NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Claiming Culture:
Ethnic Minority Rights Mobilizations in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador

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ABSTRACT

This project examines variation in ethnic minority mobilizations for cultural rights and asks: how, why, and under what conditions do violence-affected ethnic minority communities mobilize for increased cultural rights? Related to this, how do memories of violence interact with patterns of state (non)accommodation to affect the ways minorities claim their cultural, and more specifically, linguistic rights? This project has three goals: 1) to account for how democratization shapes citizen experiences of interest representation; 2) to explain how resources like collective memory interact with state institutions and practices in social movements; and 3) to understand differences between communities and states that indicate trajectories of cultural continuity or assimilation.

Despite many common characteristics—such as democratizing political regimes and legacies of state and paramilitary persecution—Tzotzil and Triqui communities in Mexico, Alevi Kurds and Armenians in Turkey, and Nahua and Lenca people in El Salvador make cultural rights demands in very different ways. This project argues that highly mobilized communities, those that visibly and vocally demand state recognition and funding for minority cultural projects, generally use narratives about historic violence to instrumentally press their cases, and experience less political, economic, and cultural accommodation by their states. As a result, these communities often use more visible extra-institutional rather than institutional claim-making tactics.

Tzotzil people from Acteal, Chiapas, are in this high mobilization category, as are Alevi Kurds from Turkey's southeast. By contrast, less mobilized communities produce less potent narratives about past violence, enjoy higher degrees of state accommodation, and tend to use institutional channels for claim-making. This project documents this pattern among Lenca people

in El Salvador and Armenians in Turkey. Still other people like Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca, Mexico, and Nahuas in Izalco, El Salvador mobilize to a medium degree but without the broadly appealing narratives of highly mobilized cases or the assimilation and institutional capture of least mobilized cases. In sum, the interaction between narratives of violence and state accommodation—the way people practice shaming their states to claim their rights—shapes mobilization patterns.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

List of abbreviations

AKP: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/Justice and Development Party

APPO: Asamblea Popular de Pueblos Oaxaqueños/Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca

ARENA: Alianza Republicana Nacionalista/Nationalist Republican Alliance

BDP: Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi/Peace and Democracy Party

CACTUS: Centro de Apoyo Comunitario Trabajando Unidos/Center of Community Support Working Together

CCNIS: Consejo Coordinador Nacional Indígena Del Salvador/National Indigenous Coordinating Committee of El Salvador

CGEIB: Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe/General Coordination of Intercultural, Bilingual Education

CHP: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/Republican People's Party

CMPIO: Coalición de Maestros y Promotores Indígenas de Oaxaca/Coalition of Indigenous Teachers and Promoters of Oaxaca

COCEI: Coalición de Obreros Campesinos y Estudiantes del Istmo/The Coalition of Workers, Peasants, and Students of the Isthmus

CONCULTURA: Consejo Nacional de Cultura y Artes/National Council for Culture and Art

Convergencia: Convergencia por la Democracia, Movimiento Ciudadano/Convergence for Democracy, Citizen Movement

COPULENCA: Consejo de Pueblos Lencas y Kakawiras/Council of Lenca and Kakawira Pueblos

CUP: İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti/Committee of Union and Progress

DEHAP/DTP: Demokratik Toplum Partisi/Democratic Society Party

DDR: Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration

DGEI: Dirección General de Educación Indígena/General Directorate for Indigenous Education

FMLN: Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional/Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front

HAKPAR: Hak ve Özgürlükler Partisi/Right and Liberties Party

INI: Instituto Nacional Indigenista/National Indigenous Institute

KADEP: Katılımcı Demokrasi Partisi/Participatory Democracy Party

Limeddh: La Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos A.C./Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights

MASJC: Municipio Autónomo de San Juan Copala/Autonomous Municipality of San Juan Copala

MINED: Ministry of Education

MULT: El Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Triqui/Movement for Triqui Unification and Struggle

MULTI: Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Trique-Independiente y Democrático/ Movement for Triqui Unification and Struggle – Independent and Democratic

MUPI: El Museo de la Palabra y el Imágen/The Museum of the Word and the Image

OIT/ILO: Organización Internacional de Trabajo/International Labor Organization

ONUSAL: United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador

OP-ICESCR: Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ORDEN: Organización Democrática Nacionalista/National Democratic Organization

PAN: Partido de Acción Nacional/National Action Party

PAPICA: Program of Support for the Indigenous Peoples of Central America

PNA/PANAL: Partido Nueva Alianza/ New Alliance Party

PKK: Parti Karkerani Kurdistan/Kurdistan Workers' Party

PRI: Partido Revolucionario Institucional/Institutional Revolutionary Party

PT: Partido de Trabajo/Labor Party

PUP: Partido Unidad Popular/Popular Unity Party

SEP: Secretaría de Educación Pública/Secretariat of Public Education

SNTE: Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación/Mexican National Educational Workers Union

SRI: Socorro Rojo Internacional/ Red Aid International

UBISORT: La Unidad para el Bienestar Social de la Región Triqui/Unity for the Social Wellbeing of the Triqui Region

UNCERD: United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

For Matolah, who is just beginning.
May she learn and share an appreciation of diversity and the ways of peace.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1. THEORIZING ETHNIC MINORITY RIGHTS MOBILIZATIONS

Brightly colored posters lined the cobblestone streets of southern Mexico just a few months after the Acteal massacre of December 22, 1997. Glued to telephone poles and concrete walls, the posters' graphics depicted faces of government officials leering over the silhouette of a bloody church. The poster text demanded rights for residents of Acteal, an indigenous Tzotzil village in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico, and justice for the 45 members who were massacred by paramilitary forces while in a prayer meeting. "If we don't organize, they will wipe us out like they did in Acteal," Chiapan activists responded when I asked in 2012 why they had organized a series of workshops on indigenous rights (Anonymous 2012e). Their explanation captures how one community includes memories of violence in grassroots mobilization as they try to gain state protection for their rights as minority citizens. Chiapan activists, like their Kurdish and Nahua counterparts in Turkey and El Salvador, believe that organizing is important for physical and cultural survival, implying that well-organized communities stand a better chance of self-preservation in the face of state or paramilitary violence.

Rights mobilizations are tactics to increase visibility of minority demands on the state. I argue in this project that memories of violence fuel the narratives that drive many people to participate in these mobilizations. In addition, many minority communities assert the importance of their mother tongue both as a powerful organizing tool and as a rights claim in and of itself, citing past ethnically targeted violence as justification for current cultural rights demands. Communities claim the right to their mother tongues in diverse ways within cultural rights mobilizations. While some Kurds choose to symbolically use Kurdish in parliamentary ceremonies even though it leads to political persecution, others make billboards, brochures, and

pamphlets in Kurdish, determined to see the language remain alive in Turkey. In Mexico, a portion of the Tzotzil community in Acteal created an alternative to the government funded primary school because bilingual education was not being carried out in practice. The new school, part of the Zapatista autonomous school system, operates bilingually in Tzotzil and Spanish and refuses any government funding or interference.[1] Through these and other examples, this project looks to ethnic minority mobilizations for cultural rights to garner insight about constraints and opportunities for citizens to participate in strengthening democratization processes. In particular, I connect memories of violence to contemporary political behavior in three democratizing states: Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador.

Observing different mobilization patterns and multifaceted responses to incidents of state and paramilitary violence throughout the democratizing world shapes the research agenda: how, why, and under what conditions do violence-affected ethnic minority communities mobilize for increased cultural rights? In other words, this agenda inquires about ways that marginalized citizens express demands for cultural continuity in democratizing regimes. To summarize the conclusions in this project, violence-affected ethnic minority communities mobilize to differing degrees through institutional or extra-institutional means; the most mobilized cases employ narratives of violence while the least mobilized communities are prone to forgetting or silencing their own narratives of violence and often assimilate more into the dominant culture. The extent of narrative production is intimately linked with memories of violence in the community as well as patterns of state accommodation for minorities. The way that states incorporate minorities politically, economically, and culturally influences how mobilizations happen, but less tangible factors like memory and narrative also deserve recognition as potential causal factors of political

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[1] Chapter 3 discusses the complexities in the alternative school model practiced in Acteal and elsewhere in Chiapas.

behavior. Institutions matter in stopping or starting minority rights activism, but people's feelings, identities, and memories matter too.

I explore the outcome of ethnic minority mobilization for cultural rights claims in order to understand why some communities are better able than others to resist the homogenizing tendencies of states. While many ethnic minority communities assimilate into the dominant ethnic majority, other communities assert their right to cultural uniqueness while also claiming mainstream rights of citizenship. There is a spectrum of political behaviors available to citizens as they balance their dual identities as ethnic minorities and civil society members, which are scored as high, medium, and low mobilization across six cases. Though many possible paths to the outcome exist, I argue that the degree of mobilization for cultural rights claims is determined by various combinations of incorporation policies—or ways that the state includes or excludes minorities from the full rights of citizenship—and the extent of narrative production about memories of violence that ethnic minorities choose to make public. Understanding the dynamics of divergent paths to full citizenship for ethnic minorities informs our knowledge of democratizing states and their agendas for multiculturalism.[2] The outcome of ethnic minority mobilization for cultural rights claims is significant for understanding democratization processes. This project moves beyond conventional structural explanations of social movements by accounting for how memories of violence contribute to mobilization. Communities that channel memories of violence into powerful public narratives have greater success in achieving high degrees of mobilization than communities that produce only limited or private narratives. To explore this idea, I link literatures on collective action, citizenship, contentious politics, memory

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[2] Though some minority communities considered in this project challenge the meaning of multicultural democratic states themselves, I take democratic statehood as the dominant norm and most likely evolutionary status of the states included here. Therefore I address questions of alternatives to the state only in very limited ways in the empirical chapters.

politics, and transitional governance. In particular, I engage Tilly's approach to storytelling in

relationship to rights claims (Tilly 2002: 35-39) as a means of harnessing the potential for

narrative to facilitate social movements. While ethnic minority mobilization may not be

correlated with an increase in actual rights achieved, communities that visibly mobilize are better

positioned to demand more rights than those communities that remain silent or only ask for

limited rights. This project uses the act of mobilizing for claims as a benchmark of healthy

democratization independent of whether or not the claims are successful. Discourse about rights

is integral to democracy because it is part of deliberation, a process contingent on freedom of

speech and expression. Referring back to the indigenous activist quoted at the beginning of the

chapter, unorganized communities risk being eliminated, and communities that forget, or do not

harness memories of violence through narrative, are more at risk of being victimized again.

Communities that remember survive and hold their democratizing states accountable for their

survival.

The cases: This project is based on political ethnographic work including more than 150

qualitative interviews and 20 participant observations of meetings and mobilizations across six

ethnic minority communities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador. In addition, I use comparative

historical analysis of secondary sources to supplement data on how ethnic minorities, their allies,

analysts, and government officials have framed narratives of violence, and how these narratives

are used in the interest arena during mobilizations for cultural rights during democratization

processes. The following overview provides local level, place-based contexts for why a theory of

ethnic minority mobilization for cultural claims in democratizing countries is important. Table 1

below offers comparative data for the cases in relation to narrative production and outcome.

	Extent of narrative production	Institutional mobilization	Extra-institutional mobilization	Outcome: aggregated mobilization
Tzotzil (Acteal, Mexico)	high	Medium	high	high
Kurdish (Dersim, Turkey)	high	High	high	high
Triqui (San Juan Copala, Mexico)	medium	High	medium	medium
Nahua (Izalco, El Salvador)	medium	Medium	low	medium
Armenian (Istanbul, Turkey)	low	Medium	low	low
Lenca (Morazán, El Salvador)	low	Low	low	low

Table 1: Similarities and differences in narrative production and outcome.

I divide mobilization for claim-making into institutional and extra-institutional categories (Garay 2009: 269), with the former connoting channels of state-legitimized interest representation, and the latter as contentious acts that place people in conflict with the state. The first type, institutional claim-making, includes contacting politicians and government agencies, calling on judicial infrastructure, or participating in venues for interest presentation that are state-created (Kapiszewski 2009: 194). Extra-institutional claim-making, which often occurs when institutional claim-making fails or is not seen as a realistic means to achieve goals, is part of a contentious politics and does not require that claims be fulfilled in order to generate collective action. Most of the groups in this project employ a mix of mobilization tactics, with all groups

employing institutional claim-making and most also relying on extra-institutional claim-making to communicate their desire for increased cultural rights.

All cases included in this project have been affected by physical forms of state and paramilitary violence that include assassinations, massacres, or genocide. Though the scale of violence differs case to case, the irreversible loss of life is a weight shared by all six communities. Also, though the degree of political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state varies, all six communities make choices about mobilization within the structural constraints of accommodation policies, or practices of inclusion or exclusion, instituted by their states. Yet each community harnesses memories of violence in distinct ways, interacting within state constraints and supports as the community transforms experiences of violence into a discourse of entitlements for cultural rights.

Tzotzil community members in Acteal, Chiapas, Mexico, exhibit a high degree of mobilization for cultural rights claims, and their use of narrative about memories of violence in mobilization is similarly high. The massacre of 22 December 1997, in which forty-five people were executed by paramilitaries inside Acteal's Catholic Church, has been commemorated on the 22nd of nearly every month for the last sixteen years. Acteal's Tzotzil community is autonomous in accordance with federal provisions for indigenous leadership selection, and its leadership committee spearheads claim-making efforts fueled by the memories of the 1997 massacre. Though Tzotzils have gained some prominence in local Chiapan politics, they remain marginalized politically at the national level, living in poverty with few means for upward mobility. While Tzotzils receive token consideration in legal documents, everyday practices of racism against them continue.

The Triqui community in San Juan Copala, Oaxaca, Mexico has mobilized to a medium degree for cultural rights claims in the face of continued violence from paramilitary groups there. More than 30 people have been killed since 2007, when a portion of San Juan Copala residents declared autonomy following Mexico's legal provisions for indigenous communities to choose local leaders in line with traditional customs instead of through political parties.[3] The violence against this group has persisted and the situation remains unresolved. In fact, though many of the cases in this project are considered post-conflict, I avoid the term because Triqui people, as well as Kurds, remain in active conflict with state or paramilitary forces. I describe communities as "violence-affected," which does not carry a temporal connotation. Both Triqui and Tzotzil ethnic minority communities in Mexico mobilize for cultural rights claim-making at local and national levels, and use memories of violence to justify their sense of entitlements to increased rights. However, Tzotzils in Acteal are more highly mobilized than Triquis from San Juan Copala.

In Turkey, more than 30,000 Kurds have been killed since 1984 (Minority Rights Group International 2011), with thousands more displaced by the civil war between Kurdish separatists and the Turkish military. However, as a way to narrow the scope of my explanations about this very complicated case, I focus on one specific Kurdish group, Alevi Kurds in Dersim/Tunceli,[4] in southeast Turkey. In 1938, between 6,500 and 11,000 Kurds were killed by military forces within the span of a few weeks, with perhaps as many as 50,000 killed in the few years

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[3] Roughly, thirty Triqui people have been assassinated since the declaration of autonomy. The numbers of people killed, wounded, and displaced remains controversial because each side in the conflict has a political motive to modify the numbers. Furthermore, due to rampant impunity, little formal documentation has taken place (see Gellman 2012b, footnote 12 for discussion of precise figures).

[4] Dersim is the name of the town in Zazaki, the language spoken by Zaza Alevi Kurds. The Turkish government, in an effort to make Turkish language dominant in the Southeast, enacted a widespread program of renaming in the 1930s with the development of the Turkish Republic. On December 25, 1935 the Turkish government changed the name from Dersim to Tunceli, and the name people use for the town often signifies their political alliances. As I try to follow local labeling vernaculars throughout this project, I refer to the town as Dersim.

surrounding the massacre.[5] The state-led destruction of Dersim's Kurdish population in 1938

created potent memories of violence that are referred to in contemporary mobilization for

cultural rights. Incidents of violence against Kurds throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s keep

concerns about violence at the forefront of Kurdish discourses about their place as citizens in a

democratizing Turkey. Now one of the best organized Kurdish communities in the country with

respect to cultural reinvigoration, including mother tongue language initiatives, Dersim's Alevi

Kurds use a high level of narrative in their similarly high mobilization for cultural rights claims.

Armenians in Istanbul, Turkey, by contrast, exhibit low narrative production and

correspondingly low levels of mobilization for claims. The genocide[6] of 1915 left an indelible

mark on the Armenian community in Turkey, though the incidents of violence have few

surviving witnesses. Concerns that mobilization for cultural rights claims would bring swift state

repression have been passed down to later generations and have had a paralyzing effect. There

are vocalized concerns among Armenians about increasing behaviors of assimilation, especially

language loss. Though Turkey grants Armenians the right to enact mother tongue education

through their own school systems, Armenians receive minimal support from the Ministry of

Education, and Turkish is predominantly the language of young Armenians in Istanbul. The right

to language is considered a human right protected under the United Nations Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous People (UN 2007: Articles 13 and 14). Though the assassination of

prominent Armenian journalist Hrant Dink briefly created a new forum from which to mobilize

for cultural rights claims (Gellman 2012a), silence dominates the interaction between Armenian

citizens and the state.

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[5] The numbers killed vary widely depending on sources. See Chapter 4 on Turkey for elaboration.
[6] The use of this term is discussed in Chapter 4.

Returning to the Latin American context, El Salvador's *pueblos originarios*[7] have experienced the pressure of *mestizaje*, to join the ethnically mixed group of *mestizos* who may acknowledge indigenous origins but who primarily identify first with their state. I consider two cases of mobilization for claim-making in El Salvador: Nahua people in Izalco and a small Lenca community in Morazán. Izalco was the center of a 1932 massacre that targeted indigenous people, killing tens of thousands, and preceded decades of widespread assimilation visible through dress and language. Fear of continued persecution lingers, but today Nahua leaders have mobilized to medium degree in order to reintegrate Nahuat[8] language and cultural values into youth education. Yet Nahua and other originarios face challenges from a state that still has no recognition of indigenous people in its Constitution.[9]

Finally, Lenca communities in El Salvador exhibit low levels of mobilization for cultural rights claims. In addition to being targeted during the 1932 massacre, Lenca people were also harshly affected by the civil war that ravaged Morazán department, the base of the Lenca community in El Salvador. Though communities such as Guatajiagua are trying to revitalize mother tongue usage, the majority of Lenca have assimilated into the dominant Spanish-speaking *mestizo*[10] paradigm and they maintain private, rather than public, narratives of violence and indigenous ancestry.

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[7] Interviewees are split between those who want to be called *indígenas* because the label comes with rights, and those who want to move away from a legacy of racism by using *pueblos originarios*. I use *originarios* throughout this project, but also use "indigenous" to avoid repetition, and generally follow the word choice of interviewees during fieldwork.

[8] *Nahua* is the ethnicity and *Nahuat* is the language.

[9] As of this writing the Legislative Assembly had approved but not yet ratified an amendment to the Salvadoran Constitution that would acknowledge the existence of indigenous people, but not indigenous communities, in the country. The implications of this are discussed in Chapter 5.

[10] Mixed Spanish and indigenous ethnic make-up. The implications of mixed ethnic background are discussed at length in Chapter 5.

I discuss each of these six cases extensively below, and the rest of the project proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 continues with a deeper exploration of terms central to this project such as memory, identity, power, citizenship, and narrative, which are then operationalized in the empirical chapters. Chapter 3 presents empirical data from ethnographic work in Mexico, covering both the Tzotzil case of Acteal, Chiapas, and the Triqui case of San Juan Copala in Oaxaca. Chapter 4 analyzes Kurdish and Armenian cultural rights mobilizations in Turkey, with particular attention to the way struggles for mother tongue education are playing out there. Chapter 5 turns to the forgotten indigenous populations in El Salvador. I elucidate how highly marginalized and assimilated populations of Nahua and Lenca citizens are reasserting their rights to be both indigenous and Salvadoran, and to have those identities formally sanctioned by the state. Chapter 6 presents cross case analysis of the cases and addressed alternative explanations in detail, while Chapter 7 summarizes the findings of the project and presents their larger implications for studying cultural rights mobilizations in democratizing regimes.

Theoretical Framework

In this project I argue that ethnic minority communities are more or less likely to mobilize in order to make claims for cultural rights based on the different degrees of political, economic, and cultural accommodation that each community receives from the state, in combination with the communities' ability to articulate their grievances through public narrative.
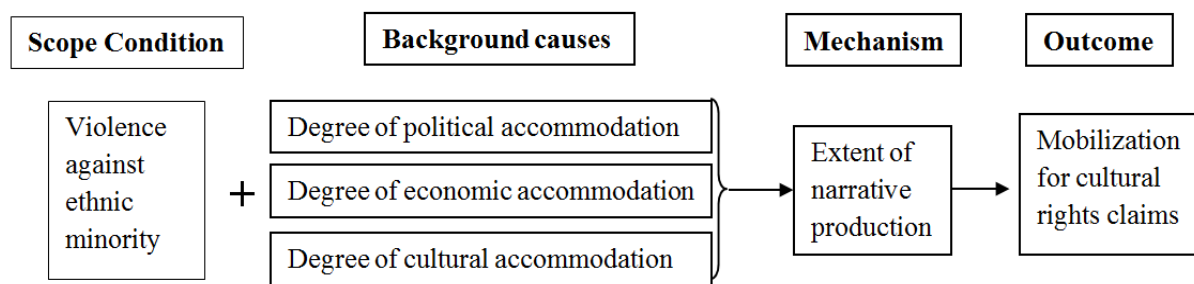
Figure 1: Summary of argument.

While oversimplifying the relationship between the causes and outcomes, figure 1 provides a convenient reference point for the elements of the research puzzle. On the far left of the model is the scope condition for case inclusion, the existence of violence against the minority. This condition provides content for the memories of violence that are then potentially harnessed into narratives. In this model, targeted violence creates the presence of grievance that influences the self-perception of the community as having been wronged. A massacre, assassination, or genocide can all be considered reasons for the presence of a grievance within a given community, and the character of the grievance may inform the community's response to perceived perpetrators.

Moving to the right in figure 1, background causes represent the structural confines within which ethnic minority communities operate when determining what to mobilize for and how to make their claims. These include institutionalized policies and practices of inclusion or exclusion, as seen in accommodations minorities may receive from the state through political participation, economic integration, or cultural rights such as the right to mother tongue education. Background causes form structural barriers or incentives for communities to make claims on the state will be discussed in their own subsection below.

In violence-affected ethnic minority communities, the three background causes of political, economic and cultural accommodation exert an influence on the outcome through the mechanism of narrative. Narrative, defined in this project as a technique of public communication that conveys a meaningful message from teller to audience, is a powerful tool in creating conditions for the mobilization of communities. Narrative is the primary means by which memories of violence can be captured and instrumentally used in rights claims. I call this process *shaming and claiming*, when communities push states to increase rights protections by broadcasting narratives of violence that paint states as undemocratic or in an otherwise unflattering light. In combination with certain degrees of state accommodation, shaming and claiming may not take place. Communities will achieve minimal mobilization if potential narratives are prevented from emerging and are only kept privately within communities. Conversely, a strong ability to produce narrative, when combined with certain structural factors, results in higher degrees of mobilization. In this way, the extent of the narrative production, in combination with preexisting violence as well as policies and practices of minority inclusion or exclusion, determines the high, medium, or low level of mobilization that each of the six case studies in this project represent. Though the full label of the outcome on far right in the model is 'mobilization for cultural rights claims,' I use derivatives such as 'claim-making' or 'mobilization' as shorthand throughout this project.

To fit within the scope of my theoretical framework, cases must meet certain conditions. Included cases are ethnic minority communities[11] that have been affected by state or paramilitary violence, and have demonstrated interest in retaining their cultural rights by demanding

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[11] I loosely interpret community to mean a collection of people that share a common cultural and geographic framework, even if there is much internal diversity within a given group.

recognition from states during periods of democratization. Violence in this project refers to physically experienced violence through a loss of life by assassination, massacre, or genocide. My central hypothesis is that memories of violence contribute to political behavior choice. I also hypothesize that the role of the state as anti-democratic perpetrator of violence influences citizen reactions to the state as democratic partner. This element is crucial because a main aspiration of this project is to understand how minority mobilization takes places specifically within the context of democratization processes. Therefore, the final condition for case inclusion is that rights claims of minorities occur within at least minimal conditions of democratization, with relatively free and fair elections, broad suffrage, and some civil liberties protections. I do not try to explain claim-making processes in authoritarian regimes, where rights claims may simply be shut down through overt repression, nor in full-fledged consolidated democracies where the social contract between citizens and the state is more entrenched. Rather, the scope condition of a *democratizing* state as the actor being petitioned by mobilized minorities acknowledges the fragile but as yet undefined new space in the interest arena where civil society tests the limits of its ability to gain new rights and redefine citizenship in more holistic ways. Thus, I assume that the democratic infrastructure is at least rudimentarily in place for citizens to invoke the social contract with their states, while at the same time not overestimating the quality of that infrastructure.

Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador meet thinner definitions for democracies because all have had elections in which opposition parties won the presidency, in the cases of Mexico and Turkey, twice in a row. I argue that standard benchmarks for consolidated democracy, and even benchmarks for democracy in general, focus too strongly on electoral outcomes (Bowman, Lehoucq et al. 2005; Caraway 2004; Collier and Levitsky 1997; De Mesquita, B.B. et al. 2005;

Lijphart 1968; Munck and Verkuilen 2002; Paxton 2000). This means that standard transition timelines prioritize the experiences of dominant ethnic majorities who make up the bulk of the voting polity, without adequate attention to severe inequalities that may still permeate countries at the time of electoral changes of power.

My intervention is meant to look critically at what factors we evaluate when determining the democratic status of a state and to concretizing the sometimes nebulous civil liberties component of democracy that scholars avoid because of the complexity involved in its assessment (for example, Manning 2008; Schmitter and Karl 1991; Tilly 2007). Countless times, interviewees expressed their lack of faith in their states, and also in an international community that is willing to consider their states democratic when minority citizens are still subject to daily indignities. For example, does citizenship in a consolidated democracy include being forced to use the majority language to obtain social services, or being denied the right to educate children in their mother tongue? As Dahl called for the term polyarchy to refer to the imperfect practices of states in reality (1971), I suggest maintaining the label 'democratizing' for states until they have met the *full* requirements of civil liberties, in addition to procedural benchmarks. Such reasoning is in line with the work of King and Lieberman (2009:2 4), who question whether the United States should be labeled democratizing rather than democratic prior to the 1960s. Democracy should not be merely a "background condition" for political struggle, but rather can be "itself the object and outcome of political struggle" (King and Lieberman 2009: 5). By applying the label "democratizing" to countries such as Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador, I invoke King and Lieberman's dynamic approach to democratization and extend their push for more than electoral benchmarks to be included in the definition of regimes. Furthermore, I call

for minority cultural rights to be especially included when evaluating civil liberties, for what is political behavior if not one manifestation of identity-driven preferences?

Mobilizations for cultural rights claims take place in the interest arena,[12] or the non-electoral space where citizens can express their preferences. While scholars of democratization have probed the depths of action in the electoral arena, as this is a critical component of the regime type (Dahl 1971), the interest arena—and especially unconventional actors making claims there—needs greater attention. Collier and Handlin (2009) have laid the foundation for conceptualizing the interest arena, and my project explores the role of marginalized citizens there as a new way to calibrate benchmarks of democratization.

Why memory?: Memories of violence form the basis of politically salient public narratives, the production of which serves as the mechanism connecting political, economic, and cultural accommodation to mobilization. I define a mechanism as the process through which a range of factors relate to an outcome. Mechanisms are not situation-specific, meaning that they will operate in similar ways in a variety of contexts.[13] In other words, narratives are the process through which memories of violence and structural practices of inclusion or exclusion fuse to exhibit a causal influence on mobilization patterns across all six cases. In the empirical chapters I operationalize these elements of the theoretical model, providing examples of how each plays out in the specific cases, but provide brief outlines below.

While there is no single path to high mobilization, it appears that a pattern of moderate exclusion, meaning generally lower levels of accommodation, combined with potent narratives

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[12] See Collier and Handlin 2009: 8-12 for further discussion of the interest arena.
[13] My approach to theorizing mechanisms draws on the discussion in McAdam, Tarrow et al. 2001: 24-25.

of violence, allows Kurdish and Tzotzil communities to make forceful claims on their states.

Similarly, though other patterns may be possible, Triqui and Nahua communities that exhibit

medium mobilization have low to medium accommodation patterns and moderate degrees of

narrative production. Neither purely excluded or accommodated, these communities do make

claims, but galvanize less of their potential audiences. Finally, Armenians and Lencas have

mobilized only minimally, with the former group keeping to themselves to avoid losing the

privileges they have already gained, and the latter group so highly marginalized that they do not

have the tools to mobilize. While the low mobilization cases share some levels of

accommodation with communities that exhibit medium or high mobilization, the key difference,

I argue, is that these communities have not been able to translate their grievances into public

narratives. In Armenian and Lenca communities, spokespeople maintain private narratives about

grievances and sometimes try to make them public, but do not emphasize narrative as an

instrumental part of their claim-making for cultural rights. In sum, accommodation patterns

matter in determining the degree of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making, but the ability

to transform memories of violence into palatable narratives matters too. I next theorize the

outcome and present how it is visible in the case study communities.

Outcome: Mobilization for cultural rights claim-making can be reached through a variety of

paths. However, there are two main ways in which mobilization for rights claims takes place;

institutionally or extra-institutionally. In figure 2 below, I label these two types of claim-making

as defining dimensions, meaning that both institutional and extra-institutional claim-making

define mobilization. To make these dimensions explicit, I also provide examples of indicators

that let us know when either of the two types of claim-making is occurring. I show that

institutional claim-making is often visible through actions such as participation in electoral politics and formal negotiation with policymakers. These are only two of many possible means of institutional claim-making, but they clearly exemplify that institutional claim-making implies using institutionally approved channels for mobilization.

The second defining dimension of mobilization, extra-institutional claim-making, implies just the opposite. Part of contentious political behavior, extra-institutional claim-making is not sanctioned by institutions and uses unconventional and unpermitted (though sometimes tolerated) means of claim-making. Indicators of extra-institutional claim-making include protests conducted without permission from local authorities, and other familiar tactics from contentious social movements such as illegal strikes, boycotts, road blocks, or sit-ins. Essentially, communities utilize extra-institutional claim-making tactics when people feel that institutional claim-making will not produce results, such as when institutional channels have already been tried and have failed, or when no institutional channels are accessible.

Outcome	Defining dimensions	Indicators
Mobilization for claim-making	Institutional claim-making	Support for/ running candidates in elections
		Formal negotiation with policymakers
	Extra-institutional claim-making	Unauthorized protests and petitions
		Disruption of everyday life through road blockages, boycotts, strikes and other unsanctioned behavior

Figure 2: Mobilization for cultural rights with dimensions and indicators.

Figure 2 shows how the ontological defining dimensions that make up mobilization are indicated by the presence or absence of certain features that are substitutable for one another. That is to say, mobilization can take many forms; and within certain parameters, each of these forms can be considered valid manifestations of the outcome. To situate this approach in the literature, I use the logical OR concept developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein and commonly known as the family resemblance technique for concept aggregation in qualitative methods. The concept of OR, or family resemblance technique, allows one outcome, in this case mobilization for claim-making, to appear in many different guises. As the name suggests, as long as there is a resemblance among the guises, each guise can be sufficient to qualify as being part of the same family, in this case the outcome of mobilization. Simply put, the family resemblance technique, in this context, shows that different combinations of characteristics can be sufficient to constitute the outcome of mobilization (Goertz 2006: 29). For example, mobilization can look like street protest, or petitions submitted to the government, or participation in permitted candidate rallies. Boundaries between what constitutes mobilization and what does not can be somewhat fuzzy because there are actions such as voting or non-payment of taxes that may occur for reasons other than mobilization, for example, due to coercion or poverty.

The dimensions that constitute mobilization for claim-making are either formal institutional claim-making or extra-institutional, contentious claim-making. These two divergent paths to claim-making can equally compose the process of claim-making itself; therefore, communities that exhibit only institutional claim-making OR communities that exhibit only contentious or extra-institutional claim-making are equally valid manners of expressing the outcome. Neither one of the dimensions are necessary for the outcome to occur, but either one is

sufficient. Table 1 presented earlier shows how the cases are scored on both expressions of the outcome.

Background causes: To capture the role of structural factors that influence mobilization, I follow three categories of inclusionary or exclusionary policies, called background causes, which contribute to the degree of mobilization by minority communities: political, economic and cultural accommodation of minorities by the states. These factors are helpful for determining the landscapes of opportunity available to ethnic minority citizens to live out their lives in political, economic, and cultural ways. Different levels of accommodation across the three categories will also tell us something about how much opportunity communities have to make public the memories of violence they hold. Finally, these three state accommodation categories allow evaluation of both structural and cultural barriers to inclusion of minorities in democratizing societies.

Political accommodation refers to the political integration of ethnic minorities, evaluated by the availability of channels for minorities to express their demands to the state. This refers not only to current institutional channels for claim-making such as parliamentary representation, but also to state policies regarding the political status of minorities. The political channels for accommodation are an especially useful venue for comparative work across the three states because of their dramatically different institutional design. For example, Mexico's federal structure, compared to the highly centralized institutions of Turkey and the somewhat centralized institutions of El Salvador, creates very different channels of access to political accommodation across the states. I measure this background cause by assessing institutional designs that facilitate

or inhibit regional autonomy, constitutional provisions for minority rights, and the space for
minorities in political decision-making, both inside and outside institutions.

Economic accommodation refers to the level of economic opportunity each minority
community has available to them. This is measured based on subjective impressions community
members have of the potential for economic mobility, taking into account government attitudes
towards economic inclusion of minorities, which serves as a benchmark of the state's
commitment to multiculturalism. There are significant differences in economic accommodation
across the countries but also within countries across minority groups, showing the importance of
having more than one case per country. Economic accommodation is qualitatively measured to
show the perceived economic limitations or opportunities for minorities that may fuel or
diminish their mobilization for rights claims. Though theoretically limiting, for the sake of
comparative simplicity, in this project economic opportunities are understood as the ability to
advance upwardly in class status through increased purchasing power. Though groups such as
the Zapatista contingent of Acteal may contest that such a capitalist model is in fact part of their
pursuit, the ability to move away from the poverty line is integral to economic inclusion for
minorities.

The third background cause, cultural accommodation, also captures structural constraints
on the national perception of each polity, but additionally tries to account for the philosophical
rejection of multiculturalism. This is measured by focusing on Ministry of Education and
Ministry of Culture policies to determine how state-sponsored education and cultural projects
facilitate or inhibit the formation of culturally aware and diverse citizens. I also focus on access
to mother tongue education for minorities as a benchmark of multicultural tolerance. The table
below shows the cases scored on each of the background factors. While the cases do not

represent every possible typological component, they cover a broad spectrum of important

outcomes.

	Political accommodation	Economic accommodation	Cultural accommodation
Tzotzil	medium	low	medium
Kurdish	medium	medium	low
Triqui	low	low	medium
Nahua	low	low	medium
Armenian	medium	high	medium
Lenca	low	low	low

Table 2: Background factor scores for cases.

To summarize, each of the three background causes contribute to the structural

constraints or supports that minorities experience in their mobilization for cultural rights claim-

making. These background causes will be evaluated to determine if they represent genuine forms

of accommodation to promote multiculturalism rather than covert attempts at assimilation. In the

ethnographic case work, I critically interrogate policies and practices that may appear to promote

state accommodation of minorities, but upon further inquiry reveal the requirement for a degree

of cultural assimilation in order to access a given benefit. This means that constitutional

provisions for multiculturalism, for example, are insufficient to warrant a case coding of high

political accommodation because such provisions have the potential to be ignored in practice.

Rather, I assess the degree to which political, economic, and cultural accommodation are both

formally decreed and actually implemented and enforced in practice to assure that accommodation is not merely assimilation in disguise.

Narrating violence: The background causes of political, economic, and cultural accommodation join with memories of violence to produce, through narrative, high, medium, or low levels of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making. Here I briefly describe how each background cause interacts with the causal mechanism of narrative to produce the levels of mobilization. Following family resemblance logic, each of the background causes is substitutable, meaning that a given score on political accommodation can be as influential as a given score on economic or cultural accommodation. However, just because the background causes are substitutable does not mean that they necessarily exhibit equal influence on the outcome. In fact, the empirical chapters show that political and cultural accommodation patterns provide more causal leverage than economic accommodation in explaining why some communities are better mobilized than others.

Low or medium levels of accommodation on all three background causes are sufficient to foster mobilization for rights claims. Applying this logic to the cases, when ethnic minorities are excluded from mainstream political, economic, and cultural life in their countries, such exclusion breeds dissatisfaction, resentment, and anger. To simplify, when minorities are marginalized, they are upset about it. Marginalization exacerbates the preexisting grievance, targeted violence against minorities, and the memories of this violence become agentive when they can be communicated to others through the mechanism of narrative.

