. Such cross-cultural differences need to be documented and explored and anthropologists have the best disciplinary tools to apply toward the necessary clarification of the conceptual categories to be used in ethnicity research.

Retrospect and prospects

The aim of the session organized by COER for the 2009 World Congress of the IUAES, held in Kunming (China), was to gather and present research and scholarship which clarifies current representations of ethnicity and assesses them cross-culturally. In particular, it aimed at documenting the contrasting ways ethnicity is defined, expressed, analyzed, and represented within and outside specific ethnic groups. Also, it was hoped that, by contrasting and comparing lay and analytical terminological uses, an attempt at relating the resulting typology to historical and cultural variation could be made. Finally, the session would highlight the presentation of both empirical research and theoretical proposals on policies that promise to positively address ethnic conflict, ameliorate ethnic relations, and establish constructive forms of cultural pluralism.

One of the major sources of interethnic conflict is the differential impact various governmental policies may have on groups which, because of cultural difference from the majority, end up being marginalized, or suffer economic, political, or social disadvantages. As a matter of fact, this is probably the primary challenge that needs to be addressed in governing multi-ethnic nation-states. And since the majority of the world's nation-states are increasingly becoming multi-ethnic, the issue of how best to apply the results of

social-science research to social policy recommendations was selected by COER as the theme of a series of International Colloquia, the first of which was held in Florence, Italy, in July 2006 (Cerroni-Long, 2007).

Because of its great current relevance, this topic was also the focus of a number of sessions hosted by the Kunming 2009 World Congress. and among the most interesting were those reporting on “insider anthropology” research on East and South-East Asian ethnic groups. One of these sessions was coordinated by Professor Jianxin Zhou, Head of the Research Institute for Ethnology and Sociology at the Guangxi University for Nationalities, and the world-renowned expert on Hakka culture. The final three chapters of this collection, before the concluding one, offer case-studies effectively exemplifying this research approach and its results.

The rest of the papers address instead the topical objectives of the COER session, and their individual value can best be assessed by reading their texts. Nonetheless, it seems possible to summarize some issues which emerged from both the presentations, and especially, from the discussions they stimulated. In fact, one of the recommendations of congress participants was that special attention should be given to addressing these issues in the next round of scholarly initiatives our commission will sponsor. These issues include:

1. Definition of ethnicity

Anthropologists need to clarify how they define an ethnic group in reference to anthropological definitions of culture. What is an ethnic group and how is membership assessed? How can ethnicity be studied?

2. Definition of ethnogenesis

How do ethnic groups emerge and/or dissolve? How and with what results do they change? What is the crucial difference between an ethnic and a subcultural group?

3. Typology of ethnic groups

Do all ethnic groups have similar structural characteristics, or are there major differences? (related, for example, to the history of the groups' emergence, to their demographic composition, or to the interface of ethnic and racial issues)

4. Definition and treatment of cultural heritage

How does cultural heritage relate to ethnic identity, and who has the right to define, describe, preserve, and study cultural heritage?

5. Definition of the dynamics of social, economic, and political representation of ethnicity

When and how do ethnic groups become minorities? Can a state be truly organized along multi-ethnic lines? What state policies can encourage harmonious ethnic relations? Does

multi-ethnic mean the same as multi-cultural? Does cultural pluralism address ethnic diversity? What is the relationship between culture and citizenship?

These five sets of issues seem to require the most urgent attention, and anthropological research on ethnicity can contribute very substantially to answering some of the questions related to such issues. Above all, ongoing developments in ethnicity research continue to call attention to the need for some synthesizing analyses of the ethnographic evidence which has been collected in a number of settings, and for the establishment of a theoretical approach which is universally applicable, thus fulfilling the scientific aspirations of anthropology as a discipline.

While the current influence of historicism is a welcome disciplinary corrective for the excesses of postmodernism, it may also be felt that it confines researchers to the discussion of case studies so specific that no contribution to anthropological theory can actually derive from the study of ethnicity. This is disproved by the efforts of those scholars who are actually focusing on the ethnic phenomenon to better understand how it relates to culture, and, through this understanding, hope to develop better theories of human behavior. Our discipline has been recently undergoing a thorough internal critique of its validity, both in terms of the products it generates—ethnographies—and in terms of the main research methods it employs—participant observation and the collection of oral and material expressions. When anthropological methods are applied to the study of socially marginal groups, which are often the ones whose ethnicity is perceived as problematic—issues of exploitation come to the fore. This, in turn, calls attention to the need for establishing a more balanced reciprocity in our relationship with the communities we study. Achieving this objective may require exploring and understanding just that cultural content of ethnicity which the situationists have called attention away from, and which the primordialists had sweepingly reduced to psychological atavism.