Narrating memories of violence is not contingent on the accommodation or cooptation of minority communities by the state through political, economic, or cultural means. The relative

ability to create narrative can come about regardless of the degree of political, economic, or cultural accommodation with one key exception. If an ethnic minority group experiences high accommodation in all three background causes, the ability to advocate for increased rights will be compromised because groups become scared of losing privileges already embedded in the current system. Therefore, I would expect to see lower levels of mobilization in communities that are well-accommodated by states. However, lack of mobilization can also indicate an inability to translate grievance into narrative, as happens when communities are so dramatically silenced or assimilated that they lose the threads of their own collective memories.

I define narrative as the process of communicating a personal or collective story verbally, textually, or visually in a way that makes others bear witness to the narrator's situation. Narrative is thus a public act compelling social engagement, and can emerge, for example, through testimony or collective story-telling. Though private narratives exist and may play powerful roles in the emotional lives of actors, public narrative, referred to for brevity as narrative throughout the project, is necessary for shaming and claiming, and is my focus here.

Narrative as mechanism provides a way to include background causes of political, economic, and cultural accommodation as parts of the story about choices people make to deploy memories of violence in mobilization for rights claims. While memories of violence may deepen people's minority identities, it is the ability to communicate those memories powerfully to others that foments collective action for a specific purpose.[14] If the potential to communicate memories through narratives is not harnessed, however, people sometimes enter processes of cultural assimilation in pursuit of a sense of security that states hostile to minorities do not provide.

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[14] Though the case does not meet the scope conditions of the project, it is interesting to look at the July 2013 protests among African-Americans in the United States regarding the Trayvon Martin verdict, as they show how memories of historic violence can be reignited by contemporary violence, and how narratives about such incidents can be channeled into increased mobilization for rights claims.

Patterns of high accommodation may hinder the production of public narrative due to fear of losing privileges already gained, though it is possible that highly accommodated communities may also be able to make larger demands because they are already visible to the state. Conversely, communities with low degrees of accommodation have less to lose in taking their grievances public, but they also face larger hurdles in gaining recognition of their demands.

Analyses of ethnic minority rights mobilizations are important for two reasons. First, learning how, why, and under what conditions ethnic minorities mobilize for rights offers insight into what rights mean, when and why rights are seen as useful, and how marginalized citizens envision themselves engaging with new kinds of rights not previously offered at local, state, or international levels. Second, this line of inquiry implies that the context of democratization creates unique opportunities for civic behavior patterns of both citizens and the state as they negotiate new social contracts. The definition of a given social contract may be contested or debated as citizens and states work out the institutional arrangements and social norms under which all actors will accept their respective roles. But how citizens go about forging the social contract with their state can serve as a litmus test for the health of democratizing regimes.

Actors: Moving away from the main theoretical elements of the research puzzle, I now turn to the two main types of actors in this project, titling them in reference to the violence that is present in every case considered here. R*ememberers* constitute direct descendants and solidarity community members, while *forgetters* constitute the majority of the public and successive government administrations in all three countries. Forgetters may deliver both informal and official statements denying historic violence as problematic for the national psyche or the nation's democratization process, or explain away the violence as self-defense or as being

between minority or indigenous people rather than perpetrated upon minority or indigenous people. Both rememberers and forgetters can be actors within minority communities or the state apparatus.

In each of the six case studies, local minority elites dedicated to advancing the rights of marginalized peoples have significantly contributed to democratization processes. Many of the actors I focus on in each community are a subset of people Tarrow has labeled "rooted cosmopolitanists," people who he describes as "rooted in specific national contexts, but who engage in contentious political activities that involve them in transnational networks of contacts and conflicts" (2005: 29). *Rooted cosmopolitanists* may be members of the ethnic majority who join, for example, with Armenians to form solidarity coalitions and are intellectual elites: academics, journalists, and NGO workers who have access to media, financial resources, and a capacity to frame the issues in ways that resonate with the larger international community. Rooted cosmopolitanists may also be members of ethnic minorities who have greater access to resources, excluding access to transnational networks, and often emerge as spokespeople of their movements. These actors may be comparatively better able to frame the discourse of their communities but have only limited ability or interest in connecting their cause to the international community. Though rooted cosmopolitanists may hold any political persuasion and might help ethnic minority causes for any number of reasons, I focus on one particular segment of this population, that (1) resides on the political left, (2) has more exposure to their Western counterparts than monolingual and domestically-educated elites, and (3) is also politically

involved in their country's other divisive issues.[15] Not only does this subsection of elites know how to capitalize on political opportunities and mobilize resources necessary to stage conferences or publish books, they are often also able to translate their message to a multilingual world. In each of the six cases, rooted cosmopolitanists are significant actors both within ethnic minority communities and in the solidarity coalitions that support their quest for increased cultural rights.

Methodology: Political ethnography as a method allows deep, contextualized, and first-hand narratives from each target population. One potential problem with qualitative interviewing as a component of political ethnography is the potential to simply be given 'memory scripts' from interviewees, prompting the question, "how do you know if they are telling you the truth?" This is a realistic concern because violence-affected community members have a sense of what outsiders want to hear when they come to ask about the experience of a group, and thus there is the potential for interviewers to be fed pre-packaged scripts about how the community feels rather that accessing any unique insight through the process of interviewing. However, I argue that the genuineness of the responses is actually less important than the way the community itself crafts the discourse of mobilization. If community members have created memory scripts, it is likely connected to a perceived advantage in presenting themselves in a certain way. Since I define narratives to be the central causal mechanism by which memories are translated into social mobilization, it is appropriate to gather the dominant narratives in each community, regardless of the degree of scriptedness or even truthfulness such narratives may entail.

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[15] Examples of other divisive issues in Turkey, for example, include Kurdish autonomy and religious freedom characterized by the headscarf debate. In Mexico, other divisive issues might include Zapatista autonomy and free versus fair trade.

Crafted narratives represent the way communities want to be perceived, rather than (perhaps) how they actually are, but narratives are no less powerful because of this. In fact, James Scott documents the power of selectively crafted narratives in two of his books (1985; 1990). In his political ethnographic work on the village of Sedaka in Malaysia, Scott describes the "cautious resistance and calculated conformity" of village peasants towards their elite bosses, showing how the publicly enacted behavior differ from private ones (1985: 241-261). He also presents the role of gossip, as a potentially more manipulative narration style that allows expressions of grievance with minimal risk of retribution (1985: 282). In Scott's more philosophical analysis of hidden versus public transcripts, he discusses the role of performance for oppressed communities and also about methods of political disguise that keep speakers safe as they voice complaints (1990: 45-58 and 136-172). Scott contributes to this project the recognition that gaining the 'truth' is not the research objective; rather, understanding the role of crafted discourses in power-infused relationships can be at least, if not more relevant, for explaining why communities behave the way they do. In my case studies, I see that narratives can powerfully mobilize people regardless of their degree of truth they may or may not contain.

The creation of memory scripts can create a new social reality for the group based on the systematic manner in which stories are retold to outsiders. The dominant narrative around memory in a community, regardless of who it is being constructed for, is representative of a strategy of memory that the community has espoused. Just as testimonial literature has been a powerful and prepackaged way to share traumatic memory with a larger readership,[16] interviews that contain memory scripts are still examples of narrative, and thus, still foment the connection between memories of violence and minority claim-making. My ability to access "real" insider

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[16] For examples of this genre, see Alegría 1987; Burgos-Debray 1983; Díaz 1988.

perspectives may be limited, but this does not undermine the validity of the narratives themselves. The time spent in each community and the relationships formed during those periods allowed me access to people's versions of the larger community narrative, scripted or not.

In addition, participant-observation of meetings of indigenous activists and organizational members allowed me to hear the language and witness other symbolic performances used to facilitate mobilization in more spontaneous ways than formal interviews. Also, visits to organizational headquarters repeatedly provided visual confirmation of the kinds of symbols I saw in the streets and the types of stories interviewees told me. For example, while visiting a communist party headquarters in Dersim, Turkey, I saw the wall of photographs of martyrs from earlier conflicts between Kurds and the state. This visual representation of memory and its importance in contemporary activism is mimicked in how individuals present the role of memory during interviews. Many tools for political ethnographic work, including site visits, qualitative interviews, and participant observation were useful in establishing the way narrative about memory was present in minority communities.

Claim-making in the literature: Many previous scholarly works have examined ethnic minority social movements, narrative, and memories of violence, and my own project makes three specific contributions. First, drawing on lessons across political psychology literature (for example Abrams and Moura 2002; Mondak 2010; Redlawsk 2006) and contentious politics literature (Aminzade, Goldstone et al. 2001; McAdam, Tarrow et al. 2001; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Tilly 2002; Tilly and Tarrow 2007), I craft a holistic view of people as political actors with both individual psychological motivations for action, but also with socially and structurally inspired

motivations to participate. Second, by considering how political, economic, and cultural accommodations support or constrain minority citizenship experiences of democratization, I participate in the discussion on optimal institutional design for multicultural states. I do this by evaluating the role federalism, decentralization, and autonomy play in mobilizations for cultural rights claim-making. Third, by assessing different state approaches to minority rights through constitutional provisions and education policies, I offer constructive criticism on how approaches to diversity management create different multiculturalisms.

The formulation of the question; how, why, and under what conditions do violence-affected ethnic minority communities mobilize for increased cultural rights refutes standard accounts of the collective action problem. In particular, it draws on Tilly's approach (Tilly 2002) to blending structural factors with stories as important elements in contentious democratization processes. Stories are finally being recognized by scholars like Tilly (2002) in relation to contentious politics, and Selbin, who documents how stories are connected to processes of remembering and forgetting (Selbin 2010). Tilly's Stories, Identities, and Political Change, (2002) looks at how stories and identities generate and constrain political change as a fruitful but messy component of better understanding why social movements develop in some cases but not in others (Tilly 2002: 208-209). Rather than presenting a crisp causal model of how stories work in political behavior, Tilly instead collects a career's worth of observations on how stories and identities have contributed to social change processes in a variety of cases around the globe. His book is particularly significant for this project in that he asserts the importance of how non-structural, emotively rooted narratives contribute to citizen-state negotiations in democratizing states. In his chapter "The trouble with stories," Tilley notes how central stories are to people's

identity, and later connects the relative strength of these remembered-story-based identities to the ability to make rights claims.

Selbin's contribution illuminates the interrelationship between memory and story, looking to the prominence of myths in revolutionary movements to explain how certain narratives become prominent, adhered to, and ultimately catalysts of social change. Both of these authors proffer convincing evidence for why memory is connected to identities that can be harnessed for political action, though the causal logic remains fuzzy. Drawing on their conceptual foundations, my project concretizes some of Tilly and Selbin's observations in specific case studies in hopes of integrating memory and narrative into explanations of why mobilization for cultural rights claims happens in some communities but not others. Other studies that examine how communities address collective action problems using identity-based means are Elizabeth Wood's work on El Salvador (2001; 2003), and Jocelyn Viterna's study of female insurgent mobilization (2006). These scholars explain behavior *during* conflict, whereas I focus on behavior *after* conflict, and the new temporal framework for explaining citizenship rights allows me to address the influence of democratization rather than authoritarianism in mobilization for rights claims.

Memories of violence are most commonly invoked in relation to demands for justice and reconciliation (See for example Barkan 2007; Buckley-Zistel 2006; Chandler 2008; Jelin 2003; Natzmer 2002). While many of these studies are foundational in developing understandings of the unique dynamics of post-conflict societies, they also are limited in how such studies use memory to address certain types of problems. Truth and reconciliation studies highlight remembering and forgetting in affected communities to answer questions about the role of psychological processes in post-conflict settings. Studies of memory in relation to truth

commissions, tribunals, and grassroots reconciliation processes have done an excellent job at making links between remembering and justice, or more broadly between memory and institutional rights claims (Breed 2007; Chheang 2006; De Greiff 2006; Fawthrop and Jarvis 2004; Ingelaere 2007; Lambourne 2004; Marks 2000; McGrew 1999-2000; Popkin 2000; Rae 2005; United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador, Bentancur et al. 1993). These studies tend to argue for either institutionalized justice to ensure that the rule of law is embedded in the post-conflict state (Bull 2008), or for grassroots reconciliation to ensure credibility among local people who have irreparably lost confidence in the state (Breed 2007; Ingelaere 2007).

The post-conflict literature is generally concerned with the traumatic aspects of remembered violence (Brewer 2009; Misztal 2003: 18; Ross 2007; Tilley 2005) because authors want to craft policy recommendations around disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes, or democratization and related institutional capacity-building (Blunt and Turner 2005; Krause and Jutersonke 2005; Lambourne 2004; MacLeod 2006). Too often, post-conflict reconstruction projects generated by leviathans like the World Bank fall into the trap of thinking that an end to violence combined with electoral democratization processes can create citizens and a democratic society, as seen in places like Cambodia, Rwanda, East Timor, and Côte d'Ivoire. Peacebuilding professionals, by contrast, emphasize the deep complexity of building trust and reestablishing networks in violated societies (Lambourne 2001; Liebler and Sampson 2003; Ropers 2004), but they do not always contextualize the process of trust-building within a deeper analysis of democratization. These streams of literature constrains citizens to the role of justice-seeker for past violence, whereas my project looks to how minorities address the range of cultural rights that should be available in democratizing and democratic regimes.

Classic studies of nationalism, though they also deal with issues of 'in' and 'out' group identity, do not theorize memory even though they invoke it, as in Weber (1976) and Anderson (1991) in their work on creating modern nations. The causal relationship between forgetting and democratization is best dealt with by Omar Encarnación in his work on Spain, where he shows the role that the Pact of Forgetting had in the aftermath of General Franco's regime (2008a; 2008b). Yet Encarnación does not differentiate Spain's minorities from the general population – his project is operating at the national level and mine at the subnational. Scholars such as McAdam (1982: x) mention the importance of *emotions* in catalyzing social movements, as how people feel feeds into determinates of political behavior. The most explicit work on the role of emotion in contentious politics is sociologist James Jasper's book, *The Art of Moral Protest* (1997), and his contribution to *Passionate Politics* (Goodwin, Jasper et al. 2001). This body of work integrates theories of political participation and variation in organizational strategies with theories about emotionality in political behavior. However, these works do not theorize the mobilization process itself, nor do they systematically connect emotionally laden memories to mobilization.

There is also literature addressing the role of memory in political behavior in some of the specific case studies. Scholarly work on Armenians in Turkey often revolves around the question of how to manifest remembrance of the massacres there (Bilal 2006), not on what impact such remembrance would have on current Armenian claim-making (Insel 2009). Debates occupy Turkish media as well as academia about what types of narratives should even be permissible in the public sphere. In Mexico, excellent scholarship on Mayan indigeneity provides critical background to understanding specific communities (Nash 2001; Taylor 2009; Thompson 2001). Yet more leverage could be gained for political scientists by focusing comparatively on specific

indigenous groups. For example, Tavanti's work on Las Abejas (2003) social movement draws a rich ethnographic map of memory-based mobilizations but does not make comparative analyses to show us if Las Abejas are unique or are but one example of a wider indigenous phenomenon.

Some cases suffer more than other from accurate documentation in the literature, from deliberate distortion of recorded information by Turkish and Oaxacan sources to long-term errors embedded in historical sources that have written originarios out of the literature in El Salvador. For example, only a handful of scholarly works exist on indigenous people in El Salvador that acknowledge the indigenous population in the 21st century, let alone delve into the complex web of indigenous-state relations. Virginia Tilley (2005) explicitly considers indigenous people as contemporary political actors in El Salvador, and Robin DeLugan (2012) addresses indigeneity in El Salvador's new national consciousness. But too often Nahua and Lenca communities have been rendered mute on indigeneity as academics read indigenous behavior as class-based, particularly in the case of El Salvador's civil war (Kalyvas 2006: 81). At the same time, historians have been able to capture indigenous dynamics in El Salvador, though the nature of historiography limits their work to isolated time periods (for example, Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008; Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007). Among these strong literatures, there is space to include a methodologically diverse causal theory of political behavior.

This project has drawn significantly on available historical literatures, but much of the data in chapters 3, 4, and 5 is derived from political ethnographic work. High degrees of missing or misconstrued information in the literature made physical meetings with community members in each place vital. Schatz summarizes the contribution of ethnography as: 1) being able to provide information that may cast doubt on previous understandings of a case; 2) broadening our understanding of what constitutes the political; 3) providing the potential to redefine how

knowledge about the subject or topic is constructed in the first place; and 4) offering "normative grounding" to political investigations (Schatz 2009: 11). Schatz writes, "ethnography's role is not so much to produce abstract knowledge as to provide new ways of seeing and thereby challenge existing, often hegemonic, categories of practice and analysis" (2009: 15). By showing up, observing the mobilizations, and talking with people participating as well as local analysts, I collected an array of insights into why each mobilization was occurring in its particular circumstance. This use of political ethnography allowed me to distinguish the voices of minority citizens themselves from dominant discourses and contributes to better documentation and reinsertion of minorities experiences back into studies of democratization.

Alternative Explanations

Much scholarly work has already been done on how and why communities mobilize. The social movements literature provides important explanations for why people decide to participate in larger political events collectively. The existence of political opportunities and mobilization networks are the standard structuralist responses to why people act, and the creation of collective action frames show the culturalist responses to pure structuralism (McAdam, Tarrow et al. 2001: 14-15). Structural elements are at work in my own causal story, captured through the background causes of political, economic and cultural accommodation, and the role of rooted cosmopolitanists who frequently have connections to transnational networks and the resources such networks can provide. But neither strictly structuralist nor culturalist accounts of collective action seriously consider the psycho-social processes happening behind structures and cultures. Even when scholars include emotion in studies of contentious politics, the role of memory remains excluded from the formula (Aminzade, Goldstone et al. 2001; Jasper 1997). Beth Roy's

documentation of the role of ideology and psychological cognition in conflict and its resolution comes as a welcome relief (1994), but Roy looks at intergroup conflict and thus excludes the role of the state, a key player in the story of minorities during democratization.

Doug McAdam's work on the politics of the civil rights movement in the US has encapsulated several of the foundational arguments as to why people act collectively, such as having ripe political opportunities, the availability of mobilizing structures, and framing processes that draw on the strength of shared identity (1982: ix). The first two are classic arguments about collective action in the social movements literature and have strong resonance in my own case studies. Resource mobilization has allowed indigenous communities of southern Mexico a degree of international visibility for their struggle, and the political opportunities available in the federal structure of Mexico has made the transition to regional autonomy a more tangible victory for indigenous people there. Political opportunities such as Turkey's application to the European Union and the presidential victory of the FMLN in El Salvador in 2009 also show historical moments when greater access to the human rights discourse manifested for minorities in those countries.

However, these materialist and structuralist explanations do not completely account for minority mobilizations for increased cultural rights. McAdam rightly identifies the importance of framing processes through his political process model, which he says catalyzes the civil rights movement (McAdam 1988: 51). Civil rights leaders were able to overcome the collective action problem not only by resource mobilization and good political opportunities, but by harvesting the energy from the collective identity of African Americans as oppressed people ready to say 'enough!' The framing of their movement as a liberation movement, imagery that resonated in the biblical sense among church-goers, further strengthened the shared meaning of the movement

for those immediately affected and also for white solidarity activists from the north. In his diagram of the political process model, McAdam shows how expanding political opportunities, socioeconomic change, and organizational strength leads to what he terms "cognitive liberation," and from there to the production of a social movement. I have somewhat different ways of conceptualizing each of these categories, but the most dramatic addition to the story of social movement production is my incorporation of memory through narrative into the model. I've placed McAdam's model and my own side by side below for clarification of the differences in our approaches.
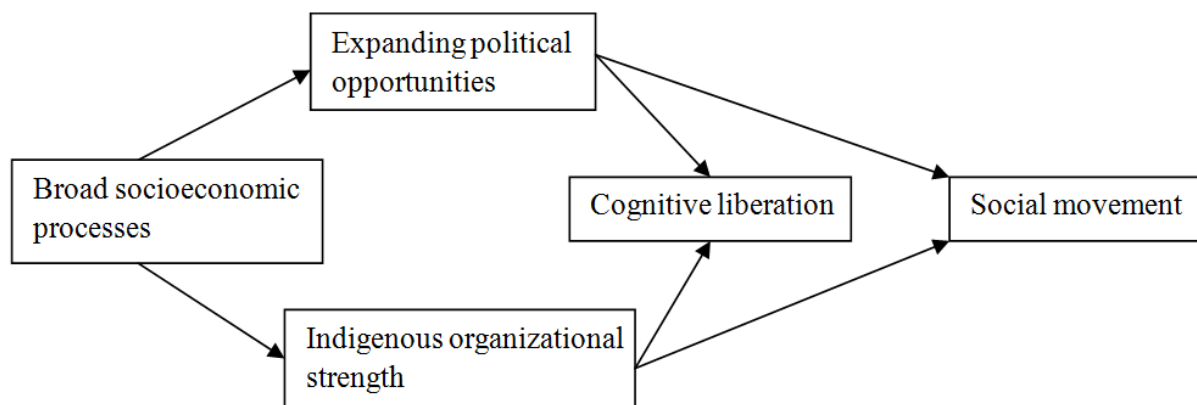
Figure 3: McAdam's model. Taken from McAdam 1988: 51, showing his theory of social movements as the product of process framing.
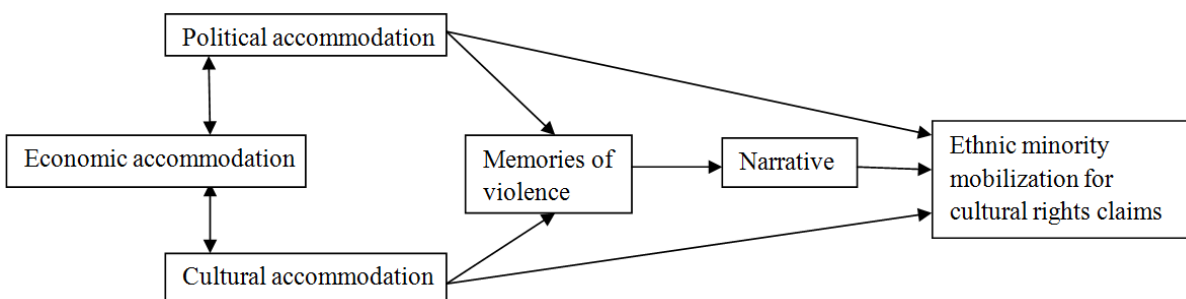
Figure 4: My causal model depicted as a variation of McAdam's.

As seen above, my project engages directly with issue framing through the lens of narrative as a critical component of overcoming the collective action problem in order to claim greater cultural rights. Though mechanisms of contentious politics that address issue framing have begun to receive serious theoretical attention (McAdam, Tarrow et al. 2001), there remains a dominant focus on political opportunity and resource mobilization in collective action. I build off McAdam's model of political framing by including memory, operationalized through the mechanism of narrative, as a driving cause of ethnic minority mobilization for cultural rights claims.

I also distinguish my approach to understanding differences in ethnic group mobilization from that of Deborah Yashar in her study (2005) of citizenship regimes. Yashar explains how indigenous movements become salient in aggregated indigenous political participation within states, rather than differences in participation across communities. Instead of addressing all indigenous people within certain states that demonstrate national level mobilization, my study operates at the local level, explaining mobilization of specific minority groups within their communities, while Yashar's unit of analysis is the national level. Yashar conceptualizes citizenship regimes as state-created methods of social control (Yashar 2005: 5-6), and I agree that such regimes exist and serve the purposes of social incorporation that she defines. My argument differs from hers, however, in examining how citizens create their *own* citizenship regimes, in part by borrowing the rhetoric of the state to access greater cultural rights through social contracts.

In the political science literature, rational choice explanations of behavior, such as that led by Mancur Olson (1965), have dominated the discourse about why people decide to act or not. But assuming that people are exclusively self-interested actors carries with it a strong

orientation towards individualism and dismisses the rich legacy of collectivism found in many communities throughout Latin America and the Middle East. In fact, marginalized, isolated, or insular ethnic minority communities sometimes engage in collective action even when it entails great risk to their individual well-being. While at particular times individuals may make rational behavior choices about whether or not to participate in collective action, I argue that memories of violence also exhibit an influence on political behavior, particularly in identity-driven collective action. There are myriad other potential explanations for why some ethnic minority groups mobilize for cultural rights claims while others do not, and these will be considered at length in Chapter 6, after detailed empirical information has been considered for each case.

In sum, this project builds on previous social movements work, addresses fundamental structural constraints to mobilization, and adds a theory of memory and narrative for ethnic minority mobilizations for cultural rights. Especially in the context of post-conflict communities in democratizing states, the way that state or paramilitary violence is remembered by a community contributes directly to the ability of that community to mobilize for cultural rights. Memories, and the emotions they stimulate, are unseen but highly persuasive tools for issue framing that minority leaders may or may not choose to use instrumentally in their struggles. We must continue to expand our analyses of how, why, and under what conditions social mobilization happens to better understand people as holistic political actors.

Conclusion: why cultural rights mobilizations matter

In this chapter I have presented a theory of ethnic minority mobilization for cultural rights claims in democratizing countries, and have argued that memories of violence play a causal role in facilitating such mobilizations. I described the major theoretical components of the

argument, including the outcome of mobilization, the mechanism of narrative, as well as scope conditions, background causes, and actors. I justified the significance of this project by showing that the way ethnic minorities claim their rights, as some of the most marginalized citizens in many states, allows us to better evaluate the health of civil liberties in democratizing countries. If we look to the experiences of ethnic majorities alone, we may inaccurately grant democratic status to countries that still face grave inequalities among domestic populations.

Previous measurements of democracy and democratization, as well as classic explanations of collective action, are limited in their ability to capture the experiences of ethnic minorities grappling with past trauma even as they try to make their voices heard in the interest arena. We need new explanations for political behaviors that incorporate memory and narrative as tools in mobilizations for cultural rights claims. This project offers one such model by measuring political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state and examining how this structural background interacts with narratives of violence. I show that institutional constraints and supports from political, economic, and cultural accommodation policies do influence how and to what degree ethnic minority communities mobilize, but they do not fully explain why people make claims in the first place. As the Chiapan activist in the introduction of this chapter made clear, memories of violence also fuel efforts to organize communities. If we look to structural elements alone, we may skip over potent narratives of past violence that communities draw on to motivate themselves and others to engage in collective action even when risks to personal safety or comfort may be high. These stories facilitate emotional buy-in from participants and can be wielded instrumentally to shame states and mobilize for cultural rights claims. This project creates a more complete picture of citizens as vibrant actors in democratizing states.

CHAPTER 2: REMEMBERING CITIZENS AND STATES OF FORGETFULNESS

> *"The democratization project in Turkey is about forgetting."*
> *(Leyla Nezi 2009, Oral Historian)*

> *"A pueblo that does not know its history is condemned to repeat the past."*
> *Sign posted at a former FMLN encampment in El Salvador*

People remember when they have been wronged. Many people remember the ways previous generations of their families or communities have been wronged, but only some people talk about it. Certain grievances become salient in politics while other grievances do not. In this chapter, I explore the meaning of citizenship in democratizing regimes, how ethnic minority citizens remember or forget incidents of violence against them, and how states deal with the memories and the related claims for cultural rights. First, I parse Tilly's definition of citizenship to better situate the framework in which ethnic minority actors operate. Second, I delve into the meaning of memory, its significance for identity and political behavior, and how memories of violence serve as contested sites for remembering and forgetting in the interest arena, the political locus where citizens represent their own interests in non-electoral ways. Third, I address political accommodation as a structural factor that I argue weighs heavily in determining how ethnic minorities choose their mobilization tactics. I argue that institutional design of federal and centrist countries plays a significant role in shaping the quality of citizenship that minorities experience and in forming regional space to hear and address grievances.

Citizenship in transition

The way scholars understand and measure the practice of citizenship has changed over time, and it continues to manifest differently under various regime types (Caraway 2004; Doorenspleet 2000; Hanagan and Tilly 1999; Kabeer 2005; Yashar 2005). Democratizing

regimes in particular are critical to ethnic minority mobilization around cultural rights claims

(Kymlicka 1995; Kymlicka and Norman 1994) because democratizing regimes represent

transitions when the content of the social contract between citizen and state remains negotiable.

During democratization, institutions are not yet fixed in their rules and norms, nor are the

expectations of citizens entrenched. The twenty-first century assumption that any member of a

particular polity has a set of commonly held rights and duties does not always hold in periods of

transition, nor does this assumption play out historically. In the Americas, indigenous people,

slaves, and indentured servants brought from the empire to the colonies often lacked status

within the territories they worked. More contemporarily, the expansion of suffrage to

unpropertied people, women, minorities, and illiterates unfolded at varying paces around the

world, often long after official statehood had been achieved, and more problematically, long after

consolidated democratic status had been recognized by the international community.

In this project, I consider citizenship as the status of a person with the duties, rights and

privileges bound to a specific territory governed by a state. This draws on Tilly's contractual

definition:

> Citizenship designates a set of mutually enforceable claims relating to categories
> of persons to agents of governments…citizenship has the character of a contract:
> variable in range, never completely specified, always depending on unstated
> assumptions about context, modified by practice, constrained by collective
> memory, yet ineluctably involving rights and obligations sufficiently defined that
> either party is likely to express indignation and corrective action when the other
> fails to meet expectations built into the relationship. (1999: 253)

Tilly's framing of citizenship captures its contingent nature. Because the contract remains

unspecified, minority communities approach mobilization for rights claims with hope that the

contract will be modified to fit their needs. Though Tilly does not contextualize his definition of

citizenship within a democratization framework, I argue that contingency is particularly salient

in democratizing states, where the social contract is less well defined than in consolidated democracies. Also, Tilly's definition highlights the ability of the contract to be "modified by practice," something which again shows the potential for social movements to exert an effect on modifying citizens' agreed duties and rights with the state. Tilly includes collective memory as a tool to constrain the social contract, in this way showing how socially and institutionally constructed norms lead to expectations, which in turn reinforce the norms. He also points out that the contract is fixed enough so that people know when it is being abused. The dual contingent and fixed nature of the social contract make it a dynamic locus for dialogue about rights claims, and all of the mobilizations considered in this project implicitly invoke renegotiating the social contract as central to their demands. Often indigenous communities want the social contract to include specific provisions for minority citizens to ensure they can access the rights of citizens not as part of a homogenized citizenry, but as indigenous citizens. For example, Tzotzils in Mexico want the right not just to education, but to education in the Tzotzil language. Similarly, Kurds in Turkey want the right not just to speak their language, but to use it in political discourse and have Kurdish recognized as a valid means for a Kurdish, Turkish citizen to express one's self.

Many citizens of democratizing and democratic states barely vote, let alone participate in civil society mobilizations. Yet such passive citizenship is distinct from what Tilly labels "effective citizenship," something that obliges both the state and the polity to address "political effects of inequalities in routine social life" (1999: 256). In effective citizenship, the burden to act is exclusively on neither party and the contract of citizenship is not static. During democratization, both state and citizens may engage each other more in dialogue to address inequality, as norms and rules are less ingrained. Such transition times thus represent potential

critical moments when new agendas can be introduced and claims carried out. Success is not guaranteed, but democratization allows space for civil society-state negotiation over rights.

For his part, Tilly goes so far as to assert that effective citizenship is a requirement of democracy regardless of whether we use substantive, institutional, or processional definitions of democracy (1999: 256). Tilly's theorizing of citizenship highlights the importance of citizens actively engaging their states, and equally, the importance of the states' responses to inequalities brought forth by its citizens. In the context of this project, effective citizenship calls on both citizens and states to address practices that push assimilation at the expense of cultural rights. In the section below, I examine how memory shapes citizen identity and how memories of state and deep state violence, when mobilized into rights claims, can threaten the ability of state agents to "forget" or negate the role of the state in marginalizing minority citizens.

The remembering citizen

"Violence shapes consciousness."
(Ramazan Aras 2011, Kurdish anthropologist, Artuklu University, Turkey)

Memories contain the stories that people use to narrate their lives and play a role in how people make choices about their political and social behavior—in other words, how they choose to tell their stories. Marginalized citizens often hold marginalized memories, and this section looks at how memory functions in citizen mobilizations that contest state homogenization agendas. Autobiographical memory, a central type of memory I consider in the project, captures the way people craft identities regardless of accuracy[17] (Misztal 2003: 10). In Mexico, Turkey,

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[17] See Chapter 1 *methodology* section, and Chapter 5, section on *Armenians in Theoretical Context* for a discussion of how, following James Scott's approach to hidden transcripts, I focus on gathering the community's public narrative rather than the "truth."

and El Salvador, memorializations of past violent events within minority communities serve as rallying points for collective identity. As sociologist Barbara Misztal puts it, "Memory is social because every memory exists through its relation with what has been shared with others: language, symbols, events, and social and cultural contexts" (Misztal 2003: 11). In the Greek tradition, memory is seen as "the precondition of human thought," operating as both a background subconscious and intentional recollection (Samuel 2012 [1994]: xx). While memories of violence may form ephemeral qualities of sadness or self-righteousness that characterize specific ethnic minority communities, memories also play tangible roles in assimilation projects and therefore become sites of contention. For example, in textual sites such as history textbooks, certain memories are deemed official and thus play significant roles in childhood identity development and citizenship formation (Ceylan, Irzik et al. 2004; Tarih Vakfi 2007). Campaigns to correct these texts have generated forums for debate about the significance of historical memory in multicultural democratizing states.[18]

The capacity to remember collectively is integral to identity formation and maintenance because collective memories contain the stories that people tell about themselves to situate their lives in relation to the world (see debates in Burgos-Debray 1983; Kubal 2008; Stoll 1999). Collective memories can serve as founts of collaboration or conflict between different groups depending on how bound up these memories are with specific versions of truth (Misztal 2003: 14). Historic state violence—as well as what I refer to alternately as paramilitary or deep state perpetrated violence—is often invoked by groups that mobilize collective memories to justify their claims for increased cultural rights when negotiating with their states. This *shaming and*

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[18] The work of Tarih Vakfi - The History Foundation - in Turkey is especially notable for its systematic investigation of human rights violations in public school textbooks (Tarih Vakfi 2007). Their staff presented a report to the Ministry of Education that documented dozens of examples where Turkish language and culture was praised at the expense of minority cultures, but the report has been ignored (Rezan Sarişen 2009).

claiming behavior shows citizens using grievances to pressure states for better protections for marginalized groups. Yet the degree to which cognitive processes such as remembering play a role in the mobilization of rights claims remains under-theorized.

Collective memories contain the ontologies and epistemologies that people use to reinforce their senses of self (Connerton 1989: 22), situated in community. These memories provide much of the material and immaterial backdrop to our daily lives (Samuel 2012 [1994]: xx-xxiii). In part, this is because memory serves as a symbol and people use a variety of symbols to link personal realities to communal ones across time (Eber and Neal 2001: 6). In addition to temporal links, memory scholars link emotionality to memory, as events that foster deep emotions are more likely to draw out "social sharing and distinctly vivid, precise, concrete, long-lasting memories of the event" (Misztal 2003: 81). Thus, events that bring about less emotive responses may fall into obscurity while more potent emotional responses cause memories to 'stick' within communities.

Denying the validity of a collectively held memory that constitutes a portion of identity diminishes that identity. The social psychology literature illuminates how this manipulation of power takes place:

> When memories recall acts of violence against individuals or entire groups, they carry additional burdens—as indictments or confessions, or as emblems of a victimized identity. Here, acts of remembering often take on a performative meaning within a charged field of contested moral and political claims. (Antze and Lambek 1996: vii)

Thus, the performance of memory that minorities enact through claim-making narratives in the interest arena is the glue that binds historic violence to contemporary citizenship. This is visible when mobilized minorities draw on certain key phrases or slogans that have historical resonance in their petitions for rights and recognition. For example, when indigenous Mexicans invoke

images of Emiliano Zapata and other revolutionary actors, they signal memory of injustice done to indigenous people under dictator Porfirio Diaz and tactics of resistance. The ubiquitous use of Che Guevara and Commandante Marcos images similarly highlights the need to fight back to obtain rights for oppressed people in Latin America. In Chiapas, Tzotzil people from Acteal invoke the "nunca mas"[19] slogan, and in El Salvador, Lenca-descendent people have used the phrase "no olvidamos[20]" to remind one another and policy makers that violence done to them has not been forgotten and in fact forms part of their contemporary reality. As communities use slogans to memorialize violence in rights mobilizations, they use narrative forms of language to convey the connection between memory, identity, and rights claims to their audiences.

Narratives are the stories people tell about themselves and others. Often expressed through testimonials that capture feelings of violation and trauma, testimonial performance and its related literature in Latin America has been used both to shame perpetrators and reassert the power of wronged individuals and communities. These verbal or textual assertions of lived experience, regardless of the authenticity of each exact detail, have been historically responsible for raising consciousness about human rights violations both domestically and internationally through shaming and claiming. Well known testimonials such as "I, Rigoberta Menchú" (Burgos-Debray 1983) and "They Won't Take Me Alive" (Alegría 1987) have brought the power of narrative through testimonial to the attention of broad audiences, publicizing collective memories of violence while demanding accountability via international response. This form of moralized storytelling can be used regardless of the degree of political, economic or cultural accommodation of minorities by the state. Misztal tells us, "[i]n testimony, memory is recalled in

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[19] "Never again"
[20] "We don't forget"

such a way that others can imagine being there—this imaginative narratization helps them to imagine a true experience" (2003: 119). As discussed below, it is not the actual truth of the memory that matters, but the belief of the community in the performed version of the public transcript.

Public narratives require an audience beyond the immediate affected community. Individuals and communities must be able to craft narratives that are intriguing or shocking enough to draw outside listeners to them. Though this project focuses on public narratives, private narratives also affect identity. Private narratives—those that happen only within the violence-affected individuals or communities themselves—often reinforce a sense of isolation that perpetuates low levels of claim-making. This will be seen particularly in the example of Armenians in Istanbul discussed in Chapter 4. Yet I focus on *public* narrative production because it connects memory to mobilization by creating wider forums in which violence can be remembered and addressed. Such narratives hold moral power that has the potential to prompt action. While individuals may hold cognitive patterns of remembering on their own, collective memory does not exist outside the domain of narrative. When memory becomes a social act, it is constructed within the vehicle of narrative, which allows for its dispersion and perpetuation.

States of forgetting: In addition to memory, identity is created and maintained through narratives that reinforce individual and social perception of self, history, and the other. To create collective memory, there must first be collective identity where people perceive that they are more similar to each other than to people of another group (Coy and Woehrle 2000: 3). The conflict resolution literature describes how when confronted with an identity-threatening conflict, people rely on in-group identities all the more fiercely (Coy and Woehrle 2000: 7). Thus, collective identity

strengthens in the aftermath of identity-targeted violence, and even more so when collective

memories of the violence, perceived as memorials to the victims, are challenged. The

mobilization of memories of violence through narrative can thus be read as a defense mechanism

against a perceptibly hostile society that wants to destroy or absorb the group under threat.[21]

In the case of Turkey, for example, the Armenian community has attempted to preserve

its identity and its collective memories as a way to resist assimilation and distinguish itself from

Turkish society. Misunderstandings about or deliberate rejections of multiculturalism have

caused tension in the Armenian community and led to the targeting of spokespeople like

Armenian journalist and public intellectual Hrant Dink.[22] The lack of cultural accommodation

operates in a paradoxical way regarding minority ethnic identity. In general, repression of

minority identities by states pushes minorities to detach from their identification with those states

and participate less as citizens, but state denial of minority identity also fosters backlash, wherein

minorities mobilize to expand their rights. This phenomenon occurs across the six cases, as all

minority groups in this study grapple with the balance between ethnic identity and national

identity in their quest for increased cultural rights. Official state negation of memories perceived

as fundamental to group identity has resulted in a silencing and a sense of detachment from the

state in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador. However, memories of violence remain salient as a

mobilizing tool even in groups that have low degrees of state accommodation because of the

accessible story format of narrative that draws audiences into the emotionality of the content.

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[21] Speaking out about a threat can bring domestic and international attention to the threat in ways that may help individuals and groups better survive by gaining greater access to resources or forcing greater accommodation from reluctant states.

[22] See Chapter 4 and Gellman 2012.

Tilly defines stories as "the sequential, explanatory recounting of connected, self-propelled people and events that we sometimes call tales, fables, or narratives" (Tilly 2002: 26). He states that "people usually recount, analyze, judge, remember, and reorganize social experiences as standard stories in which a small number of self-motivated entities interact within a constricted, contiguous time and space" (Tilly 2002:8). Tilly includes narrative as a *kind of* story and I consider public narratives as essentially stories that have gained an audience beyond the immediate ethnic community. Tilly shows that the existence of certain stories "constrains social interaction, defines an array of possible interactions and their likely outcomes, and thereby limits what can happen next. Stories play a significant part in the path-dependency of conversation and of social interaction as a whole" (Tilly 2002: 9). Here, Tilly links the words that communities use to express their histories and grievances to how those words can be mobilized for political behavior. Following this logic, memories of violence play a role in fomenting mobilization for cultural rights claim-making because public narratives about past events are capable of compelling social action.

Narratives need not be accurate to contribute to mobilization. James Scott's analysis of hidden transcripts tells us that both oppressed people and their oppressors will mask their true feelings and narratives in dealings with each other (Scott 1990: 3). It may be impossible for outsiders to tell the difference between carefully performed narratives and genuine discourses that Scott calls "hidden transcripts" (Scott 1990: 4-5). While Scott looks at the differences between public and hidden transcripts to ascertain the way power operates on discourse (Scott 1990: 5), I look to the public transcripts—or narratives—as crucial indicators of citizenship performance in democratization. Though not *necessarily* the authentic feelings of minorities,

public narratives show the way communities are willing to address grievances in the public eye and constitute an act of mobilization.

Different storytellers emphasize preferred aspects of a memory in order to make the resulting narratives more in line with their purposes. This is a widely observed phenomenon in many cases. Elizabeth Wood, for example, remarks on how memories of political events, regardless of initial accuracy in documentation, "may be later reshaped by social and cultural processes that affect which memories are retained, which emphasized, and which forgotten" (Wood 2009: 124). In fact, inaccurate public narratives may serve state or community agendas and therefore actors may strategically manipulate memories of violence to use them for political purposes. Wood presents this behavior matter-of-factly, saying, "because the telling of stories of past injustice and resistance shapes *present* propensities for mobilization and political identities, they may be told for precisely that purpose, rather than to convey accurate accounts of events as remembered" (Wood 2009: 125, emphasis in original).

The theme of instrumental stories also appeared in my interviews. Longtime Oaxaca-based social activist Sergio Beltrán reflected on community mobilization there:

> to tell our story, first, one must construct very effective stories from inside, and then make them external. I don't think this is anything magical; the first thing is to tell stories inside like a tool for oneself, and then we use those stories to tell them who we are. (Beltrán 2012)

Beltrán illustrates Wood's point that accuracy may be traded for efficacy in community story-telling when the intentional outcome is to make marginalized populations visible.

In this vein, renowned sociologist and memory scholar Paul Connerton distinguishes *social memory* from *historical reconstruction*, with the former operating more like narrative with creative license and the latter more involved with an accurate retelling of the past (Connerton

1989: 13). Connerton places social memory in the camp of the historically flexible, which is to say that social memory may shift in order to be instrumentally useful to those that remember that "images of the past commonly legitimate a present order" (Connerton 1989: 3). Again paralleling Scott's work on hidden transcripts, Connerton defines "village gossip" as a tool that people use to create their shared history (Connerton 1989: 17), and such a medium is inevitably flexible. This flexibility goes both ways, however, as state-building and democratization processes have often been founded on stories that write ethnic minorities out of history, or at least into marginal roles. Connerton describes how rituals are enacted by elites as a way to "claim continuity with an appropriate historic past, organizing ceremonies, parades and mass gatherings, and constructing new ritual spaces" (Connerton 1989: 51). Just as ethnic minorities can mobilize memories of violence to make cultural rights claims, state leaders may use related memories for entirely different purposes. As official discourses may be unchangeable for minorities, it is by creating and perpetuating collective memory through oral history where Connerton sees "the possibility of rescuing from silence the history and culture of subordinate groups" (Connerton 1989: 18). The case studies in this project show ethnic minority communities that have decided, to various degrees, to rescue their own narratives from official policies of forgetting, or more informal practices of silencing and negating certain versions of the past.

Misztal characterizes the presentation of collective memory as a way certain groups distance themselves from others and reinforce their own sense of self (Misztal 2003: 137). Similarly, Connerton reinforces this point, stating that "memory claims figure significantly in our self-descriptions because our past history is an important sense of our conception of ourselves" (Connerton 1989: 22). To summarize, memories matter for identity regardless of accuracy, contested memories can be focal points for social movements, and violence-affected ethnic

minorities can use narrative including memories of violence as potent mobilization tools for cultural rights claim-making. In other words, memories of violence are a key component of shaming and claiming.

The power to remember? Underlying the discussion about the dynamics between minority communities and their states is the ever-present operation of power, which I briefly discuss here. While classical realist definitions of power focus on coercion of man over man (Morgenthau 1992 [1946]: 7), feminist refutations have decried "power as domination and control [which] privileges masculinity and ignores the possibility of collective empowerment" (Tickner 1992 [1991]: 26). Though power as coercion often exists even in the most democratic of states, the potential for collective empowerment within democratizing states and ethnic minority communities is also present. States that deny memories of violence central to minority identity, like Turkish denial of the Armenian genocide of 1915, undermine minority claims to belonging and demonstrate Morgenthau's notion of power.[23] More useful for this project is the conception of power as coercion, as seen in Foucault's extensive work on the association of power with control, especially through his framework of discipline and governmentality (Foucault and Faubion 2000). This is distinct from the notion of power as coercion, which is rooted in the Weberian theories of the bureaucratic state (Weber, Gerth et al. 1977: 159-60). While Weber and Morgenthau's coercion notion addresses state power, it does not capture community power dynamics. A more expansive definition of power accounts for how communities work to access Tickner's version of collective empowerment in order to, in the Giddenian sense of structuration (1984), use agency to interact with the structures that shape community options.

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[23] Particularly, this echoes Morgenthau's third image of power transposed to the first and second image.

Other scholars who see power as coercion provide useful background to the history of power, but do not fully explain intra-community power dynamics. I defect from Dahl's conception of power as something that has to be empirically observed (Lukes in Scott 1994: 235) because his focus on concrete behavior is at odds with the socially constructed identity and memory-based behavior that composes the outcome of rights mobilization. Lukes points out the limitations of the Dahlian one-dimensional definition of power, as well as two dimensional power-theorizing by Bachrach and Baratz. Though Bachrach and Baratz do try to account for the role of power in contestation by less powerful actors, Lukes critiques the fact that they still rely on "consciously articulated" expressions of power (in Scott 1994: 240). Even Lukes' own addition of a third dimension of power still connotes that *someone* is exercising power *over* someone else.

While successful claim-makers may indeed be conscious of how they wield their power, I also accounts for power in low mobilization communities where it may be more subtle or disguised. To this end, I document power not only in the potentially coercive relationships between the state and its citizens and within community hierarchies, but also in the positive enactment of power in collective remembrance. Hannah Arendt's definition of power as the "human ability not just to act but to act in concert" (1970: 44) is able to capture the social movement based, identity infused element of power I focus on in this project. Moreover, Hannah Pitkin's theorizing of power from the French *pouvoir*, to be able (1972: 276), reveals the essence of power as a potential force that may or may not be realized. This latter version circumvents the empirical visibility requirement invoked by Dahl. Power dynamics form a constant background to the civil society-state relations described in the empirical chapters, and are not only coercive, but also potentially transformative.

Power dynamics in mobilization for cultural rights claims are particularly visible in the interest arena, an "informal locus of specific interest articulation and problem-solving," (Collier and Handlin 2009: 8) which allows both citizens and the myriad organizations that represent them to make claims on the state. Representation of interests in this arena in no way guarantees that the interests will be addressed. Rather, participation in the promotion of interest representation is a necessary step before potentially obtaining results (Collier and Handlin 2009: 16). This reiterates my point in Chapter 1 that the outcome of interest is the mobilization for claim-making, not the resolution of the claims themselves. The figure below shows the trajectory of how violence is captured in the collective memory, and then either transmitted through narrative to form mobilization for cultural rights claims in the interest arena, or quashed by states that use homogenization tactics and outright repression to assimilate minorities.
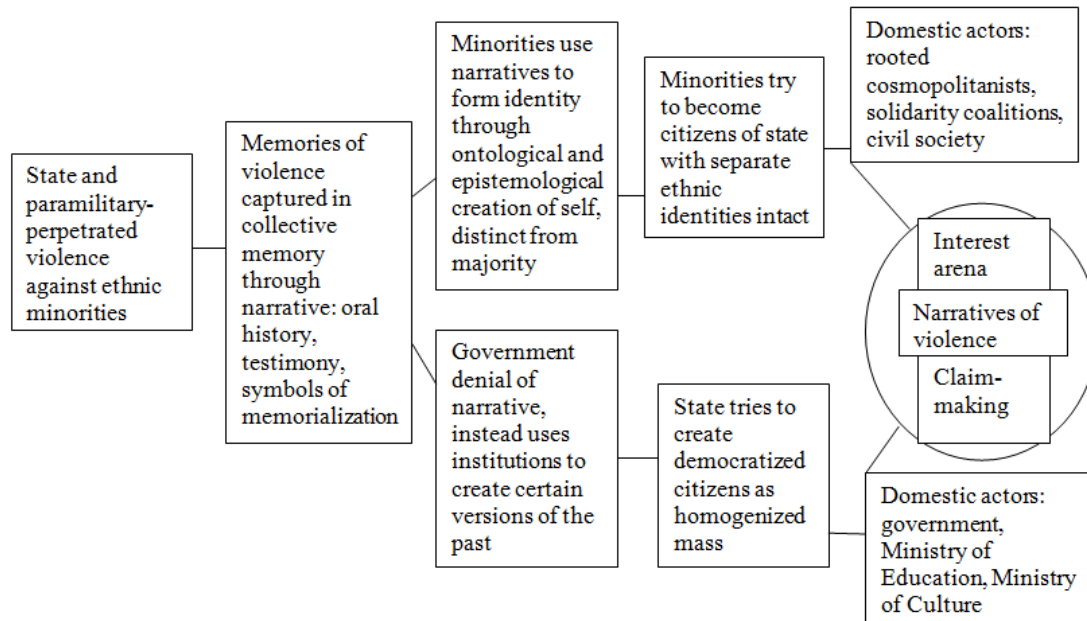
Figure 5: Violence, memory, and narrative in mobilization for claim-making.

The main difference in the two trajectories for minorities seen above can be described as the difference between making nation-states, as seen in the attempt of states to produce homogenous citizens, or making what Stepan and Linz call "state-nations" (2011: 8) and Kymlicka labels "multinations" (1995: 11), where multicultural populations come together under one state. Though many cases are not always such a stark binary, it is analytically useful to see remembering and forgetting as two paths to performing citizenship. Stepan, Linz, and Yadav distinguish between nation-states and state-nations as two types of multicultural governing arrangements, and their ideal types parallel the trajectories in the figure above. The lower route has been the common approach to state-building throughout history, where states try to base their existence on people who are homogenous and whose territorial boundaries neatly coincide with those of the modern nation-state. However, Stepan, Linz, and Yadav coin the term "state-nation" to label arrangements such as in India, which follows the upper rout in the figure, where citizens are able to hold different ethnic identities while maintaining a common identity with the state (Stepan, Linz et al. 2011: 8). While the states in this project have been working to create nation-states, the six case study communities are, to various degrees, lobbying for a state-nation model as part of their claim-making. Cultural rights can only be granted and upheld by states that allow ethnic diversity to exist in the first place. I further discuss the state-nation model in each of the empirical chapters when examining political accommodation of minorities by their states.

The institutional crafting of minority citizenship: Political accommodation of minorities by the state is significant because it determines the kinds of opportunities minority communities have to make their claims institutionally. Specifically, institutional state design, or the ways in which

power is divided between different regional units within a state, can affect how minorities

mobilize for and actually obtain greater cultural and political rights. The practicalities of

lobbying for such rights bring to light the institutional design of the state in the first place.

Should communities make claims at local, regional, federal, or international levels? Which

institutions are responsible for restricting or expanding the kinds of rights claim-makers seek?

These questions require an assessment of the political and material resources available to

communities and governments that respond to these grievances.

Regionally-based self-governance through federal arrangements is one way for ethnic

minorities to protect their rights in the face of majorities. However, the extent of minority power

in federalism is determined in part by how boundaries of the subnational unit are drawn, as

Kymlicka shows in his comparison of Canada and the US--Canada's territorial divisions were

created explicitly to protect minority self-government, while US boundaries in places like

Florida and the southwest were expanded to dilute the potentially high concentration of minority

voting power (Kymlicka 1995: 27-30). In addition to boundaries, the balance of power between

central and regional units also determines the degree to which federalism can help protect

minority rights. Increased scholarship on decentralization has boosted the visibility of devolving

power from the center to the subnational level as a way to make citizens feel more involved and

invested in their state (Beramendi and Maiz 2004; Hooghe 2004), but this devolution of power

comes with a loss of centralized power. Moreover, the sequential pattern of decentralization, that

is to say, the order in which decentralization of political, fiscal, and administrative

responsibilities takes place, has been shown to hold important implications for the effectiveness

of decentralization (Falleti 2005), and thus cautions against over-simplifying power transfers. A

centralized country like Turkey may be less likely to adopt even limited decentralization, let

alone full-blown federalism, despite Kurdish demands for both of these institutional changes

because the risk of losing central power is too great. Even if Turkey or El Salvador did

decentralize somewhat, there is no guarantee that the pattern of decentralization or federation

undertaken by states would be effective or appropriate for minority populations. Gibson (2004;

2005) describes how federal governments in Latin America leave ample space for political

manipulation at the subnational level, which cautions against overestimating the promises of

federalism for increasing minority accommodation. In fact, the federalism literature is rife with

promises and pitfalls when devolving power down to subnational units (Amoretti and Bermeo

2004). Yet, at the same time, decentralization and federalism do appear to allow states greater

accommodation of minority demands.[24] The table below presents comparative data for Mexico,

Turkey, and El Salvador pertaining to institutional design, domestic and international recognition

of ethnic minorities, and opportunities for minority accommodation at the local level.

	Federal or centralized institutional design?	Constitutional recognition for ethnic minorities?	Adopted United Nations Declaration on Indigenous People?	Ratified International Labor Organization Convention 169?	State-sanctioned and supported intercultural bilingual education programs?	Local measures taken to protect ethnic minority rights?
Mexico	Federal	Yes, at both federal and state level	Yes, on paper and in limited practice	Yes, signed in 1990	Yes, but implemented with many problems	Yes, federally granted political autonomy, usos y costumbres

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[24] My colleague Arda Gucler includes a discussion in his own dissertation (forthcoming) on the importance of federalism for addressing the Kurdish issue in Turkey, but there is almost no scholarly discussion on this topic in the Turkish context to be found in the English-language literature.

Turkey	Central	No	Yes, but applies only to some minority groups	No	No, forbidden by Constitution, education is Turkish-only, except for Lausanne minorities	No
El Salvador	Central	No (though a Constitutional revision to recognize "indigenous populations" was signed in April 2012, but not yet ratified)	Yes, in 2007, but has not implemented its measures	No	No, Ministry of Education sees population as too small and dispersed to warrant this	No, though Izalco Ordinance signed April 2012 grants symbolic rights, but no enforcement. No protections in Morazán

Table 3: Institutional design, international and local minority protection measures.

A cursory assessment of the chart above indicates that Mexico's ethnic minorities have,

at least on paper, a much higher degree of recognition and accommodation than minorities in

Turkey and El Salvador. Yet the practice of recognitions and accommodations is embedded in

the unique legacies of racism, discrimination, and state formation in each place. Prior to

fieldwork, I hypothesized that the federal structure in Mexico would contribute to higher scores

on political accommodation because the subnational units of the state have more freedom to

respond to the unique needs of minorities in particular communities. This means that

communities experiencing higher political accommodation should show higher institutionalized

claim-making but lower non-institutionalized claim-making. In fact, in Mexico this hypothesis is

only partially true. Tzotzil and Triqui communities do display high institutional rights claims, but

they also make high extra-institutional claims because in practice the degree of political

accommodation indigenous Mexican experience does not sufficiently provide the rights they

seek. Though community activists use the international signatures and federal structure to pressure local authorities, Tzotzil and Triqui civil society leaders also come up against entrenched subnational authoritarian actors who block meaningful implementation of federal and state laws allowing traditional political and cultural practices.

While Mexican communities mobilizing for cultural rights have more options for institutional claim-making, by contrast, the centralized design of the Salvadoran and Turkish states limit the state's ability to respond to minority requests through formal channels. I hypothesized that minority communities in centralized countries would engage in less institutionalized claim-making and more extra-institutionalized claim-making. This hypothesis plays out correctly for Kurds, who routinely make extra-institutional claims because they are mostly barred from formal access to state power. With few state or international provisions to facilitate their cultural rights protections, Kurds are highly mobilized and using Turkey's non-signatory status to draw on support from solidarity communities both domestically and abroad. Armenians, who also have a greater degree of protection in Turkey thanks to a post-World War I treaty protecting religious minorities there, make few extra-institutional claims on the state, though Armenian institutional claims are low as well.

In centralized El Salvador, despite minimal political accommodation, Nahua residents of Izalco mostly make their claims institutionally, a result that does not clearly fit with my original hypothesis. In fact, seeing the complexities for Nahua and Lenca minorities on the ground in El Salvador, it becomes clear that numerically the groups are too small, and their solidarity communities too disengaged, to make extra-institutional claims a viable option. Rather, though the process is slow, these communities mobilize for the most part institutionally, in long time

periods of petitioning the Ministries of Culture and Education to grant them funds for indigenous-led cultural rejuvenation projects.

In sum, institutional design, adherence to international protocols, and local provisions for minorities are important structural factors in determining both the degree of mobilization and whether such mobilization happens through institutional or extra-institutional means, but it is not the sole causal factor. Presence, absence, and type of political accommodation serves as a support or constraint in cultural rights mobilizations, in combination with narrative production around memories of violence, as well as economic and political accommodation patterns.

Finally, state accommodation and rights claims have a certain degree of feedback looping in each of the case studies. This is to say that low accommodation of minorities can be a cause of mobilization, with higher accommodation one of the goals for claim-makers. To obtain cultural rights, communities sometimes propose restructuring the institutions that govern them. This is most clearly seen among Kurds in Turkey, where Kurdish petitions for the right to mother tongue education are part of larger demands that have included variations of separatism, federalism, or most recently, democratic autonomy. By considering institutional design as part of political accommodation—a background factor of mobilization—I focus on the role of such accommodation in the mobilization *process*, rather than the *result* of the mobilization. Though mobilization results will have real impacts on the quality of life minorities experience, this project focuses more on "the right to have rights" (Arendt [1951] 1968: 177) in the first place. This is because, as discussed in Chapter 1, states in the process of redeveloping social contracts with their citizens as they democratize are more likely to meaningfully consider citizen demands. At the same time, we must be on guard against the Tocquevillian tyranny of the majority (Lijphart 1968; Tocqueville, Bevan et al. 2003 [1835]), in asking *who* has the right to have

rights. As democratizing states seek to expand rights to new categories of citizens, minorities

remain particularly vulnerable to undemocratic practices at the subnational level, and therefore

attempts to redress minority grievances with federated or decentralized solutions must be

carefully evaluated.

Conclusion: shaming and claiming as memory politics

To begin this chapter, I explored Tilly's definition of citizenship to show how actors

operate as political beings, and distinguished how citizenship is especially contestable during

periods of regime democratization. I then looked at the significance of memory in mobilization

and identity formation for ethnic minorities, particularly memories that are contested by state

actors. As minority citizens labor to maintain collective identities that incorporate potent

memories of violence, states often thwart their attempts at remembering through policies of

denial or silence. Some communities continue to shame and claim, while others are rendered

voiceless. The effect such refutation of one's being has on political behavior is consequential for

understanding how minorities choose to mobilize for cultural rights or assimilate into ethnic

majorities. In turn, these behavior choices indicate the health of multicultural democratization

processes to larger audiences. Finally, I looked at different approaches to minority

accommodation through institutional design. Federalism and decentralization more broadly do

hold potential for allowing regional diversity without threatening territorial integrity. But the

legal provisions, even when combined with international protocols that require states to protect

minority rights, are not sufficient to ensure cultural rights. In practice, state accommodation

frequently devolves to state cooptation. In surveying state models of institutional design, I

accounted for differences in structural frameworks that impact how communities organize

themselves. Federal versus central institutional design is useful for predicting whether mobilization will come about through extra-institutional or institutional means.

Mobilization results from structural factors like state accommodation patterns of minority citizens. Yet mobilization is also based on ontological and epistemological factors such as how communities remember contested incidents of violence, the extent to which communities narrate those stories in public, and the means by which communities incorporate narratives into their identity. The next three chapters examine the way these various elements play out in six ethnic minority communities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador.

CHAPTER 3. MEXICO: MESTIZAJE AND THE CHALLENGE OF BELONGING

> *"There is no 'Mexican' – we see distinct forms of being Mexican."*
> *(Miguel Vásquez de la Rosa 2012, NGO worker in Oaxaca)*

> *"If we were invisible, they would exterminate us."*
> *(Sergio Beltrán 2012, community activist in Oaxaca)*

The sun squints around the mountains as we wind our way along the road towards Acteal, young mothers in plastic sandals, grandmothers barefoot, and one young woman with black Converse sneakers peeking out under her hand-woven skirt. It is International Women's Day, March 8, 2012, and women lead the march with chants and songs, hoisting banners, babies, and plastic grocery bags with water bottles and tamales. A few hundred Tzotzils and a handful of international solidarity members and observers walk along the same road where fifteen years ago paramilitaries passed on their way to a massacre. Now, Acteal residents call out over bullhorns: "We do not forget, we fight for justice. We will not forget, we want our rights!" Their demands pierce the air as the group passes the garbage dump where dogs paw refuse and descend on steep concrete steps to the open air meeting hall of Acteal. One cross for each victim of the massacre rings the hall, their names, birth and death dates painted on the wood. In this setting, community leaders pick up the microphone, honor the memory of the people killed in the massacre, and read their communiqué, directed to "all social and political organizations," demanding to live without violence and free to make their own decisions (Las Abejas 2012). This episode of claim-making draws on potent memories of violence to form mobilizing narratives for a community, and shows how the social contract with the state is being renegotiated by indigenous Mexican citizens.

In this chapter I present mobilizations for cultural rights claim-making in two different *pueblos originarios*, or original indigenous peoples' communities in Mexico. I first examine the

Tzotzil community in Acteal, Chiapas, and discuss why people there have sustained a high level of mobilization for rights claims. I then look at displaced Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca and similarly trace the combination of factors that lead to medium mobilization within that community. Both ethnic minority groups have experienced paramilitary violence against them, but each community experiences different patterns of accommodation by the state and uses narratives of violence in distinct ways to communicate their demands. I argue that the extent to which memories of violence are shaped into narratives, in combination with the degree of political, economic and cultural accommodation, can account for differences in the degree of mobilization across these communities.

To understand the mobilizations in Chiapas and Oaxaca, I begin this chapter with an overview of ethnic minority-state relations in Mexico, including a discussion of how federalism, constitutional provisions, and usos y costumbres–uses and customs of indigenous people–have helped or hindered indigenous rights claim-making. Continuing on, I situate Acteal in the theoretical framework and describe political, economic, and cultural accommodation patterns by the state, and how mother tongue language use relates to rights mobilization in Acteal. Moving to the second case, I historically situate the conflict in San Juan Copala, and then connect ethnographic work and theory by examining an array of factors that inform Triqui mobilization there. For both cases, I provide background information about the violence, actors, and dynamics at play, and I conclude by considering how memories of violence inform mobilization differently in Chiapas and Oaxaca.

Mexico's history of minority assimilation: Mexico is considered a democratic country based on electoral benchmarks (Freedom House 2012; Tuckman 2012: 16; Wuhs 2008: 1), most notably

the ability of an opposition party to win the presidency as the National Action Party (PAN) did in 2000 and 2006. Though the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) presidential victory in 2012 is now causing speculation that the brief interruption of PRI rule was a fluke, it is not party politics but Mexico's human security situation[25] that calls into question Mexico's status as a consolidated democracy. I label Mexico a *democratizing* country based on ongoing civil liberties violations of its minority population (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2010; La Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos A.C. 2010; López Bárcenas 2005; Muñoz 2005). The literature is divided on the degree to which states must fulfill certain criteria to achieve democratic status (Boix and Stokes 2003; Bowman, Lehoucq et al. 2005; Dahl 1971; Munck and Verkuilen 2002; Tilly 2007), but the Mexican state's strong historical and contemporary assimilation agenda for pueblos originarios casts doubt on its commitment to full civil liberties for all citizens. A state which lacks a social contract guaranteeing cultural rights for minority citizens should be considered *democratizing*, not yet democratic, provided that the potential for social contract negotiation remains open, as it does in Mexico.

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[25] The discourse of human security in Mexico largely focuses on drug cartel-related violence and border violence (Kearney 1991; Lusk 2012; Torres Fernández, Olivia Rios et al. 2012); that said, I include violence against originarios as part of human insecurity in the country because it has to do with physical integrity and freedom of movement.

Figure 6: Mexico's states. Red arrows point to Oaxaca City, Oaxaca and San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas. From http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/mexico_pol97.jpg.

Nation-building projects in Mexico have historically attempted to assimilate minorities under the guise of projects that accommodate their demands. States often perceive their own programs, such as schools and unions, as *accommodating* marginalized citizens, when in fact accessing opportunities through these institutions require *assimilationist* actions such as using the dominant language or style of dress. In fact, much of Mexico's institutionalization of minority rights took place under programs that fused notions of cooptation, assimilation, and accommodation. This sub-section provides an overview of how the Mexican state historically related to pueblos originarios in the increasingly institutionalized atmosphere from the post-revolutionary period to present in order to provide context for contemporary ethnic minority mobilizations.

Cultural right demands are old news in Mexico. In the late 1930s, members of the Otomí community in Hidalgo state were the first to petition the federal government for special schools where indigenous customs would be passed on to their children (Dawson 2004: 116). In particular, Otomí people demanded teachers who could speak Otomí (Dawson 2004: 116), making this the first incident in a long struggle to include the right to language as a signifier of institutionalized cultural rights protections for pueblos originarios. In 1940, the First Inter-American Indigenist Conference in Pátzcuaro tried to address how to integrate indigenous people into the Mexican state Michoacán (Taylor 2009: 14), with limited success. Like many processes of state development in post-revolutionary Mexico, institutions were strategic vehicles utilized to integrate and assimilate indigenous people into the Mexican citizenry. In this case, the responsible agency was the National Indigenist Institute, (INI) created by President Lázaro Cárdenas in 1940 and launched by President Miguel Alemán in 1948. INI was the epicenter of *indigenismo*, a collection of discriminatory practices that glorified Indian ancestors while denigrating contemporary indigenous people as backward (Brulotte 2009: 6; Pye and Jolley 2011: 7). However, INI's mission has changed over time. Cárdenas intended INI to be a tool of "paternalistic advocacy" for indigenous people (Fallaw 2001: 21), bringing them into the mainstream of Mexican nation identity through economic and social advancement. Though initially dedicated to land reform, traditional land use and governance, and bilingual education, by 1950 these goals were replaced with "a singular focus on assimilating indigenous people to Spanish-speaking, commercially oriented national society" (Taylor 2009: 3-4).

President Vicente Fox closed INI in 2003, but not before the Institute spent a half a century incorporating indigenous people into a homogenous *mestizo*[26] society in the name of equality. As Taylor puts it, "INI's explicit mission had been to alleviate inequality between whites and mestizo society on the one hand and indigenous society on the other, facilitating the emergence of a culturally and politically unified nation" (Taylor 2009: 13). The pursuit of economic advancement at the expense of cultural diversity has left a detrimental legacy of forced assimilation in Mexico. The Mexican state chose to make class—and not ethnicity—the salient organizing tool and provided institutional tools such as workers' unions to meet this goal. While assimilationist practices such as unionization in exchange for shedding indigenous identity have sometimes facilitated socio-economic advancement, these practices do not represent genuine accommodation of diversity.[27]

Workers at INI were in line with norms of cultural homogenization of their time and region. As seen in many cases such as Nicaragua, El Salvador, Bolivia and Peru, indigenous cultural rights were often subsumed by the quest for a Marxist triumph of the proletariat, a situation that demanded a rendering of the people into an urban, working mass. Though guided by aspirations of improved living conditions for all, some leftist intellectuals and policy-makers in fact made the quest for indigenous rights even more arduous. Alexander Dawson comments:

> Fearing that pluralism would undermine broad social movements, many leftists
> folded the Indian question into their conception of class struggle. Important
> sectors of the Mexican Left remained opposed to bilingual education and ethnic

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[26] Mestizo refers to people of mixed ethnic heritage, generally understood to mean a mix of European and indigenous ancestry. See Brulotte 2009: 6 for brief discussion on this in the Mexican context.

[27] Lack of genuine diversity is evident in the pale skin color, Spanish language use, and Western style of high level political and business leaders in contrast to the distinctly indigenous features and languages of many people in the service economy in Mexico. This hierarchy is particularly noticeable in the more indigenously populated states of Oaxaca and Chiapas where it is not for lack of available indigenous people that top economic and political slots are filled by ladinos. However, in Chiapas, there is the beginning of a shift to place members of pueblos originarios in greater positions of power in local governance (Anonymous 2012e).

> organizations into the 1970s, arguing both that *ethnicity was a form of false*
> *consciousness*, and that *Indians were not worth organizing because they were*
> *anachronistic pawns of the bourgeoisie.* (Dawson 2004: 137, my emphasis)

Needless to say, such a perception of indigenous people did not help foster solidarity ties

between *indigenistas*, who were a leftist mélange of *ladinos* (social elites of mixed European and

indigenous ancestry), with *mestizos* (non-indigenous people of various mixed ancestries),[28] and

their indigenous counterparts.[29] "Indigenistas used a number of terms—Indian, Mexican,

campesino,[30] proletarian, and citizen—to express their desires to make indigenous Mexicans into

modern political subjects, transforming them from nonpolitical primitives into modern political

agents" (Dawson 2004: xix). The power dynamics and philosophy of citizenship construction are

clear: indigenous people were transformed in order to become Mexican citizens acceptable to the

state. This tension is visible in the rise of corporatism in Mexico, when large-scale indigenous

federations included marginalized people in state-run projects but altered their identity in the

process. Yashar describes how:

> The registration of peasant communities and the growth of peasant federations, in
> particular, fostered the fiction that the state had turned Indians into peasants and
> stripped indigenous ethnicity of its salience. Official political discourse promoted
> assimilation into mestizo culture and extended resources to rural citizens insofar
> as they identified and organized as peasants. (Yashar 2005: 61)

Corporatist federations attempted to redefine the cleavages where people divided themselves,

making occupation and resource access more salient than ethnicity. The agenda was partially

successful, and the structure of corporatist peasant federations still exists in Mexico. This

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[28] Countries in Latin America use ladino and mestizo in different ways, but in Mexico, ladino has an elite
connotation whereas mestizo can indicate any mixed race person, a broader category that can include ladinos.
[29] During my interviews, non-indigenous interviewees often used the term "pueblos originarios" in a two-fold
deliberate manner. First, the term made clear their politically correct capacity for real solidarity, and it also
distinguished their involvement "helping" indigenous people with anything that indigenistas had tried to do
previously.
[30] Peasant.

rendering invisible of indigeneity shows the state's project to redesign cleavages in the

subnational units, thus reinforcing a particular idea of "Mexicanness" that relied on ethnic

homogenization. Ethnic minorities draw on these histories of coercive assimilation as part of

their narratives of remembered violence mobilized in cultural rights claim-making. Punishment-

enforced Spanish-only classrooms in predominantly indigenous schools were the most common

examples of forced homogenization mechanisms cited by interviewees.

To address power dynamics linguistically, throughout this chapter I use the term *pueblos*

originarios, or original peoples, to refer to Mexico's indigenous ethnic minority citizens. This

was the preferred term among most Oaxacans I spoke with, though in Chiapas most people

continue to use the term "indígenas." There are historically based power relationships bound up

in each potential term, and I generally mimicked the word choice that my interviewees utilized

themselves. Overall, "pueblos originarios" appears the most politically correct to date, though

there are other perspectives. For example, one interviewee told me:

> when we say 'indigenous communities,' it has connotations, it has rights.
> 'Pueblos originarios' is suspicious—the government gives this title, but what are
> the rights that come with this title? If the 'pueblo originario' label gives me
> subsoil rights, fine, I'll take it, but if it doesn't mean this, why take it? 'Pueblos
> indígenas' have rights to the subsoil. (Aquino Centeno 2012)

On the other hand, another interviewee said, "the word 'indigenous' is racist" (Salinas

Pedraza 2012). This perception of "indigenous" is connected to connotations of the word

"*indio*," meaning indian, or "*indito*" meaning little indian, which nearly always had a

derogatory and patronizing implication and was widely used to refer to originarios before

the indigenous rights era.

After the post-revolutionary 1930s-1970s during which indigenous people were only

perceived as being worthy of citizenship to the extent that they conformed with mestizo visions

of citizenship, the tide began to shift in the late 1980s. In part due to neoliberal economic policies, money for the ruling party's social engineering projects began to dry up in the 1980s and 1990s (Pye and Jolley 2011: 7; Taylor 2009: 7). These projects had included regional development centers, a cornerstone of INI's agenda meant to integrate isolated communities into non-indigenous economic networks. For indigenous communities, this meant that new spaces emerged in which "cultural production" could take place (Taylor 2009: 7), like media and literature in indigenous languages, for example. However, just as in previous eras, cultural production deemed legitimate by mestizo society remained concentrated in urban centers, particularly Mexico City, and self-representation for rural, indigenous people remained a challenge through the end of the twentieth century. Taylor comments that indigenous participation in cultural production continues to rely on "urban mestizo intellectuals to act as mediators and promoters" (2009: 110), one subcategory of the rooted cosmopolitanists discussed in Chapter 1. Arguably, the role of urban indigenous and non-indigenous intellectuals continues to be central in the success of social movements in Mexico because they publish stories in the national and international community, thus raising awareness about issues in potential solidarity communities. In a certain sense, these intellectuals are memory-keepers, those who are able to transcribe narratives of violence into written form where they can then be dispersed as calls for mobilization throughout wider solidarity communities.