The time may be ripe for the development of anthropological theories of ethnicity that rather than focusing on “how” or “why” ethnic identity is used, attempt instead to examine “what” goes into it. In other words, it is time to formulate sociocultural theories of ethnicity. In the process, it is hoped that we may reach a better understanding of what culture is, how it is perpetuated and transmitted, and how cultural differences are negotiated across groups.

The study of ethnicity can contribute very crucially to theoretical and methodological developments in sociocultural anthropology, and the result of our research on ethnic issues has great potential for policy application. COER will continue to facilitate the dissemination and exchange of anthropological research on this topic, and we encourage

international scholarly involvement in these efforts.

References

Barth, F., ed., 1969, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Barth, F., 1994, "Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity" in *The Anthropology of Ethnicity*, H. Vermeulen and C. Govers, eds., Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.

Cerroni-Long, E. L., ed., 2007, "Addressing Ethnicity" (Special Issue) *International Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 22 (3-4)

Cerroni-Long, E. L., 2008, "Introducing COER" (in Chinese) *Journal for Guangxi University for Nationalities*, Vol. 29(6)

Cerroni-Long, E. L., 2009, "Ethnicity in Anthropology" in *Anthropology Now*, P.J.M. Nas and J. Zhang, eds., Beijing: IPR Publishing House

Ethnic Conflict and State Intervention: Colonialism in Motion

Magid Shihade

Lahore University of Management Sciences

Introduction

In this paper, my aim is to help understand ethnic and communal violence in the Middle East and beyond and to contribute to the critical field of ethnic conflict and resolution studies. I do this by discussing some prevalent explanations that are dominant among academics, politicians, media pundits and lay people alike when talking about communal and ethnic violence in the Middle East and elsewhere in the Third World and beyond. After discussing the limitations of these theories, I move on to suggest an alternative framework to explain this phenomenon. The approach I develop in this project examines intergroup violence, or state violence against a group, not simply as a historical event but rather as a structure embedded in Western modernity that has ramifications for the present and the future. My research offers a model for understanding communal conflict and violence in relation to the nature and origin of the state. It demonstrates how political, social, and historical developments create structures that have long-lasting implications for inter-ethnic and inter-religious group relations, and how these relations in turn can affect the politics of the state, the region, and the international community. It contextualizes the problem of communal and ethnic violence within frameworks of colonialism and neocolonialism embedded in Western modernity and in the structured racism that plagued colonizer and colonized alike. This paper attempts to widen the frame of analysis in the field of ethnic and religious conflict, and also adds to the understanding of the phenomenon of violence, ethnic or religious. In this paper, I argue that pervasive theories in the academy and public sphere in general are insufficient explanations for the phenomenon and that this is due to

misconception and blind spots embedded in Eurocentrism and Orientalism that dominate our thought, knowledge, knowledge production and dissemination. Thus, the paper is a humble contribution to the process of decolonizing knowledge and a step in correcting our disfigured perspectives on so many issues that dominate our lives in and outside the academy.

Discussion

The discussion here does not aim at engaging with all dominant theories in the field of conflict and violence in a comprehensive manner. It rather aims at engaging some dominant explanations that are pervasive in the academy, media and the general public about the phenomenon of conflicts and violence. For this, I engage with three theories: historical antipathy, manipulative leaders, and the weak state arguments. These theories are often used by politicians, academics, media pundits and lay people alike to explain conflicts and violence in Iraq, Palestine, or Afghanistan, among many other cases in the Third World. To do a detailed study of even one case in view of these theories is beyond the scope of this paper, yet, a brief engagement will suffice to show the limitations of such theories. In discussing these dominant theories, I refer to different cases from the region and beyond as a way to illustrate my argument while engaging with each theory and discussing its limitations.

1. *Historical antipathy*

One of the most commonly used explanations in the field is the “historical antipathy” paradigm, which is offered by scholars such as Donald Horowitz (1985, 2001), who argues that the primary cause of ethnic and communal violence is historical antipathy, economic and/or political, between groups. This paradigm is often used to explain violent conflicts in the Middle East by liberal and conservative scholars, politicians, media pundits, and lay people alike.

In my view, historical antipathy might be a factor that comes into play after a conflict begins to unfold, but it is not the chief cause of conflict and violence and should not be used as a totalizing, ahistorical framework. Thus, when analysts suggest that the sectarian violence between Shi’a and Sunnis in Iraq is due to deeply ingrained antipathies, real or imagined, between Muslim sects that stretch back in time to the 7th century, they forget that if this were the case, there should have been Shi’a-Sunni violence in Iraq for hundreds of years. But there is no historical evidence for this argument. To the contrary, historical evidence shows that Shi’a and Sunni Muslims mostly lived at peace with each other rather