Recent social movements in Oaxaca and Chiapas in the 1990s and 2000s show that pueblos originarios are capable of enormous creative power, but an aura of paternalism still hangs over indigenous-mestizo and ladino relations. Tzotzil and Triqui mobilizations for cultural rights claim-making are not isolated events, but in fact embody the dynamics of power and control that have characterized indigenous-mestizo relations and their proxies. The following

subsection addresses political accommodation for Mexican originarios through federal provisions for cultural rights.

Federalism as political accommodation: For ethnic minorities, federal institutional systems offer the promise of decentralized regional authority. Problems in Mexico's federal design are documented (Gibson 2004; Trejo 2004), as is the reality of political autonomy at the municipal level in Oaxaca and Chiapas (Burguete Cal y Mayor 2000; Maldonado Alvarado 2002; Muñoz 2005; Valdivia Dounce 2010). Though Mexico's Constitution lays out the federal structure of government, the document, discussed below, is aspirational. In the post-Revolutionary period, Mexican governance was "more a series of political arrangements that allowed local elites to monopolize power with the consent of federal officials, as long as they supported federal officials on certain key issues" (Dawson 2004: 158). Like accommodation of ethnic minorities, federalism existed as law, but in reality it merely allowed subnational authoritarianism, meaning local authoritarian control to continue within a national level democracy (Gibson 2005). This dynamic has slowly improved in some regions of Mexico, but the promise of federalism—to accommodate diverse regional needs while maintaining territorial integrity—has not born out in Oaxaca and Chiapas.

Some political and administrative decentralization has occurred in Oaxaca through the legalization of usos y costumbres, the right to non-political party municipal leadership selection that is in sync with the traditional practices of originarios. Fiscal power, however, is still concentrated at the national level. As activist and public intellectual Gustavo Esteva told me in an interview, referencing taxation in Mexico, "Constitutionally, there is federalism, but in practice, we are a very centralized country" (Esteva 2012). The ongoing centralization of Mexico

can be seen in the case of Copala, where PRI priority to maintain control of the community overrides the provisions for municipal autonomy. Though there is limited information about who ordered PRI-supported paramilitaries to attack the autonomous portion of the community, there was an agenda for Copala that was handed down from the Oaxaca State to local level. Fiscal, administrative, and political control were not devolved to Copala residents at all, let alone in a functional order (Falleti 2005) that could have led to a peaceful, democratic transition as an autonomous municipality. For example, autonomous status for municipalities implies, to originarios, that they should be able to control their land, resources, political systems, and cultural practices. But the Mexican government sees autonomy differently, as "*anything but* that primary right to exercise control over land and resources" (Taylor 2009: 114, emphasis in original). These oppositional viewpoints create conflict as originarios see cultural rights bound up in political and economic rights as well, while state and federal governments divide these spheres of control.

In theory, federalism in Mexico provides a promising model of political accommodation for a multicultural citizenry. Yet federal design does not come with implementation and enforcement mechanisms to uphold constitutionally protected rights to regional diversity, usos y costumbres, and indigenous cultural survival. Mexico is a large country with each state facing its own challenges of minority accommodation within the confines of its regional governance strategy.

The Constitution, usos y costumbres, and pluriculturalism: In 1992, the Mexican Federal Constitution was updated to include a passage stating that, "The Mexican Nation has a pluricultural composition sustained by indigenous pueblos, those that are descendants of

populations living in the country at the beginning of colonization and that conserve their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions, or part of them" (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). However, though Congress approved this textual change, legislators did not create mechanisms to address the collective rights of pueblos originarios (Neil 1999: 248-9). Furthermore, the supposed consultation with pueblos originarios that INI organized was, in Neil's words, "simply a sham exercise which excluded those voices not aligned with the government" (Neil 1999: 248-9). This is significant because a comparative analysis of constitutions across the cases would show Mexico's Constitution as an exemplary document of state accommodation, whereas contextualizing the constitutional reform shows the problems beneath the surface.[31] Though there is now recognition that Mexico is pluricultural, there is no roadmap to enforce the value of diversity among state institutions such as the Secretariat of Public Education. Marcos Sandoval, a Triqui alta originario who works in the Office of Indigenous Affairs in Oaxaca City summarized the problem, saying, "there is the law, but the fact that the law exists does not mean that society already functions like that, nor the institutions, nor the society. After the law, there is enormous work to do" (Sandoval 2012).

Constitutions are known for aspirational language that is not necessarily born out in practice. The current (2012) Mexican Constitution is based on the 1917 Constitution that included many rights provisions aspired to in the post-revolutionary environment, and that its authors hoped would be achieved in an ambiguous, "not too distant future" (Vargas 2008) but without a concrete strategy for how to get there. While the aspirational aspect of the Constitution may be frustrating because the language of the document appears to offer a social contract to

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[31] See (Castillo 2002) for a discussion of Mexican national law versus indigenous customary law in Mexico.

citizens that does not exist in reality, it is also not uncommon for constitutions to serve this aspirational role.[32]

Beyond the domestic aspirational commitment to rights for pueblos originarios, there is the fact that Mexico signed and ratified Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization on Tribal and Indigenous Peoples, which calls for the implementation of safeguards to protect indigenous rights to cultural continuity and consultation in issues that affect their wellbeing. In fact, Article 4 of Convention 169 states that special measures should be put in place to protect indigenous communities and their customs, and Article 28 describes in detail the importance of indigenous language continuity through education (ILO 1989). Though Convention 169 calls for consulting pueblos originarios, like constitutions that aspire to protect minorities, Convention 169 does not provide for implementation and enforcement, as this would contradict state sovereignty. Rather, Convention 169 keeps its language broad, requiring that consultative processes be adequate and in good faith (Cruz Rueda 2008: 10), hardly binding language that will create accountability, but therefore palatable to an array of signatories.

Constitutional reform and ratification of documents like Convention 169 show, at least, that the state understands the norms for democratic states expected by the international community, and at best, that the Mexican state is invested in providing institutional channels to grant pueblos originarios their rights. In fact, Article Four of the Mexican federal Constitution, which provides, among other things, the right to culture and the right to equality before the law for men and women, was reformed to show compliance with Convention 169 (Cruz Rueda 2012). But these written rights achieve little in the absence of enforcement, something that democratizing states often try to demonstrate to gain acceptance internationally as consolidated

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[32] See (West 1993) for more on this in the US context.

democracies. On paper, Mexico demonstrates high political accommodation of pueblos originarios; in practice, government-enforced violence has quelled originario attempts to claim political rights that have been legally promised.

Constitutional provisions for indigenous communities to self-govern show how the Mexican state provides the framework for accommodation of pueblos originarios, even though such state accommodation may not actually be achieved. Usos y costumbres is a form of leadership selection practices in pueblos originarios, which by their very existence challenge traditional political party politics and crosses the line between political and cultural rights. The right to traditional leadership selection is part and parcel of ethnic minority political accommodation by the state, but it is also a cultural right of originarios. Strengths of usos y costumbres include "flexibility and its room for innovation," which gives space for pueblos originarios to craft meaningful solutions to community problems (Hernández Navarro 1999: 161). In its ideal form, usos y costumbres operate in pueblos originarios that have several common attributes: communities form part of a unified territory and share a language and they have community assemblies, *cargo* and *tequio* (collective labor) systems, and they organize ritual celebrations in the community (Vásquez de la Rosa 2012).

However, in Oaxaca one interviewee referred to usos y costumbres as "abusos y costumbres" because of corruption among traditional leaders through preferential relationships with political parties, unequal representation for women, and other misuses of "traditional" power (Martínez Padilla 2012). I do not problematize usos y costumbres here, as I only assess its contribution as a marker of institutional commitment to political accommodation on paper. Both Tzotzil and Triqui communities have tried to implement various aspects of autonomy in their daily lives and the case studies address these examples in turn below.

Part I: Being Tzotzil in Acteal, Chenalhó, Chiapas

Chiapas, with a population of approximately 3.5 million people, including 1 million

indigenous people—mostly Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Tojolobal, Ch'ol, and Zoque—is one of the poorest

states in Mexico (Eber and Kovic 2003: 2). Tzotzil has seven know variations of its dialect and is

part of the Maya language family, with an estimated 329,937 speakers of Tzotzil concentrated in

Chiapas (INALI 2005a).[33] According to the most recent data available, 28 percent of the total

population of self-identified Tzotzils speak only Tzotzil, while the remaining 72 percent also

speak Spanish (INALI 2005b). Chenalhó is a remote highland department and Acteal lies along

the road that winds up the mountains from San Cristóbal de las Casas to Pantelhó.
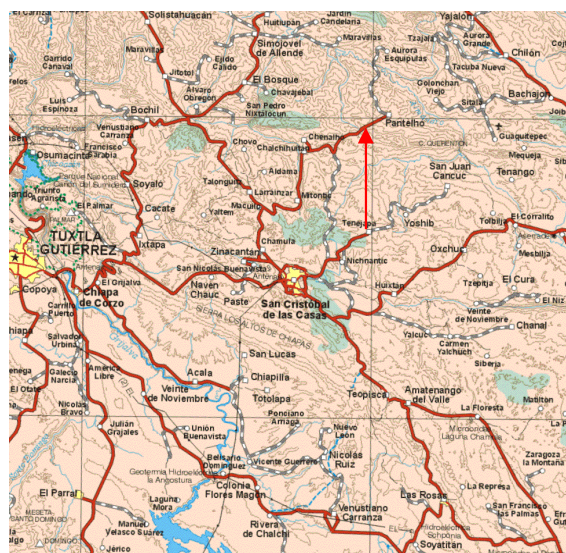
Figure 7: Chiapas regional map. Location of Acteal indicated by red arrow. From http://www.maps-of-mexico.com/chiapas-state-mexico/chiapas-state-mexico-map-b1.shtml.

Tzotzils in Chiapas have many political identities, but in Acteal I focus only on Las

Abejas, the Catholic, non-Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) portion of the

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[33] Tzotzil is spelled *Tsotsil* in Spanish and sometimes appears this way in the literature.

community, as this was the contingent targeted in the 1997 massacre.[34] Las Abejas advocate[35]

non-violent resistance and autonomy and are closely allied with now-deceased former Bishop

Samuel Ruiz's version of liberation theology.[36] They formed in 1992 in response to an intra-

communal conflict over women's right to inherit property (Kovic 2003: 63-64; Tavanti 2003: 4)

and are now organized in twenty-nine communities across three Chiapan municipalities of

Chenalhó, Pantelhó, and Simojovel (Mesa Directiva de Las Abejas 2012). While many

communities have internal divisions of which Las Abejas are a part, Acteal is one of the more

dramatic examples of divided allegiances that illuminate subnational authoritarian politics. The

small, rural village of Acteal itself is physically and ideologically divided into three distinct

political communities, all Tzotzil-speaking: Acteal Bajo is the Zapatista-aligned[37] portion of the

village; Acteal Central is the Catholic Las Abejas community that performs nonviolent-

resistance and autonomy through liberation theology; and Acteal Alto consists of the

Presbyterian, PRI-voting community that condones state militarization as a way to control the

other two communities (Tavanti 2003: 14-16). As testament to the power of Acteal Alto, Tavanti

reports that, PRI-aligned residents of Chenalhó, the larger department in which Acteal is situated

"appreciate troop presence in their communities and recognize the Mexican Army not as part of

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[34] Though Las Abejas deviate tactically from the EZLN, they have similarly demanded a range of rights for women that subvert gender hierarchies common in indigenous communities, thus challenging the "traditional" aspects of indigenous culture. Las Abejas and the EZLN continue to struggle to rid themselves of harmful traditions while mobilizing for cultural rights claim-making premised on traditional uniqueness. This project does not engage the wider debate about the benefits and perils of protecting traditional customs but I am aware of its importance in relation to the discussion of cultural rights claim-making. Zapatista women, for example, talk about how good customs that promote cultural preservation should be protected, but bad customs like gender discrimination through forced marriage and domestic violence, should be abolished (in Eber and Kovic 2003: 10).

[35] Though Las Abejas is a singular organization name, because the name in Spanish is literally plural, I follow the convention Las Abejas use in the English translation of their own website to pluralize verbs that follow their name.

[36] See Tavanti 2003 for an authoritative work on Las Abejas.

[37] Though shots have not been fired by the EZLN since 1994, EZLN alignment connotes people's willingness to use armed resistance to gain rights and protect autonomy. Though the acceptance of instrumental arms use in mobilization may only be symbolic, it nevertheless communicates a divergence in mobilization philosophy between Tzotzil groups and has important repercussions for communal organizing strategies.

the conflict but as part of the solution" (2003: 85). Today, the philosophic, religious, and political divisions in Acteal are such that members of one area generally do not enter the area of the other groups, though the divide between PRI-aligned and autonomous contingents are the most pronounced.

Divisions exist within Las Abejas as well and in 2008, they formally split into two groups. The Las Abejas group studied here is a non-governmental organization, while the splinter group took the name Las Abejas A.C., with A.C. indicating that it is a non-commercial, but government-registered civil organization. Las Abejas A.C. receives government funds and follows a government-led agenda, and has used the deliberate confusion between the names of the two groups to speak on behalf of the non-governmental group, as they did, for example, in a 2012 radio broadcast (Mesa Directiva de Las Abejas 2012). Las Abejas operate independent from the government and seek political and cultural autonomy as well as justice for past violence, while Las Abejas A.C. are characterized by the original Las Abejas as trying to climb the ladder of partisan political power to gain government appointments.

The Acteal massacre: As a result of the conflict between the EZLN and the Mexican military but prior to the 1997 massacre, Acteal contained 250-400 internally displaced people in the Acteal refugee camp, most of whom were Las Abejas members planning to relocate if and when ongoing low-scale violence and intimidation stopped. On December 22, 1997, Public Security Police trucks transported PRI militants, some of whom were identified as belonging to the paramilitary group Mascara Roja, from surrounding communities into Acteal (see Tavanti 2003: 10 for details). While members of the Zapatista portion of Acteal quickly escaped, rightly guessing that any armed violence in the area would make them a primary target, Las Abejas

members and their families were divided between those who hid in surrounding ravines, those killed attempting to flee, and those trapped and assassinated in the Catholic church. The paramilitaries opened fire on the community for five hours, eventually killing 45 people: nine men, fifteen children, and twenty-one women, five of whom were pregnant (Speed 2003: 47; Tavanti 2003: 13-14). The massacre was horrifically violent: paramilitaries hacked fetuses out of the wombs of pregnant women, cut off their breasts, and testimonies collected from survivors describe how paramilitaries threw fetuses from machete to machete (cited in Speed 2003: 52).

The massacre represents a failure of basic civil liberties protections in Mexico and reveals multiple levels of non-accommodation by the state, all of which challenge claims to democratic status. First, the basic promise of the right to life and liberty was revoked by the state. Second, the larger indigenous community in Chiapas was (and still is) contained and controlled territorially through military and police checkpoints and paramilitary harrassment, a condition that violates freedom of movement and freedom to associate and assemble with others. Third, the Catholic Church, generally a place of refuge in liberation theology communities, became a site of violent containment that targeted victims based on their religious and political affiliations. These and many other examples of civil liberties violations in Acteal highlight why we need to incorporate the civil liberties experiences of marginalized citizens in assessments about democratic status.

It is difficult to separate paramilitary activity from government decree in the Acteal massacre. Researchers have found evidence that just a few days prior to the massacre, then-President of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon and the Justice Ministry approved a counterinsurgency project by the federal army (in endnote, Marcos and Ponce de Leon 2001: 143) that may have involved granting greater approval to paramilitaries. Sociologist Marco

Tavanti, who has worked extensively in Acteal, describes how the practice of territorial division of control was utilized to contain indigenous people as "part of a low-intensity warfare strategy" promoted by Zedillo and put into action by Julio César Ruiz Ferro, then-Governor of Chiapas (Tavanti 2003: 74). Low level warfare allows containment of indigenous groups to happen outside of the public eye. When orders are not linked to government policy, there is little hope for accountability or monitoring by media and watchdog groups. In sum, less traceable low-intensity warfare has become a strategy to repress indigenous mobilization without undermining the state's democratic status.

The first non-PRI governor of Chiapas, Pablo Salazar Mendiguchía, was elected in 2000 through an unprecedented coalition of eight political parties, and initially people hoped he would hold Acteal massacre masterminds accountable and disband paramilitary forces there (Eber and Kovic 2003: 15). Salazar created the Commission of Reconciliation for Communities in Conflict, which has provided some financial compensation to survivors of violence and tried to facilitate the return of internally displaced people (Eber and Kovic 2003: 15), but neither he nor the Commission has dramatically altered the landscape of Chiapas politics. The same is true of his successor, Juan José Sabines Guerrero, who began as a PRI member but was elected by a PRD-led multi-party coalition. Guerrero has been accused by human rights activists of allowing politically motivated incarceration and forced disappearances to continue in Chiapas (Villamil 2012).

In July 2012, the PRI reclaimed the governorship with the election of the youngest governor in the country, Manuel Velasco Coello, in partnership with the PRI-aligned Green and New Alliance Parties, and there is little expectation that Velasco will increase state accommodation for pueblos originarios there. Meanwhile, a United States court dismissed a Las

Abejas lawsuit brought against Zedillo based on a suggestion by the US Justice Department that

his status as President during the massacre granted him immunity, an excuse that has been

granted to former heads of state such as Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Mahinda Rajapaksa of Sri

Lanka (Bellinger 2013). In this way, Zedillo continues to elude charges brought against him by

Las Abejas as they have tried to use domestic and international institutional channels to press

their claims against the Acteal massacre's intellectual authors. Mexico's state and federal courts

have thrown out Las Abejas' cases, but the case is under review at the Inter-American

Commission on Human Rights. The following section places Acteal in a theoretical framework

to better understand Tzotzil mobilization in Acteal.

Theorizing Acteal

> *"Each group, each pueblo, has its own way of demanding its rights in distinct forms."*
> *(Shilón Gómez 2012, indigenous government official in Chiapas)*

> *"The only thing that can guarantee that their [indigenous peoples'] rights are heard, that they are respected, is permanent struggle. And I think that one manner to do it is public denouncement. Public denouncement is a symbolic act that confronts power."*
> *(Jimenez 2012, human rights worker, Chiapas)*

Like all of the cases in this project, Las Abejas of Acteal face a unique combination of

narrative production and state accommodation patterns that determine their high level of

mobilization for cultural rights claims. Las Abejas experience medium political accommodation,

with some respect for their autonomy legally encoded but face significant harassment in practice

when they exercise this autonomy. Economic accommodation is extremely low, with most

families in Acteal operating at basic subsistence levels. Las Abejas deal with medium cultural

accommodation—some demands are accommodated and others repressed. Each of the

accommodation types are discussed at length in the following subsection, but they are summarized in the figure below to explain how Acteal fits into the larger theoretical framework.
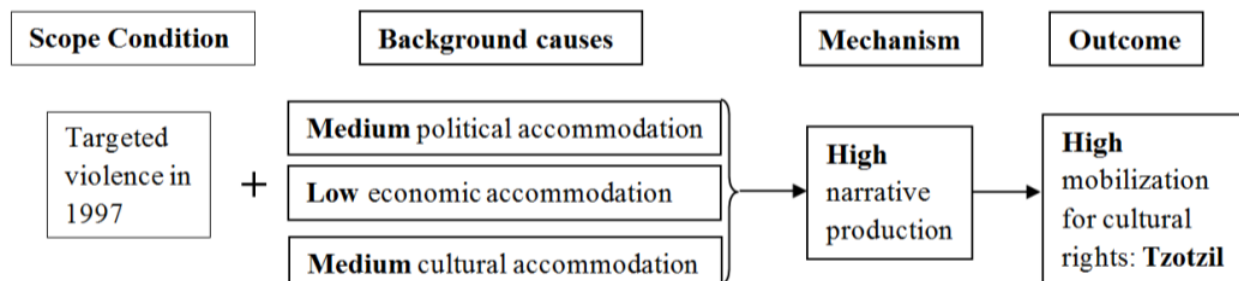
Figure 8: Theoretical model for Acteal.

The process of Las Abejas mobilization for cultural rights claim-making is bound up in the story of empowerment of pueblos originarios, and especially the transformation of women into political actors and civil society leaders (Speed, Hernández Castillo et al. 2006; Tavanti 2003). One human rights worker in Chiapas said of Las Abejas, "they have learned much about their rights and now they demand them" (Anonymous 2012c). Las Abejas use memories of violence to showcase the urgency of protecting their rights as an autonomous pueblo originario, but also as women[38] and as campesinos. The most consistent expression of memory in Acteal is the monthly vigils Las Abejas hold on the twenty-second of every month, as they have done for nearly fifteen years, to commemorate the massacre of December 22, 1997. In addition, there are numerous static visual testaments to memories of violence in the community itself: a memorial column to the victims, banners demanding accountability for the massacre, and the church itself where the massacre occurred, still showing an exterior riddled with bullet holes.

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[38] Though Las Abejas is no longer exclusively made up of women as it was during its formation, it is still perceived as an organization of women's empowerment, and is linked with many other feminist organizations regionally and internationally. However, the current Board of Directors is all male, as were all Board spokespeople I formally interviewed. I heard informally from several women in the community, as well as human rights activists in the region, that machismo is still a major problem in the community and also within the organization (Anonymous 2012c).

Figure 9: Column of Infamy. Made by a Danish artist and installed at the entrance to Acteal. Photo by author.

Figure 10: Acteal's Catholic Church. This is where much of the massacre took place and it still used by the community. Photo by author.
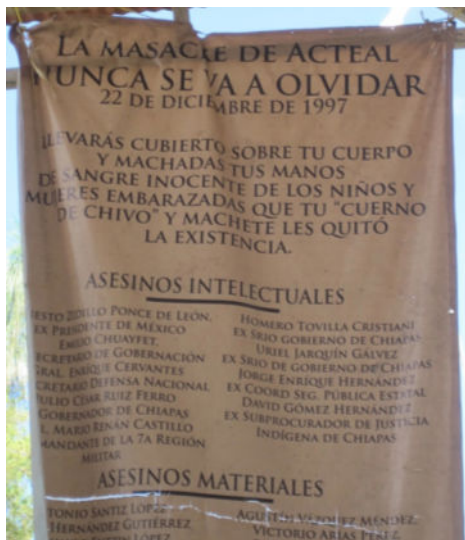
Figure

Figure 11: Banner of assassins . Hanging from the rafters of the community meeting hall, a banner names the intellectual and material authors of the massacre, and tells them, "your hands are stained with innocent blood." Photo by author.Figure 12: Banner of martyrs. This banner lists the names and ages of those assassinated and says "our children and grandchildren will be the guardians of memory." Photo by author.

Though there is concern that such heavy memories of violence immortalized in this way can contribute to a victimization of rememberers, (Kovic 2003: 15), Las Abejas have managed to use memories of violence as fuel for mobilization. In fact, they skillfully use memories for shaming and claiming—to shame the state and claim their rights. Their website, acteal.blogspot.com, has an automatically updating sidebar showing how many days have passed since the massacre. This constant reminder of the violence accompanies readers through all the tabs of their website, so that articles about grassroots radio, the Las Abejas latest choir performance, or the most recent call to action in solidarity with displaced indigenous people from nearby villages are infused with the fact of the massacre. Daily life in Acteal is similarly surrounded by physical reminders of the massacre so that people remember it, think about it, and talk about it more than if such visual triggers were absent.

Mobilization occurs in the community both institutionally and contentiously. First, Las Abejas make institutional rights claims through the courts. After unsuccessfully trying to get the Chiapan and then the federal courts to hear their case, Las Abejas went to the international level. With ongoing support and representation from the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Center for Human Rights, based in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Las Abejas brought charges against intellectual and material authors of the massacre to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights where it is under review as of this writing.[39] Despite their blocked attempts to use Mexican courts, Las Abejas continue to use a range of domestic institutional claim-making tactics including monthly letter-writing campaigns and reports by human rights observers several times a year of ongoing harassment in Acteal, which the organization sends to government

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[39] See www.cidh.org/annualrep/2010eng/MXAD212-05EN.doc for summary of the case as it stands in the IACHR (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2010).

officials.[40] All of these written documents reference the 1997 massacre and use descriptions of

the murders there, and the effects on community members afterwards, to make redress appear

imperative—this is shaming and claiming in action.

The second form of mobilization by Las Abejas includes conventional expressions of

contentious politics, including marches and sit-ins as well as a rejection of government services.

Though the PRI-affiliated contingent of Acteal does not participate in these actions, often the

EZLN contingent joins Las Abejas, making a majority of the community mobilized and sharing

grievances together. Though Las Abejas distinguish their non-violent commitment from

Zapatista-style resistance strategies, this collaboration allows hundreds of community members

to share projects and resources. For example, in March 2012, I attended the annual Women's

Day march, referenced in the chapter's opening, from the nearby Zapatista-governed

autonomous community of Polhó to Acteal that was colorfully led by Las Abejas flying flags,

banners, and leading group chants and songs proclaiming the need for increased originario rights.

On the march, we passed telephone poles spray-painted with the message "don't pay the light,"

meaning that people should refuse to pay their electricity bills, a campaign started by

autonomous communities to address state and electric company collaboration to dispossess

originarios of lands wanted for Chiapas' hydropower projects.

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[40] See home page of http://acteal.blogspot.com/ for regular letters issued by Las Abejas to various government authorities and civil society members, with archived letters linked on left-hand side.

Figure 13: Electricity bill boycott. An example of contentious politics in Acteal – the campaign to boycott the electric company with signs like this one: "Don't pay your light." Photo by author.

Similar campaigns to not pay water bills have taken root throughout Chiapas' autonomous communities. While the electricity and water bill boycotts can be seen as economic claims responding to low economic accommodation in Acteal, these extra-institutional claims are also in response to exploitation of originario land, something intimately bound to Tzotzil culture. The community refutes the government's right to demand payment because it is not upholding Tzotzil rights to continue their cosmology, which includes land use and stewardship. These contentious means of asserting autonomy contribute to cultural rights claim-making in Acteal, and are connected to political and economic claims as well.

A unique aspect of Las Abejas' contentious mobilization is their use of locally based creative forums to mobilize for cultural rights claim-making in ways that memorialize the massacre. Though these artistic endeavors are not explicitly contentious in the classic sense of the term, they are performed outside state-legitimated channels for interest representation. For example, in Acteal they have created a choir that commemorates the victims of 1997 through

song,[41] a non-violence-focused youth group, a theater group, and artisanal weavings with the distinct pattern of Las Abejas. One of the lyrics of the choir says "I cannot be silent, I cannot go on indifferently,"[42] showing how the choir acts as a vehicle for mobilization where people, especially women, use their voices to demand rights and justice (Coro de Acteal 2012).

Figure 14: The Las Abejas Choir of Acteal. Photo from Coro de Acteal 2012.

All of these venues show how memorialization of the 1997 massacre plays such an active part in the mobilization for cultural rights, through the process of shaming and claiming. As justice-demanding endeavors, these artistically channeled claims are contentious yet not directly confrontational and are also locally institutionalized. Through the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, petitions, and song, weaving, theater, marches and refusal to pay for government services, Las Abejas perform both institutional and contentious mobilization relying on narratives infused with memories of violence.

State Accommodation

"Language is an identity. It is you, as a person."

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[41] Though the choir is now nationally recognized and tours throughout the country, it is still very much a grassroots endeavor and lyrics explicitly critique the state's approach to the massacre and subsequent impunity.
[42] In Spanish: "no puedo callar, no puedo pasar indiferente."

(Pale Pech 2012, Tzotzil and Spanish Teacher, San Cristóbal de las Casas)

Ethnic minority status represents only one of many epistemological layers that compose

Las Abejas identity and inform their political choices (Brewer 2009; Gossen 1999: 54; Tavanti

2003: 209). In fact, ethnic identity has not been the most salient factor in political behavior in

Mexico, though its separation from other political and economic rights demands may be

oversimplified. According to Mexico scholar Guillermo Trejo:

> 60 percent of all publically expressed demands between 1974 and 2000 were
> political, while 30 percent were economic and 10 percent were ethnic. Political
> demands focused on the democratization of municipal authority structures and an
> end to government repression and human rights violations. Economic demands
> mostly concerned land reform, and the dominant ethnic demands involved
> constitutional recognition of the right to autonomy and self-determination of
> indigenous people. (Trejo 2004: 361)

Though it is useful to categorize demands to capture dynamics at play in the interest arena, Trejo

also shows the difficulty in separating categories of demands. The "ethnic demand" for

constitutional recognition is also a political demand, just as the demand for land reform, or the

demand to change municipal authority that Trejo cites can be read as cultural demands. In

reality, policies that would appear to be *politically* accommodating, such as the constitutional

right to autonomy, also impact the degree of *cultural* autonomy a community has, and therefore

affect cultural rights. With this caveat in mind, the following sections present political,

economic, and cultural accommodation policies towards Tzotzil Las Abejas members in Acteal

that influence mobilization for cultural rights claim-making.

Political and economic accommodation: Las Abejas in Acteal exhibit medium political

accommodation and low economic accommodation by the state. Though the Mexican state has

made progress in electoral benchmarks towards democratic status, in practice it has not yet

implemented a system of political accommodation that fully includes ethnic minorities.

Autonomy scholar Aracely Burguete characterizes the Mexican government as a "pacted

democracy," with elites defining the rules of democratization (Burguete Cal y Mayor 2012).

Pacts in democratic transitions generally symbolize compromise between opposite party

moderates in order to contain more radical elements on each side and thus can shut out voices

that the mainstream deems unsavory (Linz and Stepan 1996: 61). Burguete also invokes the

long-standing elite capture of politics in Chiapas, in addition to private agreements between

those in power. Regarding participation in the Chiapan interest arena, Burguete says, "The

citizenry does not find spaces to participate; there is no citizen participation in public decision-

making, and participatory mechanisms are defined from above by the government" (Burguete

Cal y Mayor 2012). This is not the kind of political landscape that lends itself to high

accommodation of minorities, nor to institutional types of rights mobilizations.

In the late 1980s, more than in any other state, Chiapan indigenous and campesino

organizations began a "slow evolution from demanding a universalistic program of civic and

human rights to one of group-specific ethnic rights" (Trejo 2004: 374).[43] In 1998, Chiapan

legislators passed a law recognizing communal autonomy and giving pueblos originarios the

right to implement *usos y costumbres*, or traditional practices for leadership selection, as

occurred in Oaxaca in 1997. Burguete remarked, "here it [usos y costumbres] doesn't mean

anything, it is like telling you, you have the right to put on a red shirt [referring to *huipil*s, or

woven shirts, of originario women]" (Burguete Cal y Mayor 2012). In other words, usos y

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[43] This is contrast to Oaxaca, where "ethnicity never really displaced political and material demands from the top of
the social agenda" (Trejo 2004: 376).

costumbres grants superficial rights in practice. Burguete elaborated to say that though there were supposed to be changes to the Chiapas state Constitution in early 2011, the Governor became frightened of the political implications and backed out, delivering a blow to indigenous rights and culture (Burguete Cal y Mayor 2012). An anthropologist in San Cristóbal de Las Casas referred to the culturally inappropriate nature of new political institutions, such as courts with defense attorneys put in place by federal and state governments and institutionalized in pueblos originarios (Orantes García 2012). He remarked that "these spaces created by the Mexican government seem like Hollywood movies—for example, a space with a judge and witnesses that doesn't have anything to do with the community, with traditions" (Orantes García 2012). In essence, attempts by the government to transform pueblos originarios were replete with culturally inappropriate structures and a lack of protection for the structures originario citizens actually wanted.

In fact, originarios have long histories of participation in political and cultural institutions within their own communities. Mexican anthropologist Benjamin Maldonado has written that originario "communal life is precisely an experience of the exercise of power through the participation in the assembly as a superior political organ, and through the completion of cargos and services" (Maldonado Alvarado 2002: 4). Though some communities may demand the Hollywood court set-up that outside governments have created, many want state accommodation to assist their own autonomous management that they have been practicing long before legal recognition of usos y costumbres.

In Chiapas, the issue of autonomy is close to the surface of any discussion on cultural and political rights.[44] Many pueblos originarios in Chiapas have a well-developed platform for the processes they want as "autonomous political subjects," such as:

> a) the reaffirmation of our cultural identity, the recovery of our territories and the reestablishment of our customs; b) the struggle for the exercise of power, both in the communities, the municipalities and – with broader alliances – in the state government; and c) the desire to be seen as regional subjects, whilst also maintaining a clear sense of belonging to the Mexican nation. (Gonzáles Hernández and Quintanar Quintanar 2000: 196)

Again, political, economic, and cultural demands are intertwined because reaffirming originarios' cultural identity necessitates, among other things, addressing land rights. Political power within the municipality, through usos y costumbres, includes the right to use culturally based practices of leadership rather than imposed political parties in deciding authority structures. Finally, there is the desire for applied federalism, showing that originarios see Mexico's federalism as an opportunity for political accommodation where they can have regional identity and Mexican citizenship simultaneously.

In theory, federal states should have a larger toolkit than centralized states to address concerns of local citizens because regional politicians in federal arrangements have greater administrative, financial, and political power. Decentralization allows federal governments to more swiftly disperse power to the local level, whereas centralized states struggle to accommodate diverse needs through local responses. However, as Falletti shows (2005), it is not

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[44] It is important to note that the quest for autonomy within federal frameworks is quite distinct from that of secession. One scholar describes the autonomy movement in Mexico, saying, "Indian ethnolinguistic groups, through their organizations, are not demanding sovereignty, that is to say, separation from the Mexican nation, but autonomy, which is real liberty and the right to live their culture as pueblos, together with the cultures of other pueblos and social groups, that constitute the Mexican nation" (Maldonado Alvarado 2002: 9). Unlike, for example, some Kurds in Turkey who actively want to create their own separate state, most contemporary Latin American indigenous groups are seeking greater political and cultural autonomy within states where they already have citizenship (Schatz 2000:94). In Chiapas, autonomy movements continue to grow, even as the federal and subnational governments and associated paramilitary groups attempt to restrict them.

just decentralization itself that can empower local leaders, but rather the sequence in which responsibilities are decentralized. She shows how regional governments that receive increased administrative duties from the national government, followed by fiscal and then political duties, will be less effective than regional governments given power in a fiscal, political, and *then* administrative sequence (Falleti 2005: 332). In fact, Chiapas' decentralization through regional autonomy has happened first through fiscal means, then through administrative means, and finally through political means, though uptake of each of the three stages has been riddled with subnational authoritarian control. In Falleti's model, she predicts such a progression would yield only medium or low changes in the balance of power between levels of government (Falleti 2005: 332).

One Chiapas scholar said that fiscal decentralization in Chiapas has been the most successful of the three types, in that municipalities now receive more money than before decentralization, but they do not have the political power to actually use funds in ways that will really benefit their communities (Rodríguez Castillo 2012). Because funds are labeled for particular uses, Chiapan communities are unable to use them for other purposes, even when the original designation does not meet the needs of the community (Rodríguez Castillo 2012). Such a scenario illustrates the fact that state accommodation requires more than decentralization alone. Federal institutional design does allow more flexibility in accommodating regional needs than central systems like Turkey and El Salvador, but without political will to make decentralization meaningful, it offers only limited benefits to originarios. As with Convention 169 and constitutional reforms, decentralization suffers from non-enforcement. The sequence of decentralization, in addition to cooperation between actors who control political, fiscal, and administrative components of municipal governance, play important roles in forming the degree

of political and economic accommodation ethnic minorities receive. But the lack of political power to enforce democratic changes made through fiscal and administrative decentralization undermines federalism's promise of regional autonomy for indigenous citizens.

Economic accommodation, as described in Chapter 1, refers to the perceived sense of economic opportunity for minority citizens.[45] Overall, the general sentiment of economic neglect and exploitation capture a sense of economic stagnation rather than upward mobility for originarios in Chiapas, even as many Mexicans move into middle class lifestyles. Chenalhó remains one of the most economically marginalized provinces in Mexico's poorest state (Tavanti 2003: 48). Though Acteal residents have slightly more control over fiscal matters than they did before decentralization reforms, this has not translated into increased economic accommodation. While Chiapas is a poor state, there is significant income variation within the state, with rural indigenous people significantly poorer than their urban ladino and mestizo counterparts (Eber and Kovic 2003: 2; Tavanti 2003: 48). This poverty stands in stark contrast to the abundance of resources in the state, particularly in areas traditionally inhabited by indigenous people. For example, 2003 data showed that near Acteal, in the indigenous township of San Pedro Chenalhó, 56.5% of homes did not have running water, and 78.12 % of homes lacked electricity—yet Chiapas generated 48 percent of total Mexican electricity from hydro-power, as well as 47 percent of its natural gas (Eber and Kovic 2003: 36).[46] Long term economic marginalization of pueblos originarios in Mexico has been a result of policy choice, rather than resource availability, and this is evident in Chiapas's economic landscape. Land rights remain the central economic concern for indigenous communities like Acteal, and lack of access to traditional lands

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[45] See Appendix A.1 for sample interview questions used to score background factors.
[46] This is derived in part from *Chiapas: Present and Future*. 1999, Publicaciones Garcia Lourdes.

is a major factor in the impoverishment of Tzotzils in Chiapas (Tavanti 2003: 48-49). Awareness of economic inequalities permeates the language Las Abejas use in their communiqués to the public, as they demand cultural and economic rights, as well as justice for the Acteal massacre.

To conclude this section, Tzotzils in Acteal live with medium political accommodation and low economic accommodation by the state, showing that institutional frameworks such as decentralization and constitutional protections are inadequate on their own to protect minority rights. Implementation of constitutional guarantees, combined with enforcement and effective decentralization plans, hold potential for accommodation but have not diminished the urgency with which Las Abejas mobilize.

Cultural accommodation: Language is a central marker of cultural identity (Blot 2003: 18), and for originarios in Chiapas it is a key indicator of cultural accommodation by the state. For example, the homogenization of language through public education and media is recognized by many scholars as serving nationalist projects that prioritize the ethnic majority and signifies non-accommodation of minorities (See Breuilly's introduction in Anderson 1991; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Weber 1976). I look to language rights as a useful measurement (Eisenstadt 2011: 55) of cultural accommodation for Tzotzils in Acteal. The director of an organization dedicated to indigenous language literature promotion in Chiapas described how, "for us, our languages play an important role in conflict resolution, in daily communication, in the forms of thinking about and understanding our world" (Pérez López 2012). Language rights are part of ethnic minority identity mobilization in Acteal and are used both in the process of claim-making, and as claims themselves. In Acteal, mother tongue language constitutes the basis of nearly all communication, and most information about mobilizations for claim-making is orally

disseminated in Tzotzil, with translations into Spanish happening only when outsiders are present, or in written communiqués intended for wide national and international audiences.

Language is also an intimate conveyor of intergenerational and intra-communal memory, therefore the persistence of mother tongue usage in Acteal can be seen as positively contributing to the formation of narrative based on memories of violence there. Language rights are assumed to be an integral part of culture and are included in cultural rights demands. Blot tells us that "[a]s people engage in social and political battles to establish and maintain an identity as a people, they will, of necessity, make claims about language directly or as a means to mark boundaries of class, ethnicity, nation and gender" (Blot 2003: 7). Language is one potent way of marking a unique identity, and thus the mobilization in Acteal taking place in Tzotzil follows this logic. Spanish is used by Las Abejas to connect with solidarity communities, but not as the primary language within their own community, where it is understood that the cultural rights they claim are bound up in preserving their uniqueness in the face of state homogenization efforts. Blot says:

> Spanish language, Mexican ethnicity, and social place are still so indelibly linked within national culture that virtually all programs aimed at social and economic 'progress' for Indians follow the state-initiated pattern of colonial and nineteenth-century public policy thinking. (Blot 2003: 15)

Thus, despite recent structural changes to increase ethnic minority cultural accommodation on paper, the legacy of Mexican nation-building is very much wrapped up in non-accommodation of cultural deviance from Mexicanness. Maldonado expounds that the rights of pueblos originarios were subsumed by the project "to become the Mexican nation under monocultural criteria that each State should correspond to a nation and each nation to a State" (Maldonado Alvarado 2002:

8). Lack of cultural accommodation does a disservice not only to ethnic minorities, but it also impedes democratization of multicultural states.

Though now mother tongue languages are gaining recognition in Mexico and in international solidarity communities as being vital to cultural expression, indigenous languages have been oppression in Mexico for generations (Vázquez Álvarez 2012; Maldonado Alverado 2010: 13; Meyer and Soberanes Bojórquez 2010). The General Directorate for Indigenous Education (DGEI), created in 1978-9, grew out of new indigenism taking place in Mexico at the time, where multiculturalism was beginning to be recognized as an asset (Enrique López 2009: 14). The 1992 reform of the Mexican Constitution that acknowledges the multicultural make-up of the country grew out of this momentum. In 1997, the Mexican state solidified its approach to bilingual, intercultural education with the creation of the General Coordination of Intercultural, Bilingual Education (CGEIB) in 2001. DGEI has the mission of ensuring minority languages are not abandoned due to Spanish language dominance in schools, while CGEIB seeks to make intercultural education available to *all* Mexican students, not only indigenous ones. However, the intentions of these institutions continue to be tempered by ongoing racism and underlying commitment to nation-building through homogenization, as seen through poorly designed bilingual education policies that result in monolingual school instruction.

Many factors impede implementation of federal and state laws that require bilingual, intercultural education. In practice, CGEIB and DGEI are under the authority of the Secretary of Public Education (SEP) in Mexico, which is monitored by the Mexican National Educational

Workers Union (SNTE), a powerful and controversial actor in Mexican politics.[47] At both

federal and state levels, SNTE and SEP have failed in commitments to improving education for

originarios, and have been central players in the party politics that fostered subnational

authoritarian control in Oaxaca. The union is not logistically prepared to deliver bilingual,

intercultural education due to inadequate training, materials, and assessments of such programs,

nor is its tenure system designed to allow new indigenous educators to be placed in communities

where their same indigenous language is spoken. For example, though in theory any teacher can

train to teach bilingual, intercultural education, in practice, only indigenous students follow this

path, leading to a ghettoization of bilingual, intercultural teacher-training programs. Chiapas and

Oaxaca each do have special colleges for bilingual, intercultural teachers to complete their

teaching degrees, but because of SNTE's tenure system, which gives the newest teachers the

least input into where they are placed, there is no guarantee, or even real probability, that

graduates will be sent to communities that match their linguistic skills. Also, there is minimal

development of an actual intercultural curriculum because of increasing pressures on teachers to

prepare students for standardized assessment tests. Similar to complaints in the United States

after the implementation of No Child Left Behind legislation, that teachers are just 'teaching to

the test,' standardized tests in Mexico relegate intercultural education to the status of

extracurricular luxury rather than cultural imperative. In addition, Mexico's history of

discrimination against indigenous people makes students and their families reluctant to push

back to claim the right to culturally based education. Finally, continuing trends of migration and

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[47] See Cook 1996 for an analysis of the union in Oaxaca. SNTE's infamy as a corrupt political player was taken to new levels in February 2013, when then-SNTE President Elba Esther Gordillo was arrested and charged with embezzling more than US$1.5 million from the union.

tourism make English proficiency more economically beneficial and culturally prized than

indigenous languages.

The role of SNTE in promoting language rights came up frequently in interviews. Tuxtla

Gutiérrez-based scholar Fernando Lara Piña stated that "language rights are also the right to

education, the right to health, and to a dignified life" (Lara Piña 2012). As in Oaxaca, real

bilingual education is more promise than product in Chiapas. Leticia Pons Bonal, an expert on

indigenous education in Chiapas, was critical of SEP programs in bilingual, intercultural

education:

> as a model, they have tried to impose it…there are study plans, the discourse
> does exist. But the teachers go to places where they don't speak the same
> language. When indigenous students come to us here in the university we ask
> them how their education was, if they went to a bilingual, intercultural school,
> and they say, 'yes we went, but the teachers didn't speak the language.' The
> teacher's union keeps thinking about indigenous communities as the same, as if
> they were all equal. (Pons Bonal 2012)

Pons Bonal touches on a major obstacle to language rights for ethnic minorities in Mexico.

Because the teacher's union controls teacher placements, they are ultimately responsible for

ensuring that pueblos originarios get teachers who can instruct in their mother tongue. But the

union acts as if sending *any* indigenous teacher to *any* indigenous community is enough to foster

culturally sensitive education, without thinking about language differences (Pons Bonal 2012).

The tolerance of mediocre education for pueblos originarios by SEP and SNTE is sometimes

mirrored by the pueblos themselves. Pons Bonal describes how:

> if you go to communities where it has been difficult for teachers to arrive, it is
> hard for those people to say, 'we want a different one [teacher],' because it is that
> one or nothing. To have a teacher is better than to not have a teacher, and they
> don't want to reject the one who has arrived. (Pons Bonal 2012)

In some instances, community fear of losing a teacher prevents ethnic minorities from advocating for their cultural right to have real bilingual education with teachers who speak their mother tongue. Sometimes these communities dealt with "linguistic battles" between Spanish-speaking teachers and their mother tongue-speaking students, that wreaked havoc on the social fabric of communities and diminished the utility of public education (Dawson 2004: 57).

Despite Mexico's General Law on the Language Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, in place since 13 March 2003, it is clear that indigenous language learning remains problematic. In Acteal, I spoke with residents who have mobilized to address language rights in the schools. In the half darkness of Acteal's main administrative office, a concrete, tin-roofed shack at the bottom of the steep trail leading from the mountain road down into the village, the Las Abejas Board of Directors hold court once a month to deal with community issues. Tattered posters from past marches and assemblies lined the office walls, and the lone bare bulb overhead illuminated the many empty chairs next to me and the three Las Abejas representatives on the other side of a large table littered with file folders and coffee cups. I waited, cringing, for them to finish reading my informed consent letter out loud, verbatim. The representatives didn't want to sign anything, having a well-honed suspicion of outsiders arriving and asking them to sign away rights, but they agreed to speak anonymously.

In turn, they described how a portion of Acteal residents had created their own bilingual school in response to the absence of meaningful bilingual, intercultural education from the state, which pays for a teacher at the Spanish-language primary school nearby (Anonymous 2012j). Proudly, the men described how the government does not recognize the school nor do students receive credits that are transferable to government schools, but the community funds teachers who work with students in both Spanish and Tzotzil and follow a community-approved

curriculum (Anonymous 2012j). Also, because the EZLN has created a system of autonomous schools and colleges, students who attend the autonomous school in Acteal are able to continue all the way through a university level education outside the government system (Anonymous 2012j). Though the Board members acknowledged that there are complications for students who may want to leave their communities to enter jobs that require official transcripts, for students who remain in their autonomous communities, the alternative school system allows bilingual education in line with originario values.

Yet in other instances, the process of ethnic minority oppression has been internalized by originarios. Academic and development practitioner Cabrera Fuentes described how bilingual teachers have been forced out of schools in San Cristóbal de las Casas because parents only want Spanish language school instruction:

> In some of the cases, parents have met with teachers to talk about this problem, saying, 'we can teach mother tongue at home, we want you to teach Spanish,' but the teacher says, 'the school is supposed to be bilingual.' In Larraínzar [another municipality in Chiapas], the same thing has happened. Parents want to know, why don't you give more classes in mathematics, in Spanish? Don't waste time on [mother tongue] language. (Cabrera Fuentes 2012)

Like Acteal, many communities have deep political and religious divides, as well as divides about the importance of bilingual, intercultural education. While some people have changed their stances over time, the reflections of interviewees in Chiapas show the diverse range of challenges facing cultural accommodation of ethnic minorities in Mexico. Some people perpetuate mother tongue use at home but accept Spanish language instruction at school, while others advocate for more inclusive education.

Language politics is happening beyond the schoolyard as well. Recently, a modest movement toward indigenous language appreciation has begun in San Cristóbal de las Casas, the closest major urban center to Acteal and many other Tzotzil villages. Pérez López comments:

> To speak a [indigenous] language in the past, people ridiculed, people treated [speakers] badly. Now it is less, but I think something that has helped us lessen the oppression is literature, because young people can read poems, listen to writers read books in their own language, and this process has lessened discrimination…there is still linguistic discrimination but now young people make movies or videos in their languages…also the knowledge that indigenous languages have the same [legal protected] status as Spanish is a help, that they are national languages gives confidence in them. (Pérez López 2012)

Informal recognition of indigenous languages through new cultural spaces is changing the internal accommodation of indigenous culture, and this is mirrored through institutional changes like the legal recognition of languages in the Constitution. Another interviewee talked about the increased use of indigenous languages in the globalization of communication and technological production:

> On the northern side of San Cristobal, there are cybercafés every few blocks, and if you step inside, you'll see kids on Facebook in Tzotzil, teenage girls talking in Chol or Tolojabal to their boyfriends who are in the Lacandon or in the US. There are a few new commercial video studios on this side of town, and they are producing music videos in Tzotzil and Tzeltal, and sermons, and there are movies now being made only in Tzotzil, without Spanish subtitles. (Anonymous 2012i)

Despite a tremendous history of persecution based on ethnic identity, originarios in Chiapas use their mother tongues to communicate more expansively in a globalized world and to preserve traditional practices in their communities.

To summarize, Mexico faces numerous challenges in improving its cultural accommodation of ethnic minorities, including: addressing the training, curricula, assessments, and placements of bilingual, intercultural teachers, and consulting about the linguistic needs and preferences of pueblos originarios. The first part of this chapter examined federal institutional

design, constitutional recognition of pluriculturalism, and usos y costumbres, and then turned to cultural rights claim-making in Acteal, Chiapas. I presented a history of the conflict there, and described the political, economic, and cultural accommodation of the community. The following half of this chapter discusses the mobilization for cultural rights claims by Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca.

Part II: Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca

> *"As a pueblo originario, we have never depended on the state"*
> *(Albino Ortiz 2012, spokesperson for displaced Triqui community).*

San Juan Copala lies approximately 239 kilometers from Oaxaca City,[48] due west as the crow flies, but the road from the state capital first heads northwest towards the border with Guerrero and Puebla states before dropping southwest into Triqui land. Copala is located in the heart of the Triqui baja region, which is bordered by three mestizo[49] cities known by their abbreviated forms; Juxtlahuaca, Tlaxiaco, and Putla.[50] Juxtlahuaca is the administrative center for the Triqui baja, and Putla serves the same role for the Triqui alta.

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[48] Oaxaca City is formally called Oaxaca de Juarez, but this form is rarely used. Locals refer to the state capital simply as "Oaxaca."

[49] These cities are often described as mestizo in the literature, though in fact much of the population could be better described as urban indigenous because many inhabitants are Mixtecos who have assimilated by dropping traditional dress and language use but retain a cultural identity as Mixteco.

[50] Full names of the cities are Santiago Juxtlahuaca, Asunción Tlaxiaco, and Putla de Guerrero. Though I refer to Copala as a region throughout the paper, it is in fact made up of several small villages, including Agua Fría Copala, Yosoyuxi Copala, Santa Cruz Tilapa, Pajare Pérez, and La Sabana, a site of major road closures and violence during attempted returns by displaced Triquis.

Figure 15: Oaxaca map. San Juan Copala is indicated by red arrow. From http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/3131-link-to-clickable-interactive-map-of-oaxaca-state-mexico.

There are an estimated 23,097 speakers of Triqui in Mexico (INALI 2005c), though this includes both Triqui baja and Triqui alta speakers, who generally consider much of each other's languages to be mutually unintelligible.[51] In addition, cultural animosity exists between the two groups (Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 43). Triquis have historically operated more as separate clans than co-ethnics (Huerta Ríos 1980: 139-143), despite being statistically linked together by Mexican government institutions.

Understanding political (non)accommodation of Triquis in San Juan Copala is central to comprehending the contemporary mobilization for cultural rights there. Tilly tells us that "shared culture, capacity, and political context strongly limit mobilization and making of collective claims" (Tilly 2002: 50). While shared ethnic culture among Triqui factions limited mobilization in the past, recently political divisions have become more salient and prompted mobilization along these lines. Tilly says that marginalized groups are not "content with their lot," but often stay out of politics because "the existing structure of political opportunities inhibits them" (Tilly

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[51] According to researcher Francisco López Bárcenas, there are actually 35,000 Triquis, but due to the violence and instability many have migrated to the northeast of Mexico. See (EDUCA A.C. 2010: 47, footnote 10).

2002: 50). This has been true for Copala Triquis until the late 2000s, when conditions became so difficult there that people began mobilizing anyway.

The Copala case is useful for understanding the politics of multiculturalism in Mexico because the low level of political accommodation there contradicts the promise of federalism to expand subnational rights through autonomy provisions. As of 2008, the state of Oaxaca had 570 municipalities, 418 of which had opted to select leaders through usos y costumbres instead of through political party elections (Servicios Para Una Educación Alternativa A.C. 2008: 12). This should make it clear that San Juan Copala's declaration of autonomy was not, in and of itself, a unique event in Mexican politics. Yet Copala's declaration was not exclusively for the right to select leaders through usos y costumbres, but it was also a demand for remunicipalization, a reordering of how the Oaxaca state accommodates the Copala community politically. Moreover, for the portion of the Copala community declaring autonomy, the struggle for political control is also a struggle for cultural rights, to govern themselves in accordance with their own practices.

At the end of 1948, Copala lost its standing as a municipality during political gerrymandering to bring Copala Triquis under the control of their mestizo neighbors in the larger town of Juxtlahuaca (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 18). Copala never regained municipal standing, despite ongoing demands for reassertion of municipal status over the decades. Relations between mestizos in Juxtlahuaca and Triquis in Copala have been historically tense due to the relationship of political control. In the early 1960s, one researcher documented Triquis in Copala complaining that the authority from Juxtlahuaca "treats us like children" (Montes Vásquez 1988 [1963]: 15). Another scholar, writing in 1980, noted that there were ongoing claims to autonomy in the Triqui region, where people did not want to be dependent on the surrounding mestizo districts (Huerta Ríos 1980: 257). Therefore, it should have been

unsurprising when one part of the Copala Triqui community held assemblies in the mid-2000s to discuss transitioning to an autonomous municipality in line with federal and state constitutional provisions for usos y costumbres. However, such action flew in the face of not just intra-ethnic and mestizo-Triqui conflicts, but also challenged historic political party control of the region.

On January 20th, 2007, a portion of Copala's residents declared the town an autonomous municipality, in accordance with federal and state constitutional reforms of the 1990s. The federal Constitution makes it clear that the privileges of self-determination cannot infringe on the unity of the Mexican state as a whole (2011 [1917]: 1, Article 2). Yet Copala's declaration of autonomy did not challenge Mexico's territorial integrity. It was not a call for separatism, nor an attempt to enforce autonomy to the degree demanded by autonomous municipalities in Chiapas, for example. Nonetheless, the autonomy declaration was followed by intense violence perpetrated to quash mobilization for cultural rights claims.

Pueblos originarios throughout Mexico had been voicing their claims for increased autonomy at both state and federal levels since constitutional reforms in the late 1990s granted them these rights. However, ongoing repression by local vested interests, often centered on land control, fueled anger and resentment that were channeled into contentious social movements by originarios. This was the case in Copala, where the state has used PRI-paramilitary alliances to exercise political, economic, and cultural control even as the community achieved, on paper, a significant increase in rights to self-governance and self-determination. Violence has been ever-present in Copala. More than 500 people were assassinated in the period between 1977-1983 (Pye and Jolley 2011: 185), and there have been more than 1,000 deaths recorded in the history

of conflict in the region in the second half of the twentieth century (De Marinis 2011: 1).[52] From

the time Copala became an autonomous municipality in 2007 until this writing, at least 29 people

have been assassinated, mostly in the siege of 2009. Though the exact numbers of families

displaced from contemporary violence is disputed, it seems that since October 2010 more than

300[53] Triqui people from the region of Copala have been displaced due to intense paramilitary

violence. Unable to return under fear of harm, displaced *Copaltecos*[54] camped out under the

arches of the government palace in Oaxaca City for more than seventeen months between 2010

and 2012, demanding a government response to their situation and respect for their autonomous

municipal status.

The nature of violence in Copala: Triqui organizing in Copala did not begin as a paramilitary or

even a right-wing enterprise. In the late 1970s, "El Club," composed of Copala's male power

brokers Ramón and Luis Flores, Juan Domingo Pérez Castillo, Enrique Acevedo Ortiz, and

Armando Guadalupe Flores, began collaborating, and in 1981, formed the Movement for the

Unification and Struggle of the Triqui (MULT) (De Marinis 2009: 9; Javier Parra Mora and

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[52] The numbers of people killed, wounded, and displaced are all controversial because each side in the conflict has a political motive to modify them and due to rampant impunity, little formal documentation has taken place. Moreover, accurate numbers of people killed are hard to obtain in part because it is mostly community members keeping track, and they do so through personal grieving rather than a chronological list of the assassinations. In an edited book of testimonies, Reina says that more than 20 people have been killed (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 40). De Marinis, citing journalistic sources, says that between August 2005 and November 2009, there were 30 registered deaths in the region (De Marinis 2011: 5, footnote 8). A flyer handed out by displaced Triqui children in the Oaxacan Zócalo on February 15th 2012 states that there have been more than 22 people killed to date (Consejo Autónomo Comunitario de San Juan Copala 2012), and another flyer handed out three weeks prior says that there have been more than 30 people assassinated, raped, and tortured (Copala 2012). When Triquis petitioned the Finnish embassy to help return them to their communities (selected because of the murder of a Finnish human rights observer in the caravan returning to Copala in 2010), the newspaper reporting the incident cited more than 30 people shot down (Tiempo de Oaxaca 2012).

[53] The numbers of displaced people are also highly contested and vary dramatically whether one is citing a government, MULT, UBISORT, or MASJC source. The number 300 attempts to take neither the highest nor lowest estimates of displaced from each group and this figure was often used in the Oaxacan discursive arena and sometimes by the media.

[54] People from Copala.

Hernández Díaz 1994: 191; MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 12). Initially, MULT formed as a

leftist organization to counter PRI control of the area, and made alliances with socialist and

worker-based organizations like the Coalition of Workers, Peasants, and Students of the Isthmus

(COCEI) (De Marinis 2009: 9, footnote 20; Pye and Jolley 2011: 9) in Juchitan de Zargoza

which also proclaimed indigenous pride. However, members began to split into different factions

as PRI resources tempted some into cooperation with a government agenda (Pye and Jolley

2011: 9-10), while others stood by their initial ideological platform. The Unifying Movement of

the Independent Triqui Struggle (MULTI) formed as a response to internal conflict within

MULT, with MULT ultimately leaning towards collusion with the PRI development agenda in

the region and the MULTI faction declaring autonomy in 2007 (EDUCA A.C. 2010: 19; Pye and

Jolley 2011: 10). The division between MULT members sprung from the formation of the Party

of Popular Unity (PUP), a PRI-aligned right-wing political party which MULT now supports and

MULTI does not. While both MULT and MULTI members reside in Copala, MULTI members

support the Autonomous Municipality of San Juan Copala (MASJC), while MULT members

cling to the political party leadership system. The displaced Triquis who camped out in the

Oaxaca City plaza are members of either MULTI or MASJC, or both.

The right wing paramilitary group, Unity for the Social Wellbeing of the Triqui Struggle

(UBISORT), was formed in 1994 with PRI government support (De Marinis 2011: 2) to serve as

a counterpart to the perceived leftist approach of MULT. Whereas MULT has had several

factions, some PRI-aligned and others COCEI-aligned, UBISORT has consistently served as a

medium for PRI interests in Copala. Unlike MULT, which at least started as a more politically

progressive organization, UBISORT has widely been perceived by human rights organizations to

be a violent paramilitary organization from the start (La Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los

Derechos Humanos A.C. 2010). MULT-UBISORT relations have progressed through several

phases. From 1994-2007 the two groups antagonized each other, though from 2007-2010 they

joined efforts to disband the autonomy of Copala and delimit different territories of influence in

accordance with then-Governor Ulises Ruiz's orders. From November 2009-September 2010 the

groups coordinated their actions to derail the first caravan of displaced people (MASJC and Cilia

Olmos 2011: 93). Both groups have used violence against MULTI and MASJC members to

derail the autonomy process. While UBISORT is considered paramilitary, MULT has both a

non-paramilitary and paramilitary component.

While it is controversial in the eyes of the government to accuse the PRI of funding

paramilitary activities of MULT and UBISORT, this funding is understood as a basic fact of the

conflict within the autonomy-seeking Copala contingent.[55] Delegates of the state government

have supported both MULT and UBISORT (Ávila/IGABE 2003: 10). When speaking about

reactions to Copala's autonomy project, one Triqui woman testified, "it seems that the state

government does not find this type of autonomy project suitable and because of this they have

armed paramilitary groups to attack us" (testimonio de Fausta, MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011:

17). Another woman described in detail the way in which the PRI government at the state level

collaborates with the municipal level to finance paramilitaries.

> They have killed many of our people; they've blocked the highways so that those
> of us in the Autonomous Municipality will be left without food, so that we will
> die of hunger, then they started to surround the town, to shoot at the population
> every day, at children, at women, at those that they stop in front of; because this
> was financed by the government, because they [government] are connected with
> the next municipality, in the district of Juxtlahuaca. The President of Juxtlahuaxa
> has sent them [paramilitaries] radios, he sent them guns, he sent them everything

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[55] Paramilitaries are described as "armed men pertaining to groups economically assisted by their government and supporting the police state" (Municipio Autónoma de San Juan Copala and Cilia Olmos 2011: 70).

they need to be able to attack us, the Autonomous Municipality. (testimonio de Reina, MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 26)[56]

In addition to numerous testimonies collected by Cilia Olmos in the above-cited volume, I document demands made by MULTI during their many days of protests in front of the government palace in Oaxaca City document. During this ethnographic work, I watched MULTI members express both verbally and visually how they believe the PRI is funding both MULT and UBISORT's attacks against them, and in this way they tried to shame the state into responding to their claims.

Figure 16: Ruiz's legacy. Banner hung up by the displaced contingent in the Zócalo that said "Blood, pain, and death: The legacy of Ulises Ruiz and the PRI – Autonomous Municipality San Juan Copala." The black and red banner above it advertises the gathering as one of dignified resistance for displaced women and children. Photo by author.

Figure 17: Remembering Bety and Jyri. Banner memorializing two of the victims of paramilitary attacks sends the message "Paramilitaries, get out of the Triqui Region" and calls for respect for traditional forms of governance. Photo by author.

In Item Two of the Autonomy Declaration itself, MASJC residents call for an end to the subsidization and protection of paramilitary groups by the government (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). To summarize, targeted violence by paramilitaries to carry out the political will of the PRI, in addition to impunity for paramilitary crimes, support MULTI's allegations that the PRI has supported MULT and UBISORT violence against autonomy-seekers in Copala.

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[56] Reina, a MASJC spokesperson, is misidentified several times by Cilia Olmos in his 2011 book when he spells her name "Reyna," though the majority of the time he uses the correct spelling. I use the spelling she told me is correct.

Though documenting the link between PRI and paramilitaries is difficult from an academic standpoint, slogans and petitions, in addition to everyday discourse on the ground in Oaxaca reveals this connection to be common knowledge (Martínez Flores 2012; MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 27). For its part, the PRI has always discounted any connection between itself and paramilitaries, even in cases such as Acteal, Chiapas, where proof is much more readily available than in San Juan Copala.

Theorizing Copala

Like Acteal, Copala is bitterly internally divided. One portion of Triquis from Copala have mobilized to medium degree for cultural rights as expressed through the declaration of autonomy, while another portion of the community attempts to suppress the mobilization. Autonomy in this sense is the right to usos y costumbres. As in the Acteal case where I focus on Las Abejas, I only include the portion of San Juan Copala Triquis who support the autonomy movement in the theoretical framework, referred to as MASJC or MULTI. This project does not account for why Triqui paramilitaries or PRI-affiliated groups mobilize to maintain the status quo.

The MASJC community has devised strategies to narrate their grievances publically through spokespeople, pamphlets, media interviews, and the highly visible sit-in in Oaxaca City's central plaza.[57] By broadcasting narratives of violence to the larger state, national and international audience, displaced Triquis hope to pressure the government into facilitating their return to Copala and disbanding the paramilitary forces there. However, I reiterate that the

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[57] The displaced population of Triquis in Oaxaca City was my main point of contact with the Triqui community, a distinction from other cases in this project where I did ethnographic work in the home communities. Biased treatment by the media, minimal academic documentation, and constant contention over the facts of the mobilization for cultural rights claim-making made the Triqui case ripe for ethnographic work, but there were restrictions on visiting Copala itself in 2012 due to high levels of state and paramilitary violence.

outcome of interest is the mobilization for claim-making itself, rather than the result of the mobilization. Memories of violence may not persuade elite power-brokers to grant originario demands, but they do produce narratives that foment community solidarity and make mobilization more likely. The process of mobilizing, and the constraints and supports ethnic minorities encounter along the way, relays the experience of active citizenship for marginalized populations in democratizing countries.

The kind of claim-making counted as legitimate by states—often things like voting, advocating for referendums, or consult between civil society and state representatives (Servicios Para Una Educación Alternativa A.C. 2008: 8)—is limited to certain strata of society: those educated, literate citizens who are not bound by patron-client relationships where votes are pre-determined. Pueblos originarios, because of legacies of racism and marginalization, as well as illiteracy and lack of funds to commute to urban centers of power, have often engaged in more contentious, less institutionalized forms of claim-making, such as street blockades, sit-ins, and rallies. Though MASJC spokespeople have petitioned for an audience with Governor Cué, the Triqui community has also mobilized through contentious political means like the sit-in because they believe state representatives are collaborating with the paramilitary forces that displaced them in the first place. While I aggregate their mobilization as medium, this represents both medium institutional and medium extra-institutional mobilization. The figure below depicts the causes and mechanism in relation to the outcome of medium mobilization.
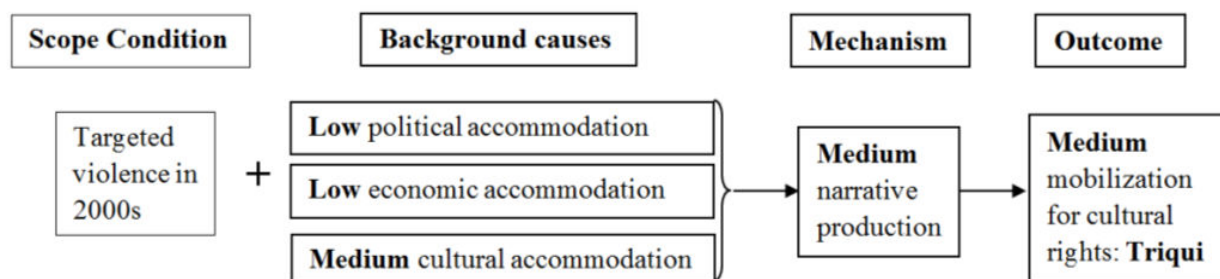
Figure 18: Theoretical model for MASJC.

Copala Triquis exhibit low political and economic accommodation, and medium cultural accommodation by the state, though as in Acteal, accommodations exist more on paper than in practice. For example, the existence of Mexico's constitutional provisions for multiculturalism, and the requirement for bilingual intercultural education make it challenging to code the degree of cultural accommodation as low because institutionalized provisions that support cultural rights are present. However, the lack of implementation and enforcement of these accommodations raise concerns about Mexico's ability to incorporate ethnic minorities into the democratization process without requiring cultural assimilation.

The lack of ethnic minority accommodation by the Mexican state makes people more likely to use extra-institutional channels for mobilization because fewer legitimate institutional channels exist through which their claims can be addressed. Therefore, it is unsurprising that Triquis used sit-ins and marches in Oaxaca City as their primary means of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making.

Figure 19: Triquis preparing to march. Oaxaca City, 24 January 2012. Photo by author.
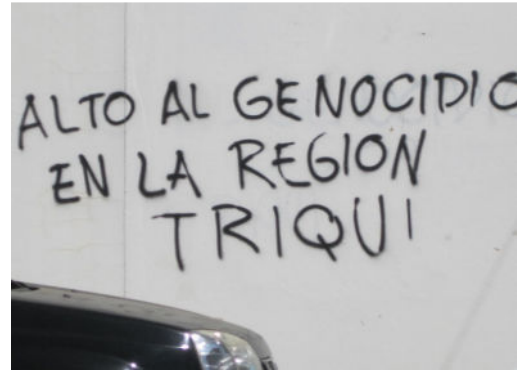
Figure 20: Extra-institutional mobilization. Graffiti on a wall in Oaxaca City, 9 February 2012, says "Stop the genocide in the Triqui Region." Photo by author.

Extra-institutionally, displaced residents occupied the plaza, but they made institutional claims as well through their declaration document and printed requests that were handed to any government official with whom they came in contact. As one member of the displaced Triqui community told me, referring to the declaration, "you have to have written demands for the government to listen, so it was written" (Lorena 2012). By soliciting meetings with government representatives where they present written demands that draw on Mexico's own constitutional guarantees for indigenous rights, Triquis show they are aware of the cultural accommodation that exists legally on paper. They are asking, through both institutional and extra-institutional means, that such accommodation provisions be implemented in practice.

In Article Two of the MASJC autonomy declaration, which was pasted all over Oaxaca City's downtown, MASJC stated that they decided on autonomy "with the objective to break with subordination to organizations that, tied, subsidized, and protected by the government, have brought death, destruction, extortion, siege, and displacement to entire Triqui communities" (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). The narrative of violence as a motivating factor for MASJC Triquis in mobilizing for rights is evident here. The statement goes on to give explicit

examples of the violence they have suffered as a community, citing "the dispossession of goods, the rape of women, the assassinations of children, and the forced disappearances of people" (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). Memories of violence are used as justification for the demand of Triqui autonomy, meaning to govern themselves without intervention by political parties and their affiliated paramilitaries. Displacement, in addition to other forms of bodily violence, has further politicized the MASJC portion of Copala not only because people become more visible when camped out in front of government offices, but also because their narratives of wrongs committed against them serve as potent catalysts for mobilization.

In Item Six of the MASJC declaration, the community engages the Mexican Constitution and the discourse of citizenship and human rights to bolster their claims on the state. Their text states that Article Two of the Mexican Federal Constitution "recognizes and protects the rights of pueblos and indigenous communities to free determination" (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). MASJC's autonomy declaration is in essence a claim to free determination. The declaration language, both in printed form as a flyer to the general public and as a list of demands presented to the Governor and his representatives, shows how MASJC residents' frame their claims within institutional channels. MASJC also draws on ILO Convention 169 for language about protection for indigenous people. Convention 169 prescribes that for indigenous citizens, states "preserve and enrich their languages, knowledge, and all the elements that constitute their culture and identity" (Pueblo Indígena de San Juan Copala 2011). In their autonomy declaration, MASJC uses the Mexican government's signing of 169 as leverage to ask for its enforcement.

Figure 21: Institutional mobilization. Triquis waiting at the door of the government palace in Oaxaca City for their spokesperson to emerge from a meeting with government representatives. 25 January 2012. Photo by author.

The legitimacy of Triqui claims faces frequent obstacles in part because of the complexity of the case, but also because of the narratives being employed. While violence perpetrated by UBISORT fits more neatly into the box of paramilitary persecution and can be memorialized as grievance, MULT violence mixes with memories of PRI-granted privileges for those who agreed to tow the party line. The dynamics of ongoing mestizo control and intra-Triqui violence in Copala make memories of violence highly contested and thus less salient as a mobilizing tool outside the MASJC community. Though the state is the target audience for MASJC's shaming and claiming efforts, the presence of locally-based paramilitaries complicates the clarity of their campaign.

Forming memories of violence: To assert their power in Copala, the PRI-armed faction began a campaign of terror and harassment against the majority of villagers who had switched to usos y costumbres, or non-political party leadership selection, in 2007. The full gambit of terror tactics

has been used: assassinations, rapes, kidnappings, and myriad forms of harassment.[58] As in

Acteal during the 1990s, the paramilitary forces controlled all entry and exit of people in the

territory; just as human rights observers and activists were barred from going in, community

members had to sneak out at night in order to escape. As one displaced woman from Copala

described it, "I was there in the village locked up like a little bird that wasn't able to leave"

(Lorena 2012). Those who were able to flee ended up sleeping on scraps of cardboard under the

arches of the governor's building in Oaxaca City while petitioning the government to stop

funding paramilitaries and help them return home.

Recent violence did not begin with the declaration of Copala's autonomy by the MULTI

faction, but in fact preceded it in 2006 when MULT opposed the town of Aguas Frías' planned

declaration of autonomy (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 23). On August 10, 2006 two MULTI

members and a twelve-year-old boy traveling with them were shot dead by unknown attackers

near Putla on their way to a meeting of the Popular Assembly of Oaxacan Pueblos (APPO), or[59]

(Davies 2007: 80). It was known that APPO supported the autonomy of the Copala Triqui

community and the adult victims were leaders in their communities, so the political implication

of the assassinations was to dampen APPO support for MULTI action.

One of the most significant incidents of violence in the region occurred on April 7, 2008,

when twenty-four year old Teresa Bautista Merino and twenty-year-old Felicitas Martínez

Sánchez, both community radio broadcasters at "La Voz que rompe el Silencio," a station

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[58] Beyond the human cost of suffering in terms of killed or displaced people, there is also the cultural impact of violence to take into account. Reina mentions many women left their huipils behind when they fled Copala, even though it takes more than eight months of weaving to make one and they are women's most prized possessions (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 47). In addition, displaced women and children who participate in the plantónes in Oaxaca City are being far more exposed to the Spanish language and mestizo and international culture than they ever were in Copala, and the cultural effect of this on language use are as yet unknown.

[59] APPO, an umbrella organization that encompasses many regional and issue-specific organizations, was the central actor in the 2006 uprising against then-Governor Ulises Ruiz.

committed to the project of autonomy, were assassinated in an ambush by MULT (EDUCA A.C. 2010: 47).

> The girls that died, our compañeras Teresa and Felicitas, were one hundred percent with the autonomy project; but the people of MULT…didn't like this, what they like is to be with political parties…so they kill these two compañeras and then the radio project fell, then the other compañeros that kept [it] going had death threats but even still they kept going. (testimonio de Reina, MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 25)

Reina, now the spokesperson for the displaced MULTI contingent of Copala, explains in the quote above several critical pieces of the conflict puzzle. First, she identifies that the MULT motivation for the assassinations was to re-embed political party governance and break up the autonomy project. Second, Reina testifies that MULT's act of violence was sufficient to break a key communicative tool in MULTI's struggle, that of the bilingual radio station, which stopped operating in the aftermath of the assassinations. Third, Reina describes this particular assassination as an effective deterrent to political participation by other community members, even among those who were committed to autonomy, because the cost of participating was evident in the assassinations. Thus, the death of the two young radio broadcasters provided both physical and symbolic obstacles to the mobilization for continuing Copala's autonomy.

On April 27, 2010, in attempt to return displaced people to their communities, the first human rights caravan left Oaxaca City and en route to Copala was attacked by UBISORT paramilitaries. As with the assassinations of the two radio broadcasters, the assassinations of Finnish human rights observer Jyri Jaakkola and Alberta "Bety" Cariño Trujillo, Director of the Center for Community Support Working Together (CACTUS), sent shock waves through Copala's displaced community and their domestic and international supporters.

Though I mention some of the more pivotal moments in the Copala conflict, even trying

to make a brief chronology of the violence is complicated because people testify that it started at

different times. For example, Reina, the MULTI spokeswoman says the main violence began in

November of 2009 (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 26), but she earlier described assassinations

that occurred in April 2008. Thus, the way that people categorize the violence, and also the way

different Copala residents were affected by the violence and therefore relate to it temporally,[60]

further complicates attempts to document it. Though some suspected paramilitaries have been

detained and a few remain in prison as of this writing, there has been minimal government

prosecution in relation to the scale of the crimes, and many MASJC and MULTI members have

also been incarcerated. The violence since 2007 has created potent memories that are used in

public narratives by MASJC Triquis as they mobilize for cultural rights claim-making. The

following section addresses political, economic, and cultural accommodation that together form

the central structural supports and constraints on mobilization for cultural rights claims.

State Accommodation of Pueblos Originarios
> *"Autonomy is translated into our languages as 'what the pueblo decides'"*
> *(Foro de los Pueblos Indígenas de Oaxaca 2006: 271-272, civil society organization).*

> *"We are aware that as citizens we have rights, but we also have obligations"*
> *(Ciudadanos de Oaxaca 2012: 1, printed in civil society organization leaflet).*

Though there are abundant legislative examples of positive state accommodation of

ethnic minorities in Mexico, quotidian practice calls into question the actual accommodation

taking place. Often cooptation or assimilation is disguised as accommodation, giving rights to

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[60] Though the temporal confusion regarding when the violence started could be attributed in part to difficulty translating indigenous conceptions of time, an alternate explanation is that it is challenging for community members to classify each incident of violence when they are living in the midst of it.

originarios in exchange for their participation as campesinos, not as indigenous citizens. This section addresses how state policies of inclusion and exclusion contribute to Triqui mobilization.

Political and economic accommodation: Constitutional provisions for rights of pueblos originarios, as discussed earlier in the chapter, are one indicator of political accommodation in Mexico. The constitutional context for legally recognizing usos y costumbres is a relatively recent phenomenon. Oaxaca's 1995 Law on the Rights of Pueblos and Indigenous Communities describes the rights that pueblos originarios have to self-administration[61] (Humberto Durand Alcántara and Campos Rayón undated: 52-53). Following this law, in theory Copala Triquis internally elect their municipal authorities in an assembly of all adult community members, though the community divisions have not actually allowed full assemblies to take place. The main internal leaders, again in theory, are the council of elders and the *mayordomo*s[62] who form the backbone of the municipal assembly, the communal political space in which all autonomous municipality decisions are made (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 15). Autonomous municipalities have the right to non-interference by the state under Article Eight of the 1998 Law, and have the freedom to choose their municipal authorities, according to section nine of Article Seven, as long as they are in compliance with Oaxaca's electoral code (Humberto Durand Alcántara and Campos Rayón undated: 52-53). These constitutional changes have brought Oaxaca into line with international rights provisions like ILO Convention 169.

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[61] Especially Articles 7-13.
[62] For a historical account of the role of mayordomos in the mid-20th century, see (Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 114-115).

There were numerous constitutional reforms leading up to the current legal parameters of usos y costumbres. One scholar documents the legal process that formed the foundation of the autonomy law, passed in Oaxaca on August 30, 1995:

> In 1986, the state's constitution had been amended to reflect Oaxaca's multiethnic composition. The 1995 reform merely brought the state's electoral law into accord with Articles 16 and 25 of the state constitution. Article 16 recognizes the pluriethnic nature of the state's population and pledges to protect and preserve indigenous communities' forms of social organization; Article 25 protects indigenous traditions and practices regarding the selection of local government. (Hernández Navarro 1999: 157)

The 1995 law was operationalized in 1998 with a plan to limit political party intervention in usos y costumbres-governed communities (Jonathan, Stephen et al. 1999). In fact, congressional bodies were "only ratifying what already existed in fact," because many communities continued internal leadership selection processes despite the dominance of political parties prior to the legalization of usos y costumbres (Hernández Navarro 1999: 160).

Hernández Navarro identifies three factors that prepared states to accommodate the political practices of pueblos originarios: first; "the persistence of indigenous political and social institutions over time despite the encroachment of national-level institutions for political representation;" second, the potency of local indigenous social movements to gain national recognition of their rights; and third, the motivating example of the EZLN struggle, and the discord between the federal government and indigenous citizens in Oaxaca (Hernández Navarro 1999: 157-8). These factors grant agency to indigenous actors as the protagonists in their own story; pueblos originarios figured out how to enact strategic social movements to foster institutional change.

But there is a darker side to the story as well, which captures the paradox of Copala's conflict. Taylor explains:

> In its public, conciliatory mood, the governing elite has incorporated the multiculturalist and anti-sexist language of Zapatismo into its own political rhetoric and sponsored initiatives aimed to foment indigenous cultural expression. Yet in its covert, repressive mood, it has escalated military and paramilitary operations within indigenous communities struggling to exercise their autonomy in political and economic terms. (Taylor 2009: 114)

Political accommodation did take place through constitutional reform at both the federal and state levels, increasing the institutionally guaranteed rights that ethnic minorities in Mexico can claim. But at the same time, in places like Acteal and Copala, where vested interests around political power, land use and control (Prashad 1998: 1; Pye and Jolley 2011: 9) were threatened by communities accessing these rights, paramilitaries stepped in to ensure PRI agendas. Though the PRI-dominated Oaxacan legislature decided it was more politically beneficial to grant legal status to usos y costumbres than to have pueblos originarios withhold their votes or transfer their votes to the opposition (Hernández Navarro 1999: 159), paramilitary forces in Copala have not let the community put usos y costumbres into action through local leadership selection. While many communities that had been loyal PRI "clients" continued to act as such after implementing usos y costumbres, Copala did not.

The Copala conflict reflects similar dynamics unfolding on the state and federal stage, as long-time one-party rule has been successfully, if painfully, defeated. While Mexican voters broke out of the pattern of PRI hegemony by electing PAN president Vicente Fox in 2000, and his PAN successor Felipe Calderon in 2006, the PRI retook the presidency with the election of Enrique Peña Nieto in 2012. Meanwhile, PRI rule of Oaxaca did not experience a major electoral shift until 2010, with leftist coalition Gabino Cué Monteagudo's victory for the governorship (2010-2016); although the PRI's grip on Oaxacan political power began to crumble long before Cué took office. The PRI had traditionally controlled the Triqui baja (and of course most of the

country), though PRI intervention in the region solidified in the early 1980s as MULT was

forming (Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 225). Unsurprisingly, Oaxacan ex-

governor Ulises Ruiz, a symbol of authoritarian PRI politics, was hostile to the announcement of

autonomy in 2007.[63] The groundwork for Ruiz's need to increase control of rural Oaxaca was

evident in 2006 as he dramatically lost control of the state's urban center. During months of

intense street protests, Oaxaca City was locked down as protesters called for the then-Governor's

ousting.[64] In the aftermath of the 2006 conflict, Ruiz's reaction to Copala's declaration of

autonomy facilitated speculation as to the degree of PRI and Ruiz financing of the paramilitaries

that cracked down on the autonomous municipality shortly after its declaration (Noticias 2010).

For Triquis, the political assault they faced by Ruiz not only played out in terms of

political non-accommodation, but also threatened cultural rights. Fundamentally, the attempt to

destroy the autonomy project is an attempt to perpetuate mestizo-dominated rule of pueblos

originarios. The fact that other Triquis receive funds to perpetuate the violence is a useful

smokescreen for the PRI, but Copala is not merely an intra-ethnic conflict. One way of analyzing

how Triquis experience political accommodation by the state is to look at the response of the

Oaxaca government to the displacement of 2011-2012. Though displaced Triquis had hoped that

the transition away from PRI domination of Oaxaca would shift the dynamics in Copala, current

governor Cué is continuing some of the policies of his predecessors. Cué, elected as a coalition

candidate of the National Action Party (PAN), Labor Party (PT), and Convergence Party, has

directed his representatives to delay the return of displaced people to Copala indefinitely. Every

time displaced Triquis negotiate with the government to seek protection for their return, they are

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[63] This is a widely known fact in Oaxaca, and is presented in the grassroots publication of MASJC and Cilia Olmos (2011: 15-16).
[64] See (Denham and Collective 2008: 74-83) for a discussion of the 2006 Oaxaca protests by originarios.

told that if they want government escorts they will have to wait for indefinite periods of time and drop many of their demands (Anonymous 2012h; Matías 2013). For seven weeks of my fieldwork in January and February 2012, newspapers carried articles about how, if the Triquis just waited until next week, next month, or the next government meeting, then they would receive assistance in their return (Noticas 2012: 1A, 5A). These delays show Cué stalling to maintain the authority of leaders chosen through political parties rather than usos y costumbres. Though he asserted his support for human rights organizations in general, Cué made it clear that outside voices were not welcome in the discussion about Copala, saying, "'we Oaxacans can solve our own problems'" (Martínez 2012b). In this quote, Cué is telling activists from The Other Campaign, the Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights, and unaffiliated solidarity groups have traveled to Oaxaca from Chiapas, Mexico D.F., and Guadalajara that their input is not welcome,.

At the same time, Reina asserts that the displaced Triqui contingent continually solicited help from federal and state governments, but:

> We are seeing that there is no interest. They [the government] don't want to do anything because they don't want us to continue with the project of autonomy. What they want is for us to get tired, to get bored. But even if the government gets tired, in all manners we are going to continue with this project. (MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 55)

Reina ascribes the lack of government aid to the fact that the government wants the autonomy project to collapse, something Cué's statements reinforce. As the spokesperson for the group, Reina asserts Triqui determination for cultural rights, stating that even though the government may be fatigued, the displaced residents of the autonomous municipality will not get tired or bored and acquiesce to the demands of the political party-affiliated leaders. In other words, MASJC Triquis will continue pushing for more than medium political accommodation even if

the government stalls. The government response to the displaced Triqui community shows that,

PRI or not, the Oaxacan state government is not protecting the right of Copaltecos to practice

customary leadership selection. By not enforcing the right to usos y costumbres, delaying the

return of displaced citizens, and ongoing impunity for MULT and UBISORT, Cué's government

does not deliver the rights promised so eloquently in the federal and state Constitutions.

Political and economic inclusion and exclusion in Mexico are often closely linked, as

political parties exert economic influence through subnational control of communities. The

MASJC Triqui community experiences low economic accommodation by the state.[65] Triquis

who have tried to maintain their indigenous identities and separate themselves from political

party interests have found themselves harassed and isolated politically, economically, and

culturally. MASJC members, already some of Oaxaca's most economically marginalized

citizens, have been especially targeted for violence, making their daily attempts to gain

livelihood through agriculture and day labor more challenging (Anonymous 2012h).

As early as the 1830s, there were confrontations between Triquis and *ladinos* from

Juxtlahuaca and Putla (García and Gómez Levy 1998: 66-67). Women's huipils[66] served to

identify them as Triquis, and more generically as indigenous, thus making them targets of

discrimination. The revolution of 1910 institutionalized violence as a political strategy of

indigenous people, and also facilitated increased access to arms (Javier Parra Mora 1993: 86;

Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 50, 58).[67] From 1940-1965, periods of guerilla war

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[65] See pages 132.

[66] Huipils worn by Triqui women are large squares of red, woven and beribboned fabric that hang like a poncho, but reaching to the ground. Today, they are often worn over jeans and t-shirts, or other modern clothing, and thus are not perceived as "necessary," clothing. Instead, the Triqui huipil serves a symbolic purpose as what one interviewee called "the flag of the Triqui" (Swanton 2012).

[67] For a timeline of mestizo actions that influenced Triquis in Copala, see Javier Parra Mora 1993: 85. For a diagram of the effects of the post 1910 period on Copala, see Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 57.

erupted among Triqui factions for political and also economic reasons. On the economic side,

coffee, the major export crop of the Triqui baja, lent its production to exploitable hierarchies of

labor both among Triquis as well as between them and mestizo business partners (García Alcaraz

1997: 119), especially around the price of crops and labor (Javier Parra Mora 1993: 88).

Exploitation manifested not just through quotidian labor, but also through physical

attacks. In fact, the number of ambushes and assaults that occurred near or in Copala in the mid

twentieth century even fueled theories: that Triquis were naturally violent (García Alcaraz 1997:

120), that their location in the hot valley made them more prone to violence, or that, as the origin

story of the Triqui baja goes, as descendants of men instead of women[68] they were cursed with

hot tempers (Sandoval 2012).[69] Real causes of the violence were probably more ordinary.

Mestizos would assault or assassinate Copaltecos to steal their coffee or the money they had just

made from selling their coffee (García Alcaraz 1997: 125), and different allegiances to various

factions of co-ethnics or mestizos prompted ongoing patterns of retaliatory violence. Though I

have only found passing references to control over natural resources being a cause for conflict in

Copala, in 1950 one author stated that there were precious metals such as mica, lead, gold, and

silver in the subsoil around Copala (Peña 1950:92-3 in Huerta Ríos 1980: 44), and this could

only have exacerbated tension over political and economic control of the region. The linking of

demands for protection from economic exploitation to increased respect for cultural values has

occurred since the early 1990s (Anonymous 1992: 3-8), and this process of consciousness-

raising has facilitated mobilization for cultural rights claim-making.

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[68] This juxtaposes the nature of people in the Triqui baja to the Triqui alta community of Chicahuaxtla, whose population is said to descend from a woman and which explains the non-violent nature of the population there (Sandoval 2012).
[69] I reiterate that this is an origin story, and though Sandoval related it to me as such, he also conveyed an astute analysis of politico-economic reasons for the conflict in the Triqui baja – he did not invoke the origin story as justification alone.

In the 1990s and 2000s, economic incentives have been used to divide the Triqui community in Copala. Prior to the declaration of autonomy in 2007, government influences had managed to protect the land control (Javier Parra Mora and Hernández Díaz 1994: 234-240) and distribution of resources that had maintained certain power hierarchies in the region, but the transition to usos y costumbres threatened to change this. After 2007, the PRI-aligned portion of Copala, including Triqui-staffed paramilitary groups, received arms and payment to control the MASJC-aligned portion of the community. Low economic accommodation of autonomy-seeking Triquis directly contrasted the economic benefits for Triquis willing to assimilate into and actively enforce the PRI agenda. As one woman from Copala put it, "Yes, we are all Triquis and have the same blood, but they [paramilitaries] don't think that way. My husband told me, all that matters to them is money" (testimonio de Soledad, MASJC and Cilia Olmos 2011: 50). Economic survival surely influenced the decision of some Triquis to collaborate with PRI-backed paramilitaries. As veteran Oaxaca activist Sergio Beltrán put it, "money and political power do lead to decreased demands, or to demands more in line with the giver's vision" (Beltrán 2012). In Copala, higher economic accommodation of paramilitary collaborators ensured their perpetuity, while for the MASJC contingent, economic marginalization made mobilization for cultural rights claims all the more pressing. For MASJC, mobilization was not just a struggle for cultural survival, but physical, political, and economic survival as well.

Cultural accommodation: The right to mother tongue education serves as a benchmark of cultural accommodation because language is a primary marker of ethnic distinction[70] and has been vocalized as a demand by all six communities in this project. For Triquis in Copala, their mother tongue is under threat by a decrepit bilingual education program and legacies of discrimination that foment assimilation. As one Triqui woman told me in the midst of a rally against her displacement, "language is just part of who we are, we just want to be in our homes and have respect for who we are and how we want to live" (Anonymous 2012h). For this respondent, her mother tongue is part and parcel of an indigenous identity that she wants accommodated by the state. Her displacement, an indicator of non-accommodation, and memories of violence coupled with fear of future violence, has led to her mobilization to claim cultural and political rights on behalf of her community.

The status of language politics occupies an important place for the identity of both states and pueblos originarios. Maldonado notes that because indigenous languages serve to distinguish originarios from the majority population, the Mexican state has tried to do nationalization through castilianization, or the rendering of originarios into Spanish-speakers (Maldonado Alvarado 2000: 28). Though Mexico has accommodating provisions for mother tongue education through the SEP program for bilingual, intercultural education in indigenous communities, the reality of how this plays out is often dismal. There are many factors that inhibit the SEP's ability to deliver on the promise of bilingual education, and most of these are similar to challenges in Chiapas. First and foremost, the training of teachers came up in numerous interviews as a central problem in delivering bilingual education (Caballero 2012; Maldonado Alverado 2012; Ruiz

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[70] I recognize the wider debate about problems with language as signifiers of indigeneity (Brulotte 2009: 7; Eisenstadt 2011: 55), but within the confines of this project I use language as a benchmark of originario identification because it is a common attribute of cultural rights discourses in all six cases.

López 2012). One interviewee, a teacher for thirty-six years and a member of a radical offshoot of the teacher's union that promotes pueblos originarios rights, said bluntly, "bilingual education does not exist in Mexico" (Soberanes Bojórquez 2012). In addition to lack of properly trained teachers, there is a lack of bilingual teaching materials, and worse, a practice in SNTE whereby bilingual teachers are sent to teach in communities that speak a different indigenous language than their own (Pale Pech 2012), as discussed in the Tzotzil section. In this scenario, teachers resort to teaching in Spanish, just as they do when they have not received training to implement a bilingual agenda but are sent to communities that require or desire one (Ruiz López 2012).

The production of Spanish language-only texts for schools also makes mother tongue languages less compelling, as does exposure to Spanish-only media, and collective memories in the family or community about discrimination or outright persecution for using indigenous languages in public spaces. I heard numerous horror stories about students who spoke in their mother tongue in school and were publicly humiliated, beaten or tormented, for example, by having to hold clods of ant-filled dirt in their hands while kneeling in front of the class (Anonymous 2012f). In the interview data across all six cases, stories of violence towards students for use of mother tongue in schools were prominent and shaped my decision to use mother tongue education as an indicator of cultural accommodation. These experiences form collective identities whereby originarios tried to distance themselves from anything that would mark them as targets of abuse. For example, Fernando Soberanes, head of the Coalition of Indigenous Teachers and Promoters of Oaxaca (CMPIO), a renegade subgroup of teachers devoted to improving education in originario communities, commented that "people want to be urban, they want to change themselves to not be discriminated against. Their mother tongue marks them as indigenous, so they want to drop it" (Soberanes Bojórquez 2012). CMPIO is one

of the only visible organizations in Oaxaca pushing SNTE to apply the bilingual, intercultural educational programming mandated by the SEP, and it is operating in a highly politicized, resource-crunched environment that may undermine its success. But the commitment of its members provides hope that mother tongue education will continue to be part of cultural rights demands. Cultural accommodation, as it increases, will allow pueblos originarios to see cultural rights, including the right to mother tongue education, as rights worth demanding rather than something that will single them out for persecution.

The case of language as an indicator of cultural accommodation operates somewhat differently in Mexico than in Turkey and El Salvador. Copala Triquis continue to speak their mother tongue in the home and in public spaces within their communities despite the legacies of discrimination against them. This is similar to Acteal, where Tzotzils have been able to retain their mother tongue as the dominant language of daily life. In both Mexico cases, the claim for cultural rights is not an *express* claim for language rights. Rather, Triquis claim to language is an integral package of the right to their cultural practices writ large, including the right to political autonomy and to return to Copala from their displacement in Oaxaca City.

Figure 22: Claims in Triqui and Spanish. Chalk slogans in front of the government palace, Oaxaca City show how mother tongue is integrated into mobilization. Photo by author.

Figure 23: Virgin of the barricades. Banner used by CMPIO during 2006 protests showing Mexico's iconic Virgin of Guadalupe wearing a gas mask, with the slogans, "Protect us, Virgin Saint of the Barricades" and "Neither Pardon nor Forgetting." Photo by author.

As one scholar in Oaxaca told me, "though linguistic heritage is so rich, linguistic rights have not been a specific demand. Linguistic rights are seen as part of cultural or territorial rights" (Sorrozo Polo 2012). In Turkey and El Salvador, by contrast, mother tongues have been lost to ethnic majority languages, and therefore linguistic rights are a much more explicit demand. For Triquis, the right to culture includes the right to speak their language, but it also includes the right to wear huipils, to self-governance through usos y costumbres, and to be free from paramilitary violence. They are mobilized for cultural rights, but meaningful granting of these rights includes political and economic rights as well.

Conclusion: multicultural Mexico talking the talk

Though both Tzotzil and Triqui people have been subject to paramilitary violence and are both poorly accommodated by the state, they have mobilized for cultural rights to different degrees and through different tactics. Tzotzils in Acteal, Chiapas created powerful public narratives that have highly mobilized their population through discourses of memorialization in songs, communiqués, slogans, and court cases. Though they use extra-institutional means, much of their mobilization practices are at least locally institutionalized, and use a broad array of claiming and shaming tactics. In contrast, Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca have produced a medium degree of narrative and mobilization – though visible during the Oaxaca City sit-in, MASJC Triquis have not managed to package their narratives for wide external consumption and

rely instead on their physically displaced presence rather than their stories to gain an audience. Their autonomy declaration document is one of few printed examples of their claims, whereas Las Abejas have hundreds of documents, many of which are available on their website, using narrative to promote rights claims. Triqui shaming and claiming tactics have been less effective in mobilizing people than those in Acteal's Tzotzil community because their memories of violence have been less well packaged into narratives.

State accommodation patterns also inform the way in which each community channels memories of violence into narratives that are used to mobilize for cultural rights claim-making. In the first half of the chapter, I presented national level factors such as institutional design, constitutional provisions, and usos y costumbres that affect political accommodation of originarios in both Chiapas and Oaxaca. I then explained how Tzotzils in Acteal form high levels of narrative production and subsequent mobilization based on memories of the 1997 massacre. I also discussed many political, economic, and cultural policies and practices that specifically inhibit cultural rights in Mexico, including how the teacher's union and SEP together have fostered education programs based on assimilation rather than diversity appreciation. In the second half of the chapter, I showed that Triquis in Oaxaca have been able to mobilize to a medium degree based on medium narrative production with low political and economic accommodation, and medium cultural accommodation. The extent of narrative production is influential in determining the degree of mobilization, while the package of state accommodations helps determine whether mobilization is institutional or extra-institutional.

More broadly, this chapter has looked at what community use of violence narratives and policies of inclusion and exclusion tell us about Mexico's contemporary commitment to multiculturalism and democratization. Constitutional reforms, the legalization of usos y

costumbres, and a decentralization of power under federal arrangements all have the potential to provide a structural environment to accommodate pueblos originarios. Yet pressure to assimilate and accommodate political party agendas has manifested into violence and terror despite the package of institutional accommodations for ethnic minority citizens. Ongoing economic marginalization of originario communities in addition to denial of the right to mother tongue education through poor systemization of public education and the teacher's union has further compounded the marginalization of Mexico's indigenous minority. Through strategies of political, economic, and cultural cooptation, the Mexican state continues to favor assimilation rather than accommodation of a diverse citizenry. Nonetheless, many groups like Las Abejas and MASJC push back against the state through memorialization ceremonies, communiqués, marches, sit-ins, petitions, and negotiations with local government officials, using memories of violence to shame their state and mobilize for rights claims.

CHAPTER 4. TURKEY: MOBILIZATION OR ASSIMILATION?

"You begin to liquidate a people," Hubl said, "by taking away its memory. You destroy its books, its culture, its history. And then others write other books for it, give another culture to it, invent another history for it. Then the people slowly begins to forget what it is and what it was. The world at large forgets it still faster."
"And the language?"
"Why bother taking it away?
It will become a mere folklore and sooner or later die a natural death."
(Kundera, The book of laughter and forgetting)

I met Hüseyin Aygün, a leading human rights attorney in Dersim who has published several books on the history of 1938, after climbing several flights of concrete stairs to a bustling office overlooking Dersim's central square. A dedicated, mustachioed man whose eyes sparkle despite the gravity of his work topics, Aygün leaned forward across his file-laden desk to describe the effect of 1938 on different generations of Alevi Kurds in Dersim.

> Lots of old people say "we are guilty, we deserved that punishment, so why bring it up again?" This is psychological trauma – instead of accusing the murderers, they accuse themselves. They are afraid to take on the state and have the same thing happen again. It is interesting, and there is a contradiction. *People are afraid, but they still speak.* The third generation is sensitive about this – *grandchildren are more aware of their identity.* Since 2009, more people are talking about this issue since it came to the National Assembly.[71] Most people believe that since they are Alevis, that is why these things happen to them. "A new '38" is the phrase said by people when they are protesting the state – "*are you going to make a new 1938 for us?*" (Aygün 2011, emphasis mine)

As someone promoting memory of 1938 in judicial proceedings as well as daily life, Aygün draws on memories of violence to describe how various members of his community silence themselves or create new rights mobilizations. This chapter explores memories of violence and

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[71] In December 2009 the Turkish Constitutional Court voted that a major Kurdish political party was illegal because of alleged links to the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) and leaders of the party were banned from office, with many more members banned from joining political parties for five years. Massive protests across the southeast and in major urban centers broke out in response to the ruling.

the narratives used to describe them in relation to state policies of minority inclusion or exclusion, that factor into cultural rights claim-making by Kurdish and Armenian minorities in Turkey. I argue that the interactions between memories of violence, narratives, and political, economic, and cultural accommodation for minorities by the Turkish state shape the degree and type of mobilization for rights claims by each group. Kurdish and Armenian minorities draw on memories of violence in different ways, and their resulting narratives, along with structural supports and constraints from the state, have influenced these two social movements playing out in Turkey.

I theorize the cultural rights mobilizations of Kurdish and Armenian people in Turkey as two distinct performances of citizenship in democratization. While Kurds make news with major protests and violence related to the quest for autonomy in the southeast of the country, Armenians are gradually being absorbed into the urban cultural fabric of Istanbul. This chapter describes both mobilizations and discusses the challenges to cultural survival facing ethnic minority communities in Turkey, incorporating data from more than sixty interviews and multiple mobilization observations over four research trips from June 2009 through April 2013. Much of this chapter shares reflections on the importance of memories of violence for ethnic identity as stated by Kurds, Armenians, and Turks in their own words during open-ended interviews. I look to language rights campaigns as a means of evaluating cultural rights mobilizations, as language remains the primary cultural battleground in Turkey, followed by religion. The quest for language preservation is present as a commonly held feature across all communities in this project, allowing for cross-case comparisons. While Tzotzil, Triqui, Kurdish, Armenian, Nahua, and Lenca communities differ widely in approaches to traditional food, dress,

and religious and spiritual practices, mother tongue language use is a topic that all communities confront, albeit in different ways.

In the first section of the chapter, I contextualize the politics of multiculturalism by offering background on the status of minority groups in Turkey. I present empirical evidence of how Kurdish and Armenian communities navigate their civic identities in relation to their ethnic minority status in Turkey, and how they use memories of violence to petition for increased cultural rights. Religiously, most Turks are Sunni, a major Islamic sect, while the majority of Kurds in Dersim are Alevi, a smaller Islamic sect, and Armenians follow Orthodox Christianity. This double stigmatization for Alevi Kurds and Armenians as being both ethnic *and* religious minorities increases their marginalization in a country that has been dedicated to building a homogenous nation-state. Taking the struggle over mother tongue usage as an indicator of cultural rights mobilization, I follow the issue of cultural rights through both cases, and also consider alternative explanations for Kurdish and Armenian mobilizations.

Figure 24: Turkey's administrative divisions. Red arrow points to Dersim/Tunceli, Istanbul, and Diyarbakır, considered by many Kurds to be the capital of Kurdistan, as a reference point. From http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/turkey_admin_2006.jpg.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Kurds were most readily identified, both by the Turkish

state and popular imagination, with the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) and its call for the

creation of a separate Kurdish state encompassing part of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Outlawed

as a terrorist group by Turkey, the PKK nonetheless remains an active element in the Kurdish

rights movement and the reality of PKK-state and deep-state violence is at the forefront of

Kurdish thought. More than 30,000 Kurdish people have been killed since fighting began in 1984

(Minority Rights Group International 2011) and many thousands more have been displaced. The

civil war between the PKK and the Turkish military showed how far both sides were willing to

go to reach their goals. Justifying its militarism with an appeal to the territorial integrity norm,

the Turkish state has maintained a state of emergency in the southeast to prevent the formation of

an independent Kurdistan. However, the number of people supporting separatism has waned since the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in1999, and more energy has gone into petitioning for democratic autonomy (Anonymous 2011a). Meanwhile, the PKK has become one of many actors rather than the sole platform for Kurdish demands, particularly in Dersim. The Alevi Kurdish community in Dersim[72] is not necessarily *more* mobilized than Kurds as a whole in Turkey, but they mobilize actively with non-PKK tactics. Instead of guerilla warfare, memories of violence become instruments to express grievances and challenge state policies of cultural domination. The Dersim community provides an opportunity for in-depth analysis of a community's experience turning memories of a specific violent incident into a powerful narrative useful in rights mobilization. This case represents the highest level of mobilization for cultural rights of all the cases discussed in this project.

One small disclaimer is necessary here. Though I discuss Kurds as an ethnic minority in Turkey, many Kurds reject the 'minority' label because, as they point out, they are the ethnic majority in southeastern Turkey and envision the region as part of greater Kurdistan, a homeland for Kurdish people. These Kurds reject minority labels because they see themselves as a separate nation comparable to Basques or Catalans in Spain. Nonetheless, from a statist perspective the minority label applies to Kurds, and I use it for the sake of maintaining terminological comparability across the cases.

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[72] As explained in Chapter 1, though the Turkish state changed the name of Dersim to Tunceli, I use the original name of Dersim as it was used by nearly all interviewees in referring to the town.
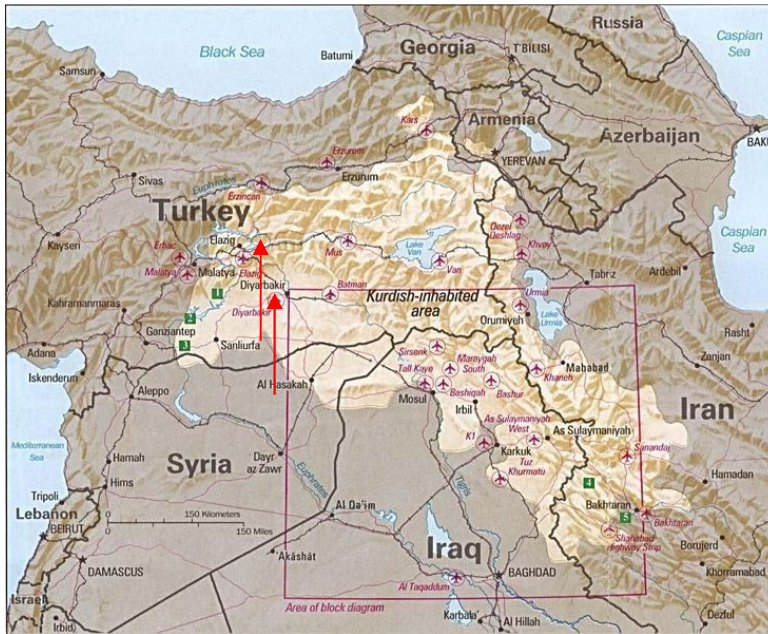
Figure 25: Kurdistan. Boxed region is inhabited by a Kurdish ethnic majority and referred to by many Kurds as Kurdistan, which includes part of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Red arrows show approximate location of Dersim and Diyarbakır. From http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kurdish_lands_92.jpg.

The second half of this chapter focuses on Armenians living in Istanbul and their low

level of mobilization for cultural rights claims. A century of Ottoman and Turkish state denial of

the genocide of 1915 has constricted the ability of Armenians to instrumentally use memories of

violence in forming their demands for cultural rights. Instead, assimilation has predominated,

with narratives of violence privately guarded. Though the Republic of Armenia, which borders

Turkey to the east, was created in 1918, most Armenians in Turkey today are not exiles or

immigrants but rather indigenous descendants of Armenian population that lived in Anatolia

since at least the Ottoman Empire. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, signed by Turkey after its

defeat by World War I allies, established Turkey's sovereignty within newly diminished borders

and required the state to protect its Armenian, Greek, and Jewish populations. This Treaty grants

Armenians the right to Armenian language education in their own private, self-funded schools,

whereas Kurds have no access to education in their mother tongue, as general education in a language other than Turkish is illegal for non-Lausanne minorities.

In this chapter, I provide an explanation for the divergent degrees of mobilization by Kurds and Armenians. I argue that different avenues available to translate memories of violence into public narratives – forums and tactics for speaking out about grievances– as well as mixed levels of state accommodation explain why a portion of the Kurdish community has mobilized to claim cultural rights while Armenians have tended towards assimilation. The different physical and emotional legacies available to Kurdish and Armenian cultural rights activists come from their historical relationships with the Turkish state and the way that memories of violence have been processed within minority communities.

Minorities in Turkey: Turkey, despite the intentions of its founders to create a homogenous nation-state, is ethnically and religiously diverse. Yet this diversity remains so politically sensitive and controversial that there is only limited data about its scope. Of the approximately 77 million citizens of Turkey, Alevis, who can be ethnically Turkish *or* Kurdish, constitute 10-33 percent (Kaya 2009: 8), while roughly 70-75 percent of the population is ethnically Turkish and 18 percent is ethnically Kurdish (CIA 2011c).[73] The 7-12 percent of the total non-Turkish, non-Muslim 'other' population includes 60,000 Armenians, 23,000 Jews, 16,000 Rum Orthodox Christians, and some 15,000 Syrian Orthodox Christians (Kaya 2009: 8) and smaller numbers of Greeks, Caucasians, Caferis, Rum, and Laz people (CIA 2011c). The US Government's CIA Factbook does not distinguish Alevis from what it classifies as a 99.8 percent Sunni Muslim

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[73]Some scholars, such as Michele Penner Angrist have called Kurds Turkey's 'sole significant ethnic minority' (Penner Angrist 2004) but members of the ethnic and religious minority groups listed here would likely disagree with her.

population (CIA 2011c). Broad characterization of Turkey's religious composition by outsiders misses the details of identification that form the basis of social and political conflict. In addition to tremendous variation of religious practices within Sunnism, the Kurdish community is also divided between Sunni and Alevi groups. In fact, Mesut Yeğen, professor of sociology at Istanbul Şehir University told me, "If a Kurd is an Alevi, being Alevi is more important than being Kurdish" (Yeğen 2011). In other words, religion takes precedence over ethnicity or nationality as a vector of identification. This sentiment was echoed by many people I spoke with who insisted that Alevis and Sunnis first identify with other co-religionists and only secondarily with Kurdish or Turkish co-ethnics. The temptation to overlook the potent diversity that exists both within Sunnis and among Turkish citizens obscures the real challenges that exist for Turkey to meet not just the needs of the majority population but the needs of minority citizens as well.

In Mexico, state institutions collect group-level statistics on basic indicators of education and development across indigenous communities. In Turkey and El Salvador, the state has not performed this data collection, leaving the job to international organizations. Statistical data about levels of education in specific ethnic groups have been collected in some countries by the United Nations Children's Fund and the United National Development Programme, but there are no such statistics available at the community level for Kurds and Armenians in Turkey.[74] Therefore, we don't actually know where Turkish minorities stand on a range of developmental indicators. The absence of these data suggests the disregard of minority communities by the national government (van Bruinessen 1994: 2). Numerical practices of population categorization are infused with power relationships and the absence of data implies the withholding of recognition from minority groups by the Turkish state, as is also the case in El Salvador.

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[74] See Appendix A.5 for comparative development statistics.

Though organizations such as Minority Rights Group International and Minorities at Risk offer general information about many of the communities that are part of this project, these organizations have limited resources and thus do not provide more than basic overviews of minority rights in each country. The absence of accurate institutional information about these communities undermines potential to create strategies for their rights protections. Poor institutional commitment to minority documentation also indicates the importance of independent research that is not constrained by domestic Turkish politics, and my political ethnographic work is a contribution in this way.

On the other side of the spectrum, even describing Turkey as an ethnically or religiously diverse country is controversial among many in the government and the military, the latter of which adheres to Kemalist notions of statehood as integrally bound to a homogenous population. Yet as this chapter shows, denial of diversity is an outdated and counterproductive mode of state construction.

Part I: Alevi Kurds in Dersim and the Massacre of 1938

> *"To be Kurdish is a dangerous thing in Turkey."*
> *(Sami Tan, President, Istanbul Kurdish Institute, 2011)*

> *"Kurdistan is a multiethnic, multireligious, multilinguistic [sic] society."*
> *(Mustafa Gundogdu, Kurdish Human Rights Project Officer)*

Dersim has a long history of forced assimilation as part of Turkey's "Turkification" policies, which are measures to incorporate ethnic and religious minorities residing in Turkey's territorial boundaries into a Turkish identity. In 1925, just a few years after the nation's founding, then-Prime Minister Ismet Inönü made a speech declaring, "We shall, at any price,

turkicize those who live in our country, and destroy those who rise up against the Turks and Turkdom" (in van Bruinessen 1994: 9). Though they have changed over time, Turkification policies have included laws and practices such as Turkish-only schooling, forced secularization by closing religious schools, forced resettlement (van Bruinessen 1994: 8-9), conversion to Sunnism, and encouragement of interethnic marriages to dilute non-Turkish customs. Strong tribal affiliations among Alevi Kurds made these policies particularly contested as tribal leaders led a series of rebellions against Turkish state representatives (van Bruinessen 1994: 2-9). To address traditional leadership structures, "the state integrated feudal leaders into community parliaments and local government, so Alevi leaders of Dersim became incorporated into the state" (Yıldız 2011b). Though the community parliaments may have to some extent served as a means of early political accommodation for Alevi Kurds, in fact, these were practices of cooptation rather than accommodation for minorities.

Unassimilated parts of Dersim's political life, however, stood out as reminders that the community maintains its independence and throughout time has not wanted to conform to national norms or submit to Turkification policies (van Bruinessen 1994: 2). In more recent times, in the 1970s "there were new forms of protest and activism, and the Marxists and New Left in Dersim were different from larger national social movements" (Yıldız 2011b). Even though assimilation projects were successful at changing language and to some extent government, autonomous political behavior remains a key identifying feature of the region. Though in 1994 van Bruinessen stated that there was little left of Dersim's unique culture (van Bruinessen 1994: 12), in fact, the 1990s and 2000s have seen a resurgence of ethnically motivated cultural activity and associated social movements.

Dersim's cultural rights claims are *in part* a result of its status as a community educated and assimilated enough to know how to engage the state to its benefit, while simultaneously remaining independent enough to retain a distinct cultural identity. Related to this, the Dersim community has historically been hyper-mobilized and the high degree of cultural rights campaigns is to some extent an extension of this history of activism. I do not discount the uniqueness of Dersim's history of mobilization, its degree of assimilation, or the real impact of its geographic isolation, which are discussed in Chapter 6. Rather, these facts work together with Dersim residents' potent narratives to explain why contemporary mobilization for cultural rights has been so high.

The history of Alevi Kurds in Dersim rebelling against the central governing apparatus extends beyond the limits of the contemporary Republic. Early on, Dersim earned a reputation as being a problem area. In part, this was because its residents refused to participate in the Russo-Turkish wars, the First World War, or the Turkish War of Independence (Chaliand 1993: 58). Moreover, in 1920 Dersim Alevis resisted nationalizing policies (Olson 1989: 27), thus challenging the Turkification of the region during its transition from Ottoman Empire to Turkish Republic. In 1937 and 1938, Alevi Kurdish residents of Dersim fought a guerilla war against state military troops that were occupying the territory. In an attempt to impose a targeted Turkification agenda for Alevi Kurds, the Turkish state moved into one of the last autonomous regions of the country. In doing so, military officials underestimated the willingness of Dersim residents to give up their lives to retain cultural and political autonomy. With roughly 65,000-70,000 inhabitants in the 1930s (van Bruinessen 1994: 2), official reports document that nearly 10 percent of Dersim's population was killed during a seventeen-day offensive in the spring of 1938, though Kurds say the numbers were considerably higher (van Bruinessen 1994: 6). In one

interview I was told 11,000 were killed in 1938, with more than 50,000 Alevis killed during the

1937-38 period (Çifçi 2011). Kurds who had hidden in caves and barns were burned alive,

women and girls committed suicide by jumping into the Munzur River, the military dispensed

poison gas, and towns and country-sides were bombed from the air and subject to artillery fire on

the ground (Chaliand 1993: 58). Van Bruinessen writes that the term "ethnocide," an attempt to

destroy an ethnic identity, is the most appropriate label for the violence against Alevi Kurds in

Dersim (van Bruinessen 1994: 6). The military finally isolated the community to such a degree

that by the summer of 1938, guerilla attacks ended and violence diminished.

Figure 26: Statue of a 1938 Dersimi martyr. Placed along a main street in Dersim. Photo by author.

Figure 27: Sign of the 1938 Dersim History Project. Affixed to a building next to the town square in Dersim. Photo by author.

Though government documents, historical works, and contemporary Turkish politicians

refer to the events of 1938 as the Dersim Rebellion, this is an inaccurate label (Aygün 2011).

'Rebellion' implies violence towards the state as the dominant characteristic, rather than a

systematic slaughter of Dersimi[75] Kurds by the military. A Dersim civil society leader told me

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[75] The term Dersimi Kurd indicates that the person is a Kurd from Dersim.

"there was no rebellion against the state at that time" (Aygün 2011). Though the exact nature of Kurdish response to state assimilation projects in 1938 may not be known, the historical record shows that a massacre, not a rebellion, best characterizes how the violence of 1938.

Alevi Kurds talk about the massacres of 1938 as a major turning point in the consciousness of the community regarding their status as citizens in the Turkish Republic. Many descendants of survivors reside in the town of Dersim and there are still a handful of original survivors who live there. Kurdish academics and others have documented the stories of survivors, though no publications in English have yet appeared (Aslan 2011; Aygün 2011; Yıldız 2011b). Conversations with Kurdish academics indicated that, as in many other post-violence communities, those who experienced the violence in Dersim are less inclined to translate their memories into mobilization because they fear further violence. However, their children and especially grandchildren have used memories to form mobilizing narratives to make cultural rights demands. The bulk of my interviews in Dersim were with the younger generation (forty years old and under), themselves the new social movement leaders who had grown up on stories of the massacre and on the lived experience of the conflict between the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the military during the 1980s and 1990s. Though I spoke with no survivors from 1938, I did also speak with several middle aged Dersimis who advocated different uses of memory – some wanted to remember (Aygün 2011), and others to forget (Yıldız 2011a).

Alevis as minorities: Though Kurds are studied here as an ethnic minority group in tandem with ethnic minority groups in Mexico and El Salvador, I focus on Dersim's Alevi Kurds, who, like Armenians, are both ethnic *and* religious minorities in Turkey. Alevism is closer to Shi'ism than to Sunni Islam, since Alevis follow the teachings of the Twelve Imams of Shi'ism. Religious

ritual observances differ dramatically between the groups, with Alevis often culturally

identifying more with Turkish Alevis than Sunni Kurds (van Bruinessen 1994: 6, 17).[76] Alevis

maintain an uneasy connection to Sunni Kurds and the Turkish government has exploited the

religious differences between the groups to prevent them from forming a larger Kurdish

autonomy movement (van Bruinessen 1994: 7). In addition, there are linguistic differences –

though often lumped together under the term "Kurdish," there are in fact three main Kurdish

languages that are mutually unintelligible.[77] The factionalization of the larger Kurdish

community came up repeatedly in interviews, with many people professing that the state has

fostered intra-Kurdish discord to prevent large-scale collaborative organizing. As in El Salvador

during the civil war, the state alienated factions of Kurds from each other through the creation of

village guard systems that required some Kurds to report on guerilla activities of their neighbors.

These external barriers to unity exacerbated tribal tensions that long characterized social

relations in Southeast Anatolia. In sum, there are internal and external challenges for a united

Kurdish rights movement. Yeğen points out that "Turkey recognizes the potential power of an

Alevi-Sunni Kurdish coalition and did nasty things to prevent it. In Tunceli, the town is almost

divided in two–half supports the PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party] or the BDP [Peace and

Democracy Party], and the other half supports the CHP [Republican People's Party]" (Yeğen

2011). In part, this is due to strategic recruitment by CHP of party candidates from Dersim, who

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[76] For details on Alevi religious cultural practices in Turkey, see Shankland 2003.

[77] There are three main strains of Kurdish spoken today: Kurmanji, which boasts the largest population of speakers identified ethnically by the same label; Sorani, which is mostly spoken by Iraqi and Iranian Kurds; and Zazaki, spoken by ethnic Zaza people, including Zaza Alevi communities in the northeast corner of Kurdistan (Barkey and Fuller 1998: 63; van Bruinessen 1994: 19). There is much debate among scholars about the relationship between these three languages, and there are various perspectives about which of these three can be considered languages and which ones are dialects. Not being a linguist, I do not weigh in on this debate, and will refer often to Kurdish language generically throughout this chapter unless otherwise specified. To be clear, the majority of Kurds speak Kurmanji and they dominate the linguistic rights movement in Turkey. However, the Alevi Kurds of Dersim speak Zazaki, and thus I refer to it by its specific name to distinguish it from Kurmanji in this project.

elicit hometown pride in voters who would otherwise vote BDP. It appears that divide and

conquer has been an effective tactic in influencing Kurdish identity in Turkey.

Dersim in the Theoretical Framework

> *"The state wants us to think they are bringing democracy but they are not."*
> *(Hasan Ölgün 2011, Teachers Union of Dersim)*

> *"I'm not hopeful about Turkey's ability to democratize, but I am hopeful about the Kurdish movement's power."*
> *(Anonymous 2011b, Member of The Oppressed People's Socialist Party (ESP))*

Dersim's Alevi Kurds are highly mobilized to demand rights from the state. The

community has incorporated memories of 1938 into potent public narratives but not achieved a

high level of state accommodation. There are some Dersimis who have obtained a degree of

power within political parties, but they have overwhelmingly downplayed their Alevi Kurdish

identity in the process. Several prominent Dersim intellectuals have been inducted into political

parties like CHP in hopes of gaining Dersim's vote for that party. Kurds still cannot use their

language in political arenas and the tight rein of centrist politics emanating from Ankara gives no

institutionally supported regional power to address the needs of this distinct population. Kurdish

political rights are not protected through any decentralized or autonomous arrangement, and I

code the Dersim case as having medium, instead of low political accommodation only because of

Kurdish participation in political parties and the fact that the BDP, the main Kurdish political

party, is able to win elections and hold office.[78]

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[78] Full discussion of interview questions used to assess accommodation levels and derive codes are presented in Appendix A.1.

Economically, Dersim remains highly marginalized, though there is a small prosperous middle class. The creation of a university in the city has boosted the intellectual class and economic growth simultaneously. Several of the people I interviewed saw the university as a meaningful place of employment that brought with it the promise of a middle class lifestyle. Though poverty, unemployment, and underemployment are persistent problems among Kurds in general, there are some Dersimis who have found opportunities to develop businesses and change the economic circumstances of their families. Because of these mixed circumstances, I code Dersim as having a medium level of economic accommodation.

Unequivocally, cultural accommodation of Dersim's Alevi Kurds is low. Lacking constitutional protection, recognition, or valorization, Kurds have been culturally marginalized and actively persecuted. Their cultural marginalization is in a large part linguistic: Kurdish was historically criminalized and remains subject to restrictions. Language therefore serves as a strong indicator of cultural accommodation in Turkey and is the focus of the sections below. Though medium political and economic accommodation contribute to the sense of rights exclusion for Dersimis, it is the low degree of cultural accommodation, in combination with narratives of violence, that carry particular causal weight in this case. Much of this chapter is devoted to assessing the low degree of cultural accommodation and evaluating its impact on the community.

Scope Condition	Background causes	Mechanism	Outcome
Targeted violence in 1938, 1980s-1990s	**Medium** political accommodation **Medium** economic accommodation **Low** cultural accommodation	**High** narrative production	**High** mobilization for cultural rights: **Kurds**
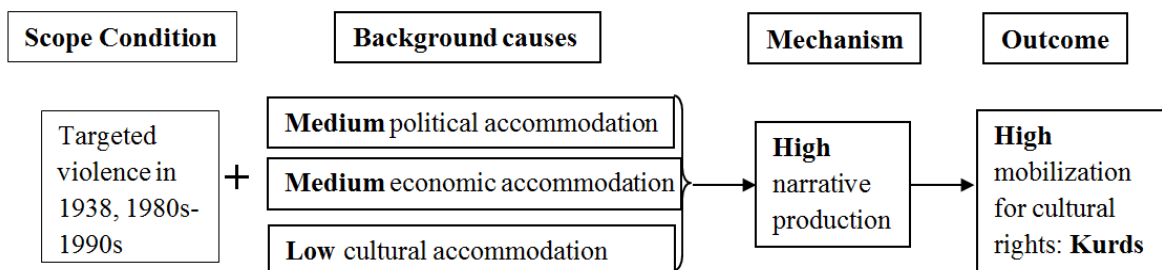
Figure 28: Theoretical model of Dersimi Kurdish mobilization.

Though many subpopulations of Kurds in Turkey could fall into the category of high mobilization for cultural rights, the massacre of 1938 created a specific and temporally bound incident of remembered violence in Dersim. Memories of 1938 are distinct from those that surround the widespread and ongoing violence against Kurds in the civil war of the 1990s, which, though also capable of producing powerful narratives, occurred on a more dispersed scale. The massacre of 1938 has produced a specific narrative that Dersimis use in pushing the state to grant greater cultural rights. These memory-fueled narratives often come off as reasons for entitlements – in other words, 'we deserve rights because something bad happened to us.'[79] This shaming and claiming process is similar to narratives about violence seen in the Tzotzil case study in Chapter 3. Shaming and claiming is by no means the only approach to Kurdish rights claims, which in general have rested more on the human right to self-determination, illustrated by Aras: "you don't have to be thankful to anybody for giving you your rights, because they should be yours anyway" (Aras 2011). But the Dersim mobilization shows how memories of violence can be useful instrumentally both in galvanizing community members to act, and also in shaming the state into permitting claims to move forward. This strong sense of empowerment coupled with the moral imperative for rights protections makes Dersim a compelling microcosm of mobilization in Turkey's southeast.

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[79] This sentiment touches on "ressentiment," the French term to describe frustration and hostility toward those responsible for grievances without a channel to express such feelings which is widely discussed in political theory and philosophy literatures. See Nietzsche and Kaufmann 1967 and Kierkegaard, Hong et al. 1978 for an overview. Also, Wendy Brown's work looks at how groups organizing for grievance-based rights can breed ressentiment by overly attaching to their victim status (Brown 1995).

Drawing on the theoretical models presented in Chapters 1, 2, and above, I argue that this narrative, in combination with ongoing political, economic, and cultural marginalization, drives cultural rights mobilization in Dersim. First, Dersim residents exhibit both institutional and contentious claim-making. In Dersim, Alevi Kurds support candidates of their own ethnicity and religion in elections and also engage in formal policy negotiation with the central government, demonstrating a high level of institutional claim-making. Dersim residents also engage in unsanctioned behavior constituting contentious claim-making, such as illicitly installing bilingual signs in the municipal building, refusing to comply with language bans demanded by the central government, and offering Kurdish language instruction in a variety of forms.

Figure 29: Bilingual Turkish/Zazaki signs. Next to office doors in Dersim's main municipal building. Though it is illegal to have municipal signs posted in a language other than Turkish, as of my visit in 2011, no action had been taken against the municipality to remove the signs. This one marks the office of the "special pen," or municipal spokesperson. Photo by author.

Figure 30: International Women's Day rally. Most visual communication in Dersim, like this poster, is still in Turkish. Photo by author.

Having connected the Dersim case to the larger research puzzle, I now explore political and cultural accommodation of Kurds in more detail.

Political and economic accommodation of Kurds: As was discussed above, Kurds in general have achieved medium political accommodation from the state. However, looking at the high degree of centralization of political power in Turkey, it is clear that minimal political accommodation of minorities is inherently present by institutional design. In this section, I describe how Turkey's centralized institutional design affects minority rights mobilization and present the range of alternatives to centralization that various Kurdish factions are putting forth.

Turkey, since its foundation as a republic, has been a highly centralized state, controlling all political, fiscal, and administrative business through central apparatuses across highly diverse parts of the country. In general, Kurds put their regional identity above the state – they may feel little connection to Ankara but are civically engaged at the local level. People tend to identify primarily with the cities they are from, rather than with the state polity. In this environment, it is no surprise that Kurds have actively vocalized their demands for an institutional reorganization of the state.

Because PKK militancy for the creation of Kurdistan dominated the popular imagination for so long, the stigma of Kurdish rights equaling separatism has not been shed even today despite the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999. In fact, Kurdish strategy has shifted considerably since then (Içduygu, Romano et al. 1999: 993-994), moving towards endorsement for "democratic autonomy" rather than separatism as previously voiced under Öcalan's leadership. This is not to negate that a portion of Kurds in Turkey continue to advocate for a PKK-led separation from Turkey, but rather I show that the discourse has substantially broadened in communities like Dersim and among their urban advocates. Many members of the Kurdish intellectual elite with whom I spoke in Istanbul, Diyarbakır, Mardin, and Dersim

advocated for some type of democratic autonomy within Turkey. While there were some calls

for true federalism, it seems that these demands serve more as a radical flank, useful to push

towards compromise on some degree of decentralization rather than a deep commitment to

federalism itself. Regarding federalism, one Kurdish activist I spoke with told me:

> It is only talked about by small groups within the Kurdish community.
> Democratic autonomy, on the other hand, is more widely discussed, not just for
> the Kurdish region but for the rest of Turkey, which would mean a
> *decentralization of the state with more power for local authorities.* (Gundogdu
> 2011, emphasis mine)

On a practical note, democratic autonomy would divide Turkey into about 28 sections, allowing

use of regional languages alongside Turkish. While journalists and other members of civil

society discuss this option, state leaders are more reticent (Gundogdu 2011), perhaps out of

reluctance to give up any degree of power, or out of fear that giving a little to begin with would

lead to giving up a lot of power. As with any institutional rearrangements, there would be costs

as well as benefits, and the Turkish government so far has shown itself unwilling to modify any

aspect of the centralized system to accommodate Kurdish demands.

The critique of the central government's unwillingness to accommodate any type of

devolution of power was a common theme in my interviews. Coşkun, an expert in constitutional

law, told me, "the state is afraid of decentralization. In 2004, AKP put forth a public

administration reform draft on decentralization but the president refused to sign it. According to

the draft, some powers would be shared by the regional government, but it didn't go through"

(Coşkun 2011). A Kurdish academic in Istanbul elaborated:

> Federalism is an acceptable alternative to separatism, but the state won't consider
> it. The Turkish public will also not accept federalism, but it is possible to do,
> because the state could see it as a way to stop calls for separatism. *Unofficially, it
> IS a federal system because the regions are so disconnected from the national*

center, but people want to insert this formally into the constitution and have the benefits that go with formalizing it. (Çifçi 2011, emphasis mine)

For the de facto independence of municipal governments like Dersim and Diyarbakır is far too fragile and vulnerable to central pressures to be a satisfying long-term solution. For example, a municipal worker commented: "we have just the money that the central government sends us, and they always cut it. We are so dependent on the central government" (Anonymous 2011a). But Kurdish intellectuals disagree about what the exact institutional arrangement should be in order to accommodate Kurdish demands. Kurdish sociologist and public intellectual Mesut Yeğen explained:

> Federalism in its full sense is too much, and also not that popular among Kurds or among PKK. There are two parties, the Participatory Democracy Party (KADEP) and the Right and Liberties Party (HAKPAR) that both support federalism, and they are both influenced by the KDP in Iraq and think that Kurds in Turkey should have the same arrangement that Kurds in Iraq do. But *a radical federalist stance is taken to make bargaining about moderate reforms more likely*. Decentralization is needed, but Kurds need to present a viable arrangement to Turkey to get their [government] support.

Again, Yeğen's statement reinforces the impression that federalism is discussed only as a radical flank, whereas the realistic goal is a lighter version of decentralization. Many Kurds and their allies are hopeful that a new institutional arrangement could be democratic autonomy, a watered-down version of federalism that would allow for regional cultural practices. At the same time, a necessary skepticism pervades conversations about democratic autonomy because the Turkish government has shown no signs of being genuinely willing to consider it.

> The government is very nervous because democratic autonomy would bring a whole new administrative system, and not just for Kurds but for all of Turkey. The government doesn't want to give up any power. The proposed autonomy includes fiscal, administrative, and political decentralization. We are looking at Latin American models and get references from the EU and the Copenhagen documents. (Anonymous 2011a)

To some extent, Mexico's experience with implementing *usos y costumbres* (see Chapter 3) could provide a model, albeit an imperfect one, for how such a system could operate in Turkey. However, the Turkish government may reject the wider scope of federal arrangements that Mexico had in place prior to allowing usos y costumbres as a local governance tool. Yet at the end of the day, if the Turkish government is serious about ending the civil conflict with Kurds, it will need to consider methods other than military crackdown and judicial persecution. Whether pure federalism or a diluted form of decentralization is implemented, interviewees argued persuasively that institutional design change holds the promise of enhancing regional accommodation for minorities in Turkey. However, the Turkish government does not yet appear willing to make such changes, so federalism and its derivatives may remain intellectual exercises in the so-called Kurdish Question for some time to come.

Economically, Kurdish citizens in Turkey, particularly in the southeast of the country, find themselves perpetually on the economic margins despite Turkey's overall transition to middle-income country status. Studies show that historical state neglect of the southeast, combined with the destruction of villages during the civil war and consequential migration to urban centers, has led to much higher unemployment, illiteracy, birthrates, and student-teacher ratios than in the rest of Turkey (Ozturk 2002: 6; TESEV/UNDP undated: 2). As in Mexico, Turkey's economic growth has not benefited the majority of Kurds. In a United Nations Development Programme report on Turkey, the southeast of the country scores lower than all other regions besides the east on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, public and private investment, and on human development indicators (UNDP 2004: 16). In fact, detailed comparisons of social and economic indicators between Turkey's western and southeastern regions show consistent disparities in sanitation, household crowding, and the existence of

durable household goods, leading to a situation of "environmental insecurity" in the predominantly Kurdish region (Içduygu, Romano et al. 1999: 1002-1005). Though within the southeast Dersim scores higher on human development indices, the southeastern region as a whole scores lower than Turkey at the national level (TESEV/UNDP undated: 9). Dersim's geographic isolation has only aided government neglect of the area, and arriving there from economically bustling Istanbul can feels like entering another country. Residents in Dersim, because of years of assimilatory schooling, are fluent Turkish speakers able to access state services and educational opportunities. However, doing so often requires ongoing suppression of ethnic difference, showing that moderate economic accommodation comes at a cost to cultural rights.

Cultural accommodation: There are several reasons why language rights are important for evaluating cultural rights in Turkey. First, Kurdish language use has been perceived as a threat to Turkish state-building and has been a stumbling block in Turkey's EU membership application. The Turkish state knows that language matters for cultural continuity of minorities and has targeted language assimilation as a cornerstone of cultural integration. Second, language matters for identity, and ample scholarship supports this (Bush and Saltarelli 2000; García, Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2006; Kymlicka 1995; Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 2010; Watson 2007). In Turkey, language rights serve as a highly visible indicator of the larger package of cultural rights that minority communities demand. Clearly language is not the only way ethnic identity is preserved and passed on, but it has long been accepted as a key marker of culture. My ethnographic research supports the literature that language matters for identity and community cohesion. In speaking with Kurds in Istanbul, Dersim, Diyarbakır, Mardin, and other parts of

southeast Turkey, I heard remarkably similar explanations of why language matters so much. At the most basic level, minorities in Turkey equate language with identity, and my ethnographic research presents evidence that Kurdish and Armenian youth feel left out of their culture until they began to use their mother tongues more vigorously. Third, language rights are a common thread through the six project case studies and allow for comparability of cases across specific kinds of mobilizations. In sum, language serves as a useful indicator of cultural in my evaluation of cultural accommodation of minorities by the state.

Kurdish languages remained completely illegal in Turkey until 1991, at which point they were still illegal to use in any public space connected to the state, for example at utility offices, in city halls, or in schools. Even today, Kurdish may not be used for any political act or communication, and those who violate this ban are frequently jailed. Though the Turkish government decriminalized the non-political use of Kurdish in public to some degree in 2006, it is still prohibited to teach Kurdish in public schools, even as an elective language class. Both AKP and CHP have shown some willingness to consider Kurdish elective classes, but neither will consider general public education in Kurdish. Kurdish-language public education would require a constitutional amendment: Article 42 of the Turkish Constitution declares that public education must be provided in Turkish. This Article has recently been debated by Turkish and Kurdish public intellectuals as in need of revision if or when the Constitution is updated.[80] As it currently stands, Article 42 also makes it impossible to open private schools with general education curricula in Kurdish languages, though as mentioned above, privately funded Kurdish language classes for adults are now allowed. Thus many Kurdish families find themselves in a

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[80]As of this writing, the Constitution is currently under review and Article 42 is targeted for revision.

difficult position with regard to the education system, wanting to pass down their language but lacking institutional reinforcement through schools.

Multiple interviewees expressed the impact of Article 42 in their family life. For example, Vahap Coşkun, a law professor at Diyarbakır's Dicle University and a language rights activist admitted that, "in my family, my children and parents can't understand each other well because my kids speak Turkish, from going to school, but my parents didn't go to school so they only speak Kurdish" (Coşkun 2011). Despite Coşkun's professional commitment to Kurdish languages, he described how, when his kids became school-aged, there were no Kurmanji options for them. They became immersed in Turkish at school and with their friends, and gradually lost their ability to communicate in Kurmanji in the home (Coşkun 2011). Another interviewee related a similar story. "My son, I speak to him in Kurdish at home. This worked until he was three and started daycare –now he understands me but answers in Turkish" (Yalçındağ 2011).

One line of argument Kurdish language rights activists are putting forth is that denial of mother tongue education undermines another constitutional provision – free and equal access to education for all citizens. However, activists have so far not developed a uniform argument about why mother tongue education is so important. While democratic liberalization, in conjunction with the bid for European Union membership, opens the dialogue about multiculturalism in Turkey, important restrictions remain in place. It is still illegal, for instance, to use Kurdish in any political context, and decisions about what constitutes a political versus a public act are often made with calculations to target and arrest Kurdish activists and politicians.

As Kurds migrate from rural areas where Kurdish is the dominant language, to urban spaces in search of work or as internally displaced peoples from the civil war between the PKK

and the Turkish military, speaking Turkish becomes a necessary survival tool and thus the

Kurdish language is at an increased risk of disappearing (Kaya 2011). In addition, public schools

in places like Dersim have been very successful at linguistic assimilation by requiring Turkish

immersion in order to receive an education. Yet Kurdish people who have not learned their

Kurdish language, or who have deliberately stopped using it, often report feeling disconnected

from their culture. This separation can be a source of psychological stress, particularly when it

leads to a loss of connection with one's elders. For example, Sami Tan, who has been part of the

Kurmanji language revitalization movement in Istanbul remarked:

> It is impossible without language to live the Kurdish identity and to preserve
> Kurdish identity. When you ask people why they want to learn Kurdish, they say,
> 'I want to continue with my identity, I want to understand the stories of my
> grandparents.' It is a traumatic situation to not have intergenerational
> understanding. (Tan 2011)

Language loss matters for Kurds today because, as one young woman put it, "we can't even

speak to our grandmothers" (Bozgan 2011). In expressing why language loss is particularly

tragic for Kurds, Coşkun's connects language rescue to cultural rescue:

> Kurdish culture is a verbal culture. Language is the main carrier of this culture
> from one generation to the next, therefore language preservation is very important
> for cultural survival. Since the beginning of the Republic, language has been
> oppressed. Saving language is saving culture, language is identical to our being.
> (Coşkun 2011)

Though Coşkun is correct that Kurdish languages have mostly been passed down orally, this is

true of many minority languages. It is not the oral transmission of Kurdish that has led to its loss,

but an external factor, targeted Turkish state policies to restrict language use. The lack of a

written culture for Kurdish communities can be seen more as an outcome of Turkish-only

language policy than an endogenous cultural attribute.

Memories of violence and the emotions those memories create are directly tied to the loss of intergenerational understanding among Kurds in Turkey. One young Kurdish activist, Umut Suvari, has been working to create a voice for youth in the Diyarbakır City Council. I met Suvari in his barren office in the municipal government building complex on the outskirts of town, where he told me, "parents who are afraid of past violence don't speak Kurdish to their kids, so young people are losing the language" (Suvari 2011). This may help explain why Coşkun's children, even though they spend time with their grandparents at home where they hear multiple generations of elders employing Kurmanji to communicate, are not learning the language. The fear of persecution for language use has inhibited survivors of violence from passing on this basic cultural inheritance. Solutions to this situation include mobilizing and demanding linguistic rights from the government, but there are also more quotidian approaches. As Suvari told me, "we are trying to use Kurdish among ourselves now, to bring language into daily life" (Suvari 2011).

From these small glimpses into interviews in Diyarbakır, the principal city of what many Kurds consider to be northern Kurdistan, and where many Dersimi intellectuals now live, it is clear that language is a crucial identity marker for Kurds, and that language is particularly important in intergenerational communication. But the role of language rights as a unifying Kurdish rights platform is also worth mention, since much of this chapter addresses separate Kurdish communities that, for various reasons, have been working on their own rights mobilizations in isolation from each other. Language is a key that can unlock the "Kurdish question," a way of referring to the messy situation in southeast Turkey, or more broadly to the future of Kurds in Turkey. As long-time scholar Mesut Yeğen put it, "being a Kurd doesn't mean necessarily that one is part of the Kurdish Question. Being a Kurd and objecting to a

monolingual state makes one part of the Kurdish Question" (Yeğen 2011). In other words, it is the element of contestation of a monolingual Turkish nation-state that defines the Kurdish Question, not simply ethnicity. Some Kurds shame and make claims on the state, while others do not.

Finally, despite nasty political infighting regarding political party loyalty, controversy over separatism versus democratic autonomy as the solution to Kurdish marginalization, and disagreement about the use of violence as a tactic to achieve greater rights in Turkey,[81] the demand for language rights unifies otherwise segmented populations. As Coşkun told me, "diverse Kurds and Kurdish groups are all able to agree on language rights" (Coşkun 2011). In a region and epoch riddled with competition and suspicion, agreement over the right to language is no small feat, and yet another example of why language rights matter in contemporary Turkish politics.

Remembering Violence in Southeast Turkey

"They raised themselves up by crushing their Kurdishness"
(Mete, in Neyzi and Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010: 33).

Memories prompt different behavioral responses by individuals and groups across a range of geographies and political circumstances.[82] My research contends that minority groups that have experienced violence and are poorly accommodated by the state often use narrative to convey memories of violence to wider audiences, while groups that are more highly accommodated tend to choose assimilation as a self-preservation strategy. This theoretical

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[81]Van Bruinessen 1994: 18 discusses how Dersim residents rejected the PKK, and also how the state encouraged this intra-Kurdish discord.

[82]For example, Slobodan Milosevic gave a speech in 1987 that referenced an Ottoman military victory in over Serbs in 1389 to fan the flames of nationalist sentiment that eventually led to genocide against non-Serbs (Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 19).

argument resonates with the experiences and self-understanding of minority groups. During my ethnographic work in Turkey, interviewees explained this interaction between memories of violence and behavior again and again. In this section, I present data from interviews with Kurdish civil society leaders and show how memories of violence relate to claims for Kurdish cultural rights. The pattern shows that older Kurds who were closer to the 1938 violence are more fearful to assert their cultural rights, but for younger generations, low levels of cultural accommodation have motivated their activism, particularly for linguistic rights.

In looking broadly at violence against Kurds in Turkey, the period of the 1980s and 1990s stands out as the most dramatic time during which the state deployed full military power against communities in an attempt to crush the separatist movement of PKK fighters. Like all civil wars, the conflict drastically affected civilians, killing tens of thousands of them along with militants,[83] and displacing hundreds of thousands more. As Kurds dealt with memories of past violence they and their families had suffered, as well as the material consequences of such violence, they created powerful narratives to convey their stories to wider audiences and to claim rights finally available to them under Turkey's post-civil war democratizing institutions. Mobilizing for cultural rights claims did not emerge as a result of democratization. Instead, it is a premise of this project that the quest to be viewed as a democracy pushes states to recognize minority rights claims that previously existed but were repressed and are only able to be vocalized as the state undergoes democratizing reforms.

Ramazan Aras obtained his PhD in Canada, and now teaches in the anthropology department at Mardin's Artuklu University. Seated across a narrow desk, Aras squints through

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[83] Aliza Marcus cites 40,000 killed as of 2007 when her book was published, and this figure is generally accepted by scholars who are not sympathetic to the Turkish government or military (2007: 1).

the golden sunshine pouring through his office window and turns into himself. I've asked him about violence, and how his childhood, spent as a Kurd in the far southeast of Turkey, shaped his current involvement in the new Kurdish studies program taking shape at Artuklu, which is near the Syrian border. Aras is the quintessential rooted cosmopolitanist, vibrantly aware of the international community, able to publish analyses in multiple languages, but dedicated to the issues of his home community not far from Mardin. Over an ever-present glass of tea, he remarked, "every single member of the Kurdish community has been influenced by violence. Everybody has a story, everybody has a memory, everybody has a family member who is part of the movement. Everybody has a memory of state violence" (Aras 2011). While the degree to which memories of violence permeate people's lives depends in part on how they navigate their public Kurdish identities, Aras argues that the violence was so pervasive that people would be subjected to it simply by bearing markers of Kurdishness – a name, a skin color, or the birth location of one's father, which is printed on mandatory state identification cards. Also, because the experiences of violence were so widespread throughout Kurdish communities, the ability to remember those experiences collectively was, and is, especially strong, even if it is not always openly discussed. As the sun dipped low and the meeting waned, Aras enumerated:

> There is this memory, underground. In collective punishment, the whole family is punished, *every single person is affected*. In the 1990s, there were checkpoints. Generally, if you are Kurdish you are stopped, every passenger is taken out of the vehicle, if you are a woman, a man will search you, and there are insults. So you have this daily practice of violation and humiliation. *There is an "otherization" of Kurds* as dirty, brown-skinned. (Aras 2011, emphasis mine)

Aras's reflection on these violations years after they occurred demonstrates the complexity of the human psyche in integrating powerful emotions and sensory experiences into one's identity.

Similarly, in the bustling Diyarbakır Human Rights Association office, Reyhan

Yalçındağ echoes the nearly universal experience of violence in the southeast. She also connects

remembered violence to a collective emotion, courage, which can be channeled into "fighting"

for future rights:

> Most families lost a father, brother, or sister, or they lost their village, or their sister was raped. It is impossible to forget all this. *Not to forget…it helps us to be more courageous*. We fight for the next generation. We believe we can find a solution in a peaceful and democratic way under a new constitution. (Yalçındağ 2011, emphasis mine)

As Yalçındağ sees violence as something that can fuel mass action to achieve rights for future

generations, she also considers the role of the state in fostering such an outcome. As a lawyer,

she looks to constitutional means of changing the situation for Kurds in Turkey, and she looks

for democratic means to promote rights. Yalçındağ's statement is a call for greater political

accommodation by the state. If Kurds were granted this accommodation, extra-institutional rights

claims could be reduced or exchanged for institutional claims. Similar to Aras, Yalçındağ

emphasizes the pervasive quality of violence that Kurds have experienced. There is the

understanding that most Kurdish families have had something terrible happen to at least one of

their members at some point, and this fact contributes directly to choices people make about

political behavior.

Memory can be used to fuel a range of behaviors. It can incite revenge, but also political

mobilization, and sometimes these are connected. Aras describes the tension between identity

development and the lust for revenge that has developed in the southeast:

> Violence has created a climate in which people are becoming more conscious about who they are, and on the other hand, they are wanting revenge. There is a strong emotion of revenge in Kurdish society, which is connected to ethnic consciousness, and revenge becomes easier because *there is only one avenue for*

> *revenge, to fight for justice* by joining the guerillas, to avenge the rape of a sister,
> the assault of a mother, the arrest of a father. (Aras 2011, emphasis mine)

While Kurdish people have certainly carried out some acts of revenge in the region, they have

predominantly responded in three ways: take part in PKK offensives (which may include

revenge attacks but also are a means to establish territorial control), self-silence, or organize

through channels such as the Dersim or Diyarbakır municipalities and affiliated political parties.

For example, local government in in both municipalities is run by the BDP, known domestically

as the Kurdish party, and has been a site for repeated contestation of centrist and Turkifying

policies.

Mobilization versus assimilation: Though in general Alevi Kurds in Dersim are highly mobilized

to make cultural rights claims, there are sections of the community that are not mobilized but

instead reject the idea of mobilizing around their Kurdishness and assimilate. As in other

minority communities, fear of state persecution within the Kurdish community disincentivizes

people from mobilizing for cultural rights. This barrier to participation—fear—exists even in

communities that have managed to gather enough momentum to act anyway. Despite intense

activism for a host of cultural rights in Diyarbakır, for example, many people do not get involved

because of past violence against those who raised their voices. The President of the Youth and

Change Asssociation of Diyarbakır, Umut Suvari, summarizes the challenges to mobilizing

Kurds in the southeast for political particpation:

> There is a fear of volunteering because it means being visible. In Kurdish areas,
> people are afraid because they think they will be arrested for participating in
> something. For example, when the Roma were organizing for their rights, the
> news presented it as "Roma ORGANIZING," as if it was a bad thing. To be
> organized in the modern meaning is quite new for people. This is not like the old
> way of participating by giving money to religious organizations. (Suvari 2011)

As Suvari attests, fear of visibility can impede the creation of a civil society base from which to work for cultural rights, and this fear stems from the remembered persecution of those who spoke out before. Contemporary incidents of state persecution reinforce memories of past violence, and also indicate low political and cultural accommodation.

Kurds in Dersim see what happens to co-ethnics in Diyarbakır: ongoing arrests and imprisonment of top BDP politicians and other high level civil society leaders. Though such repression has not occurred in Dersim, the Turkish government is widely targeting symbolic Kurdish figures such as Muharrem Erbey, the chairman of the Human Rights Association of Diyarbakır, who, like many others, was accused of "aiding the insurgency" and imprisoned for years (Human Rights Watch 2010). The government was quite calculated in selecting public figures such Erbey, as well as journalists and BDP politicians for arrest to dissuade others from speaking out (Cheterian 2013; Hawramy 2012; Kurdnet 2011). Suvari told me, "Kurdish politicians were educated, and working hard, so the message is, if you work hard to accomplish something, you'll be arrested. This is a big deterrent to participation" (Suvari 2011). Indeed, this deliberate targeting of regional leaders undermines the organizational capacity for mobilization, and is evidence of the low level of political accommodation of Kurds by the Turkish state. Those Kurds who used their positions to shame the state to claim ethnically based rights have been repeatedly persecuted.

At the same time, such deterrence has not worked. Kurds continue to be highly mobilized across a broad base, and while older people are less likely to compose that base, as one interviewee put it: "Kurds have political power – we can organize one million people in an hour" (Anonymous 2011a). Demographically speaking, there are plenty of younger people who *are*

willing to mobilize for their rights in spite of Turkish state repercussion. Even in ultra-mobilized

communities, many people, including those leading the mobilization, go through periods of

questioning their choice to reject assimilation and assert their cultural demands. To decide to be

proud of one's Kurdishness in Turkey today comes at a high risk, as one interviewee explained:

> Sometimes I say, "I don't want to be a Kurd." To say I am a Kurd is not advantageous. It means being against the entire system and includes torture, prison, discrimination, economic problems. People are really psychologically, emotionally, socially very tired from struggling with all these barriers. They lose their dreams. *Sometimes Kurdish people choose to be "dead" people who are living. They don't want to be seen. They assimilate.* These are people who have greater access to power. (Anonymous 2011a)

The person quoted above is currently facing charges of terrorism by the state because she uses

Kurmanji in a project, funded by an EU grant, to organize low-income women to demand their

rights.

Employing Kurdish languages for anything remotely politically can be considered anti-

state under Article 220 of the Turkish penal code, which equates such use of Kurdish with

membership in an illegal organization. AKP added this article to the penal code and the state

utilizes it widely to deter Kurdish activists from cultural rights activities by charging them as if

they were PKK members. This instrumentalization of the law calls into question the democratic

credentials of Turkey. As a lawyer for the Human Rights Association of Diyarbakır put it, "now

we are calling the Turkish government a police state" (Yalçındağ 2011).

Figure 31: Kurdish cultural rights demonstration. Students at Dicle University dance a traditional (and illegal) Kurdish dance on International Women's Day, 2011. Photo by author.

Figure 32: Cultural rights advocates are watched by the state. Media, police, and secret service officers document the Kurdish dancing. Spiral wire earpieces, a tell-tale secret service gadget, were visible on several photographers and "observers." 3/8/11. Photo by author.

This is a problematic label for a country that, prior to the summer 2013 protests,[84] considered itself well along the path towards democracy. This assessment of the Turkish government also shows that, incorporation into political parties aside, Kurds political accommodation by the state remains poor.

As the Turkish state tries to deter mobilization of the Kurdish community, it undermines its own rhetoric of democratization. The activist facing charges for her organizing work explains how the threat of state persecution is impacting Kurdish activism in Diyarbakır:

> Just to be a Kurd and trying to express yourself in legal democratic process means you are at risk of going to prison. You have to choose to be yourself with your identity or to just live amorphously. Kurdish society is very divided between politicized Kurds and those who are assimilated, with a small middle ground where more assimilated people cautiously participate in small ways. (Anonymous 2011a)

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[84] The protests in May, June, and July 2013 began as a public protest against the demolition of Gezi Park in Istanbul's Taksim Square but quickly spread to Ankara, and many other cities as a referendum against Prime Minister *Erdoğan*'s repressive policies and the AKP government agenda.

One way this fear plays out in the daily life of Kurdish people is through constant

negotiation about whether to reveal their identities. The quotidian reinforcement of

tension between cultural assimilation and identity assertion came up repeatedly in my

interviews. Şükrü Aslan, a Dersimi sociologist at Mimar Sinon Fine Arts University, told

me the following story:

> The Diyarbakır municipal government decided to set up a call center to assist
> residents in navigating city services. When they started doing interviews to hire
> people for the call center they asked applicants if they could speak Kurdish, and
> they all shook their heads, "oh no, we do not speak Kurdish." The interviewer
> said, "but many of the people who call in will only speak Kurdish, so we need to
> hire Kurdish speakers." "Well, of course we speak Kurdish" admitted the
> applicants. (Aslan 2011)

As amusing as it is tragic, Aslan's vignette captures the maze of identity Kurdish people navigate.

So accustomed to seeing their minority ethnic identity as a liability, Kurdish applicants would

rather lie to be safe than claim their cultural heritage, an indication of low cultural accommodation

for Kurds in Turkey. However, when such identity appears as an asset, Kurds are willing to claim

it.

In another example, a teacher of English and Kurdish at the local university in Dersim told

me: "In any province in the southeast it is less common, but in the west and middle of Turkey

people will still be punished in the street for speaking in Kurdish. If you are talking on the phone

in Kurdish, people may get angry and say 'You have to speak in Turkish, this is Turkey!'"

(Yıldırm 2011). This story was echoed by a Kurdish doctoral student in Dersim who told me that

he only uses Kurmanji to speak with his mother, but his mother fears that if he speaks it in public

he will be accosted or attacked. So when his mother calls she always asks him where he is. If he is

at home, she will talk to him, but if he is out somewhere she tells him to call her later because she

doesn't want him to speak Kurmanji in the street. In this anecdote, memory and violence interact to deter cultural rights claim-making in Turkey.

Sami Tan, President of the Istanbul Kurdish Institute, an NGO dedicated to promoting Kurdish language and culture, observes that "If you accept Turkishness, everything is okay, so some minorities have opportunities from assimilation and they don't want to give this up; they would rather preserve their power. Fear is strong in Turkish society" (Tan 2011). It seems that in exchange for assimilation, a greater degree of political accommodation is available to Kurds, though this undermines the basic promise of cultural rights in a democratic society. Every assessment of media about Kurdish protests in the southeast offers descriptions of how the lack of political accommodation mobilizes people. For example, in numerous instances when Kurdish politicians were arrested, Kurds took to the streets and continued to advocate publically for their rights there when those same politicians were sentenced to prison.[85] This mobilization includes advocacy for political rights and cultural rights together, which are sometimes impossible to separate. For instance, many protests were about politicians' arrests for being Kurdish in public, e.g. for speaking to constituencies in their mother tongue. Cultural rights demands are intertwined with Kurdish claims for increased political power, and any meaningful solution to the Kurdish Question will entail political *and* cultural accommodations.

The idea that a modern state could only evolve out of a homogenous populace has been reinforced through the Turkish government's approach to education and national myth-making over time. Though Turkey is by no means alone in the process of creating an imagined memory,

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[85] Though interviewees rarely directly communicated feelings of anger towards the Turkish state, feelings of hostility came through in the way they talked about the actions of the Turkish state, military, police, and other forces that have repressed Kurdish identity. Such emotions were communicated through body language such as grimaces, raised voices, and tense verbal tones. These indirect communication signals would have been lost without the ethnographic component of this project's methodology.

truth is the main casualty in this process. As Benedict Anderson points out, imagination is a key

component of nation-building (1991), and most countries could be charged with fictionalizing their

unity through a variety of national symbols. Coşkun and his colleagues at the Diyarbakır Institute

for Political and Social Research created a unique report, with the title translated from Turkish as

"Scar of Tongue," that addresses the role of imagination in Turkish nation-building in relation to

consequences of banning mother tongue education for Kurdish students (Coşkun, Derince et al.

2011).

> [T]he first thing that needs to be done for the creation of a national identity is the creating of an imagined common memory. The teaching of history is designed in accordance with the historical memory needed by the nation-state; *events believed to negatively affect the people are either passed over quickly, or ignored, or distorted*. On the other hand, events believed to be of critical importance for the memories are parsed in detail and, if necessary, exaggerated. (Coşkun, Derince et al. 2011: 17, emphasis mine)

Just as remembering is critical to forming the imagined community, so is forgetting. As one

memory scholar puts it, "[i]n order to ensure national cohesion there is a need to forget events

that represent a threat to unity and remember heroes and glory days" (Misztal 2003: 17). In

Turkey, selective remembering forms the basis for the imagined unity of the state, but Kurds are

challenging this narrative with their own counter-narrative and paying a high cost for their

contestation. Memories of violence form the foundation of the Kurdish imagination, which

continues to be actively repressed. Thus far, this chapter has connected historically remembered

violence to outcomes of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making.

Democratization and memory in Dersim: This subsection presents experiences of Dersimi Kurds,

many of whom are descendants of survivors of the 1938 massacre, as they mobilize for cultural

rights. In communities that have experienced targeted violence, it is common to hear rhetorical

questions like: 'Why us? How could this have happened to us?' Often community members

answer such questions in the next breath by citing an element of their out-group status that

distinguishes them from the majority of citizens in the state. In Mexico and El Salvador, the

rhetorical answer is generally, "because we are indigenous" or "because the government hates

Indians." In Dersim, the answer is both "because we are Kurdish" and "because we are Alevi"

(Aygün 2011). By holding identities that are both ethnically and religiously distinct from the

dominant majorities, Dersimi Alevi Kurds ascribe the reason for their persecution to their

minority status.

The challenge for democratizing countries is to create spaces of inclusion where all

citizens feel part of the *demos*, the people. For Alevi Kurds, and indeed, for survivors of violence

everywhere, some kind of closure is necessary to release the violent incident and diminish the

potential for it to haunt the survivor. A basic element of reconciliation entails some kind of

apology by the perpetrator in exchange for reintegrating both survivors and perpetrators into

society, as has happened, for example, through South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation

Commission and Rwanda's Gacaca courts. There was a similar call for the acknowledgement of

violence in Dersim, and the Turkish government answered this call to a limited degree on

November 24th, 2011. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in remarks to members of his own

AKP, which were made public, acknowledged that "Dersim is one of the most tragic events of

our near history. It is a disaster waiting to be enlightened and boldly questioned," and apologized

for the role of the state in the violence (Al Jazeera 2011).

However, critics argue that Erdoğan's apology was not only (or perhaps even at all)

directed at reconciliation. In fact, it served a strategic purpose: to rile members of AKP's rival,

CHP, which incorporated cadres of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), who were in

power at the time of the massacre. CUP, and by affiliation CHP, is generally thought to be

responsible for its planning, and this undermines the degree to which the apology can provide

closure to Dersim's residents, who claim a "real" apology. After all, AKP didn't exist at the time

of the Armenian catastrophe, so perhaps in the future an apology for 1915 could also be safely

deployed under the auspices of degrading CHP, just as the Dersim apology was. However,

Erdoğan's apology is a tiny step in a much larger path towards reconciliation, a process that the

2013 protests against AKP show to be perhaps untenable.

During fieldwork in Dersim, I met with many people who had vocalized their opinions

about how the 1938 massacres affected the community. After climbing the stairs to a bustling

office overlooking the town's central square, I spoke with Hüseyin Aygün, a leading human

rights attorney in Dersim who has published several books on the history of 1938 and is now a

prominent challenger of Erdoğan's apology.[86] A dedicated, mustachioed man whose eyes sparkle

despite the gravity of his work's topic, Aygün explained the request for apology that other

Dersimis echoed in their own interviews:

> To lessen the grief of people, the government should make an apology and show
> where the graves of the seven leaders of 1938 are. Most people do not know, but
> researchers know people were exiled and died in western [Turkish] prisons. Their
> whereabouts should be given. For example, the case of Jebrail Ağ, he was a tribal
> leader, sentenced for 30 years in Izmir prison, but he died after 10 years and his
> grandchild always asks if there is anything he can do to learn where his
> grandfather's grave is. *For those who have graves to go to, there is less sorrow.*
> (Aygün 2011, empahsis mine)

From South Africa and Rwanda to Guatemala and Bosnia, survivors of political violence have

demanded access to victims' remains as part of truth and reconciliation processes. Arguably,

creating a focal point for grief through the location of a grave allows survivors and their

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[86] Aygün is more than a leading intellectual in Dersim and a chief historian of the massacre – he also served as a
CHP Member of Parliament and thus his challenge to *Erdoğan may also have to do with AKP-CHP tensions.*

descendants the space for mourning that is important in the grieving process. Moreover, locating the graves also requires states to acknowledge the past violence and the impact it has had on some of its citizens.

In Dersim, several people involved in reviving Zazaki as a spoken language in the community gave poignant testimonies about the role of memory in their own cultural rights mobilization. Over steaming cups of tea in a Dersim cafeteria, I spoke with two young women[87] who discussed how their parents' memories of violence led their parents to try to assimilate by using Turkish in the home. These women, as adults, decided to join the mobilization for language rights by teaching at the newly established Dersim branch of Kurd*î*-De, which offers free Kurdish (Zazaki) language classes to the community. One woman said: "At the beginning of our participation, my father and mother were afraid for me to work at Kurdî-De, but I explained the importance" (Anonymous 2011c).The teachers also provided important reflections about how language connects to their broader identities.

> We are a bridge between generations, between our mothers and our generation. When my mother went to school she spoke Turkish but only spoke mother tongue at home. But for us, we also speak Turkish at home so our relationship to our mother tongue is more deliberate. *When we speak Zazaki, we feel ourselves differently.* When we listen to our songs, listen to our grandmothers, we feel ourselves differently. *Everything begins and ends with language. Language is our existence, our culture, our traditions.* We cannot represent ourselves fully in Turkish. (Anonymous 2011c, emphasis mine)

Language is a powerful manifestation of Kurdish identity for these women, yet they also recounted the many barriers people in Dersim have to overcome in order to access this rich identity trove. As they became animated talking about the potential for Kurdish language classes

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[87] Both women were nervous that they could somehow get in trouble for speaking to me about Kurdish language issues and therefore spoke under condition of anonymity. While a small percentage of interviewees in this project requested anonymity, most of these were in Mexico and El Salvador, and the vast majority of interviewees in Turkey did choose to be identified by name.

to reconnect people to their culture, I asked about how people create a sense of safety using a previously illegal language. They responded:

> There is no special way to encourage people, just say – 'be brave and speak your language.' When you learn a new language, it is difficult to speak, people prefer to give up and not talk. In our classes, people can understand Zazaki but are afraid of speaking. Past experiences have a big impact, but nowadays there is great uncertainty, anything can happen. Just for using the letters QWX you can be sent to jail. (Anonymous 2011c)

To elaborate, Q, W, and X are letters that are common in Kurdish alphabets, both in Zazaki and Kurmanji, but do not exist in the Latinized Turkish script. For decades, use of these letters carried steep prison terms, one of many measures of language criminalization used against Kurds. This example makes evident the low cultural accommodation in Dersim, as well as the community response to it as people try to shame their state and claim their alphabet.

Figure 33: Kurdish mobilization for language rights, including the right to use the letters Q, X, and W. Photo from a wall calendar in Dersim, origin unknown.
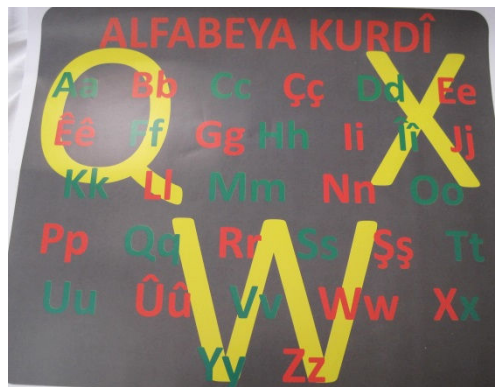
Figure 34: Kurdish alphabet, with illegal letters highlighted. Photo from a wall calendar in Dersim, origin unknown.

As Kurdish languages are slowly decriminalized, as seen through measures such as government approval for the opening of both undergraduate and graduate programs in Kurdish

languages at Artuklu University in Mardin, this 'crime' may slowly become obsolete.[88] But for many, persecution for using a letter of the alphabet reinforces the culture of fear that the 1938 massacres created in Dersim. The message from the government was and continues to be that it is safer to be a Turk than a Kurd, and those who try to assert their Kurdishness risk punishment. Similarly, under the Islamic AKP government, it is also safer to be Sunni than Alevi, leaving Dersim's Kurds doubly vulnerable.

Unsurprisingly, Dersimis respond to state pressure for assimilation by performing their identities and rights claims in different ways. An anonymous activist interviewee told me, "There are both kinds of people in Turkey - those who are afraid to participate because of past violence and people for whom this makes them take part more strongly" (Anonymous 2011a). In particular, there are divergent generational responses to claims for language rights, as is evident in Kurdî-De classrooms, where the majority of students are in their twenties. Younger activists have been vocal about reasserting the right to their mother tongue while older people tend to be much more cautious about the risks associated with reclaiming the linguistic aspect of their identity. For Alevi Kurds, the 1938 massacres are linked to contemporary violence against Kurdish people through both the civil war and language criminalization. Memories of 1938 are explicitly mobilized in rallies and petitions for linguistic rights in the community. As quoted at the opening of the chapter, "A new '38' is the phrase said by people when they are protesting the state – 'are you going to make a new 1938 for us?'" (Aygün 2011). These examples show how

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[88] Many interviewees also mentioned AKP allowing the opening of TRT6, the first Kurdish-language television station. However, most of them also mentioned that AKP has not embedded the right to Kurdish-language media in the Constitution, which means TRT6 could be closed down at the whim of the government at any point. Furthermore, they note that the content is very bland, focused only on culture, with no space for discussion of politics in Kurdish.

Kurdish cultural activists are highly mobilized in using narrative about collectively held memories of violence as they engage the democratizing state to demand increased rights.

Though the last decade has seen a steep decline in the number of casualties from state-PKK combat, previous violations are not easily forgotten. In Dersim, the legacy of the 1938 massacres were refortified by the violence in the last several decades, casting an enduring threat of attack by outsiders on the community. This sentiment was captured best by a municipal staff member in Dersim:

> People here still feel attacked by the government, they don't feel like the threat has ended. *In our houses, all of us grew up with stories of the massacres and transmitted them to the next generation. Memory has always been a part of our cultural rights movements.* In the last few years, we've tried to encourage researchers to make oral history projects about the past. Old people have been so afraid to speak but in the last few years of their lives, they opened up to researchers about the tragedies they lived through. (Kahraman 2011, emphasis mine)

As mentioned above, personal vignettes about divergent generational responses to memories of violence have been seldom recorded, in part because Dersim is far from intellectual centers of research and the topic is fraught with conflict. But my research, in line with the municipal worker quoted above, makes it apparent that based on what has been documented so far, there is a generational difference in how people respond to memories of violence and translate them into their political behavior.

Generational gap aside, the dominant energy in the municipality is one of intense cultural rights claim-making. From the BDP's initiative in January 2011 to make all the signs in the municipal buildings bilingual (Kahraman 2011), to the establishment of the Dersim branch of Kurdî-De and the proliferation of interest in Zazaki language classes, Dersimis are dedicated to reinvigorating their mother tongue. Though Dersim does not necessarily present a level of

mobilization higher than other Kurdish communities in the southeast, like Acteal, Chiapas, and Izalco, El Salvador, it stands out as a place where specific memories of violence have lodged in the collective imaginary and been vibrantly mobilized for cultural rights claims. The narratives that community members disseminate to outsiders like me, but also to a much wider audience through books, court cases, and petitions, demonstrate that the massacres of 1938 are intimately linked to their current quest for cultural rights, and specifically the right to speak Zazaki. Kurdish activists in Dersim have chosen reference to 1938 as a strategy to claim language rights, and this strategy appeals to a younger generation, but not to the older generation, who interpret the consequences of 1938 as a reason *not* to mobilize.

I have presented first-person accounts of why language matters for cultural rights and how Kurdish identity is navigated in the face of mediocre accommodation by the state. In doing so, I have served as an audience for the narratives of Kurdish people who play active roles in cultural rights mobilizations. I have also documented how Kurdish activists explicitly invoke memories of historic violence as they mobilize for cultural rights, and conversely, how older generations invoke those same memories of violence as explanations for why mobilization is dangerous. In this way, I have shown how the process of narrating memories of violence about 1938 connects communities to legacies of state (non)accommodation.

The first part of this chapter has shown why culture matters, how memories of violence influence the continuation of Kurdish culture, in particular Kurdish languages, and how Kurdish people are mobilizing for cultural rights in Turkey. Focusing on the case of Dersim, I have presented evidence of how one community mobilized memory through iterated narratives to assert its right to culture, and placed this mobilization in context of political, economic, and cultural accommodation patterns by the state. In the remaining portion of this chapter, I turn to

the case of Armenians in Istanbul as a way to offer contrasts between the experiences of

citizenship held by different minorities in Turkey.

Part II: Armenians in Istanbul

"Being an Armenian in Turkey is very dangerous."
(Rober Koptaş 2010, Armenian journalist, Istanbul)

"'I would repeat what my mother told me to say: 'I'm a Turk of Armenian origin.'"
(Selin in Neyzi and Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010)

In contrast to Kurdish communities, Armenians in Turkey mostly keep their narratives of

violence private. In this section I explain why Armenians in Istanbul have not capitalized on their

memories of 1915 as they advocate for increased cultural rights such as the right to mother

tongue education. Armenians in Turkey are not "un-mobilized." Rather, when compared to the

five other cases in this project, Armenians stand out for their reluctance to invoke collectively

held memories of violence in mobilizing for cultural rights.[89]

Why have Armenians managed to maintain a strong private narrative about 1915 but

have not successfully translated this narrative into activism for cultural rights? Put differently,

why has the Armenian community not been able to use the genocide as a tool for shaming the

state and claiming greater rights? Significantly, Armenians' status as a minority protected by the

1923 Treaty of Lausanne means that as a community, Armenians have focused organization

efforts on defending *treaty-granted* rights from the Turkish state. These treaty rights are

explicitly defined, and their implementation and enforcement has usually come about through

quiet institutional negotiations with a small number of Armenian leaders, rather than through

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[89] However, Armenians are hardly the least mobilized minority group in Turkey – Roma people in Turkey have also experienced violent persecution, as have Greeks, Jews, and Assyrians. Similarly, in Mexico and El Salvador there are other minority communities not included in the scope of this project.

community-based mobilization. The availability of institutional channels to protect Armenian cultural rights in theory makes the use of extra-institutional mobilization less likely. Yet Lausanne protections are consistently stymied by controls on Armenian schools and the resources needed to run those schools effectively. This section examines how Armenian and state memories of 1915 stand in opposition to each other and generate widely different narratives about the minority rights in Turkey.

In what follows, I first contextualized the historical violence against Armenians in Turkey. Using language rights as a benchmark of cultural accommodation, I explore the politics of language for this community, based primarily on interview data collected over three periods of fieldwork from 2009-2011. I document the private narrative operating within the Armenian community and its sympathizers, where memories of 1915 are used to facilitate rights claims. Importantly, this private narrative is largely censored from the public arena, both by the state and by Armenians themselves, and activists do not use it to push a cultural rights agenda. I address low mobilization of Armenians in Istanbul by examining accommodation patterns and their repercussions, and conclude with a summary of both the Kurdish and Armenian case study findings.

Remembering violence against Armenians: In the final years of the Ottoman Empire and amid the chaos of World War I, the Ottoman regime intentionally killed Armenians through forced migration and assassination. Though the death toll is highly contested, scholars commonly estimate that roughly 600,000-1,500,000 Armenians were killed in the deportations and

massacres from 1915 to 1922.[90] The Turkish government, in contrast, contends there were

between 300,000-600,000 casualties.[91] While exact figures are still up for interpretation, the

events of 1915 have left an indelible mark on the Turkish and Armenian psyche.

Figure 35: Area where most of the Armenian massacres took place. From http://freeforumzone.leonardo.it/lofi/NEWS-ABOUT-BENEDICT-/D354494-123.html.

Genocide, though perhaps the most accurate description of what happened in 1915,[92] is a highly

contested term in Turkey. More commonly, non-Armenians in Turkey use words such as

massacre, deportation, or catastrophe are used in Turkey by non-Armenians (Adak 2009; Neyzi

and Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010: 19, 120). Following many of my interviewees, I employ the

word "catastrophe" in much of this section. As a Turkish academic said to me, 'Catastrophe' also

captures the ongoing catastrophe of denial" (Adak 2009), thus adding a poetic, if tragic, double

entendre.

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[90] In everyday discussion, this time period becomes compressed into just "1915," the year of the largest single genocide, though the whole time period was in fact part of the catastrophe.
[91](Akçam 2006: 4; Suny 1993: 217)
[92]See http://www.genocidescholars.org/about-us/ for the way international scholars apply the term.

Despite widespread agreement in the international community that the events of 1915 met the definitional criteria of a genocide by Ottoman Turks against Armenians living under the Ottoman empire, the memory of this event as a genocide has been repeatedly denied and suppressed by the Turkish state. State officials and the media will sometimes call the events of 1915 the "Armenian rebellion," emphasizing that some Armenians sided with Russia during World War I, when the Ottoman Empire clashed with its near neighbor. So naming an act of violence is to set the terms of relationship between parties – rebellions connote justification for perpetrators using violence to deal with "rebels" whereas genocide recognizes an unwarranted attack. The rigid divergence in the naming of what took place in 1915 alone highlight some of the potential roadblocks in an effective narrative of 1915 being used by Armenians to assert their cultural rights in Turkey. Though Armenians call 1915 a genocide, they have been denied this term in Turkey, where the state silences genocide narratives and continues to refer to 1915 as a rebellion.

While 1915 is the central historical moment of violence that Armenians reference in contemporary narratives, other incidents of violence have also become rallying points. Similar to the impact of the civil war of the 1980s and 1990s on Dersim,[93] whose residents were already dealing with the memory of 1938, many Armenians interpreted the 2007 assassination of Armenian journalist and public intellectual Hrant Dink as a painful reminder that Armenians should assimilate to avoid being targeted.[94] At the same time, acts of solidarity by ethnic Turks at Dink's funeral reinforced the feeling that Armenians should demand their rights as citizens of

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[93] To be clear, the civil war affected many Kurdish communities in the southeast, but I focus on Dersim as one particular case study.

[94] The looting of Greek and Armenian shops on September 6-7th 1955, by gangs sponsored by the Turkish Secret Service, was another incident of ethnically targeted violence that promoted the idea of assimilation as a means of security for Istanbul's Armenians, but is outside the scope of this project.

Turkey. The democratization process has created new expectations for citizens of Turkey, and though Armenians have been reluctant to claim these new rights, many other Turkish and minority activists have used symbolic moments like Dink's funeral to make their claims. In fact, the major exception to the low mobilization of Armenians occurred in the aftermath of the assassination of Dink, when tens of thousands of people – some estimate 100,000– filled the streets of Istanbul for Dink's funeral holding signs that said "we are all Armenians" and "we are all Hrant Dink."

Figure 36: An Istanbul intersection during the march after Dink's funeral. From
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Dinkfuneral3.jpg.

Dink's funeral is often cited as a transformative moment in Armenian-Turkish relations in the country, and as a moment that encouraged Armenians to speak more boldly about 1915 (Neyzi and Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010: 19). In fact, many of these protesters were not Armenians but ethnic Turks who were appalled at the murder and who wanted to voice their dissent with the state's approach to Armenian citizens. The presence of so many Turks offering solidarity with an Armenian grievance allowed Armenians to more safely raise their voices in protest of state behavior.

While prior to Dink's assassination this discrimination fomented private narratives within the community, his funeral is cited as a turning point where people began publicly to articulate Armenian memory. Yet even as Dink's funeral demonstrates a mobilizing moment for

Armenians and their solidarity networks, it was an isolated event that modestly facilitated engagement with the state about respect for the Armenian minority. Importantly, the funeral mobilization inspired personal commitments to action in some Armenian intellectuals, several of whom told me they were unsure of how Turkish society would respond if they had spoken out before the assassination. This incident also exemplifies the way emotions can facilitate the transition of memories from private to public narratives.

Aris Nalcı, a journalist at the Armenian and Turkish language newspaper *Agos*, described how this turning point affected him personally: "I lost my fear in 2007. If I speak I can be killed, if I don't speak, I can be killed, so why not speak?" (Nalcı 2010). While Nalcı decided to speak in spite of the threat of violence for being visibly Armenian, many other Armenians perpetuate silence in the hope to avoid drawing attention to themselves. Some Armenians choose to risk the consequences of shaming and claiming, but others do not. Many Armenian youths and thirty-somethings, including Nalcı, have been incorporated into Turkish society through Turkish-language media and culture, and feel able to speak out as citizens in Turkey. As Rober Koptaş, the Executive Editor at Agos told me, "It is normal to be Turkish, Armenian, or Kurdish all at the same time. These labels are just one of our identities" (Koptaş 2010). However, for elderly Armenians who still remember parents or grandparents dying in 1915, the benefit of pushing a public narrative about 1915 is less compelling. For many of the older generation, Dink's assassination only proved the danger in speaking out. This intergeneration divide mimics the divide seen between older and younger Kurds, where the generation closer to the remembered violence is less willing to address it, while younger generations are more willing to employ violence-based narratives as mobilization strategies.

In general, the continued persecution of members of the Armenian community has reinforced the notion that it is better to blend into Turkish society than it is to stand out as Armenian. Paylan summarized this sentiment, saying, "We've lost so many things as an Armenian community. We saw that if you participate you will be in trouble, like Hrant Dink, but if we don't participate we will lose the things we have – the schools and foundations – we would only have the Patriarchate left" (Paylan 2011). Paylan echoes Nalcı's statement that he could be killed whether he spoke or remained silent As the Patriarchate does not contest the limitations put in place by the Turkish government, such aquiescence is unacceptable for Armenians who want to perform the kind of effective citizenship I discuss in Chapter 2.

Nalcı, Koptaş, and Paylan represent the new youthful, educated, professional approach to Armenian cultural rights mobilization, and they are positioned to foment discourse about these rights within the Armenian community through their positions at Agos.[95] However, Nalcı's readiness to speak out does not represent the majority attitude, which is geared towards representing the interests of mainstream Armenian businessmen and the conservative Patriarchate. Nalcı's commitment to use his voice as an Armenian and Turkish citizen is part of the small wave of Armenian mobilization happening in Istanbul, along with others who participated in the 2007 demonstration.[96] Yet these mobilizations, though significant, are still low compared to the sustained and vocal mobilizations of the Tzotzil, Triqui and Kurdish case studies in this project.

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[95] Nalcı has since left Agos since our interview in 2010. Since this writing, he works at Radikal, a leftist daily newspaper, does political analysis for International Media TV, and produces GAMURÇ, a show on minorities in Turkey.

[96] Armenian youth have taken part in the summer 2013 Gezi Park uprising in Istanbul, but the use of these protests as a forum for explicitly Armenian cultural rights claims is not yet clear, The Gezi uprising does highlight Alevi unrest in Turkey, however, with the worst violence taking place in Alevi neighborhoods and so far, all of the protestors killed have been Alevis (Kemal Cengiz 2013).

Armenians in Theoretical Context

"Only if you accept assimilation are you allowed to be a citizen, but minorities want to be accepted as citizens with their own identities. We need to create a new 'we.'"
(Rezan Sarişen 2010, NGO worker, Istanbul)

"Europeans learn multiple languages; why can't we?"
(Garo Paylan 2011, Board Member of Armenian Foundation School)

Because Armenians in Turkey have not overtly challenged state repression around remembering the events of 1915, they have produced a low degree of public narrative about 1915. In combination with certain degrees of political, economic, and cultural state accommodation, this low public narrative production has subdued Armenian rights mobilizations. In other words, Armenians in Turkey have been too reluctant to assert their right to remember 1915 in public, and they have become somewhat comfortably included in the Turkish political and economic apparatus. These factors, in addition to the institutionalization of Armenian cultural rights in Turkey under the Treaty of Lausanne, have led to the community's low mobilization.
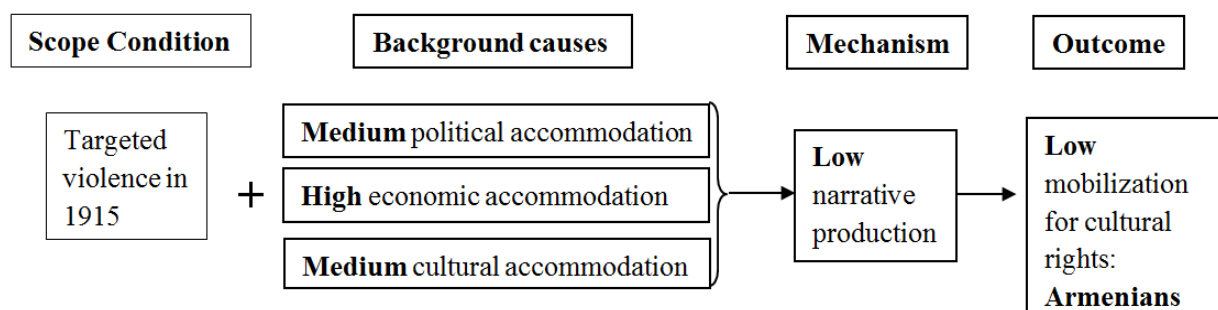
Figure 37: Components of theory explaining Armenian mobilization.

To summarize the figure, medium political accommodation, high economic accommodation, and medium cultural accommodation combine with potent memories of the 1915 Catastrophe, but Turkish state denial, among other factors, prevents a strong public narrative from forming, leading to low mobilization for cultural rights.

Narrative as a contentious memory mechanism: State denial of Armenian narratives about 1915 plays an important role in explaining why Armenians have struggled to capitalize on memories of the genocide as a source of inspiration for political mobilization. One person in Istanbul told me, "the fact that history is not discussed has made the official ideology very hegemonic" (Anonymous 2009). Because official state memory denies that Armenians were deliberately persecuted in 1915, this casts Armenian memory, and consequently Armenian identity, in a skeptical light. The international community generally remains sympathetic to the Armenian version of historical events, however, and the Armenian diaspora has lobbied hard for an apology and achieved a degree of recognition from governments of countries such as the United States and France.

Domestically, however, Armenians face the problem that their memories are erased by "official" history. Like other minorities, Armenians do not see positive mention of themselves in school textbooks, for example, which serve a major function in forming young citizens (Rezan Sarişen 2009; Rezan Sarişen 2010). Consequentially, explained scholar and public intellectual Murat Belge, "as time passed, fewer and fewer people even knew enough to challenge the state version of history" (Belge 2009). The withering of accurate historical knowledge in the public sphere undermines the sense of self that is necessary to drive narratives forward and channel them into politicized behavior. Loss of historical knowledge also furthers the divide between

Armenians and Turks. For Armenians, "identity is constituted around remembering, while Turkish identity is constituted around forgetting, so there is a big disconnect between the two identities" (Anonymous 2009). The alienation of Armenians in this process further inhibits their incorporation into a democratizing citizenry *as* ethnic Armenians.

Yet such identity hegemony, the erasure of one identity by another, need not always be the case. Rober Haddeciyan, the editor of one of the two Armenian-language-only newspapers, decried the stalemate between accommodation and silence, saying "there should be no contradiction between being a good Armenian and a good Turkish citizen" (Haddeciyan 2010). In his office filled with dark furniture and piles of old newspaper copies, Haddeciyan implied that both identities can profit from economic prosperity and mutual acceptance. Haddeciyan calls for promotion of dual identity as a way to combat forgetting without losing one's place in Turkish society, but the state is not yet on board with this agenda.

The state's negation of Armenian history has diminished activists' use of public narrative about 1915 as a mobilization tool, but it has not repressed Armenian memory in general. One interviewee, in an activist-geared café near Istanbul's Armenian neighborhood, told me: "even if individuals forget, the collective memory will keep these issues going. Forgetting has far greater implications than individual memories" (Anonymous 2009). While on one hand individuals make up the remembering community and therefore must play a role in memory-keeping, the activist's statement points toward the truth that memories form their own momentum, and though individuals may let them lie dormant, there are anniversaries, slogans, photographs, and documents that sometimes do the remembering for us. In this way, the "community" writ large can become an alternative bearer of history to the individual. This indicates the importance of memory sites like traditional archives including new spaces for historical knowledge, something

that has been a real challenge in Turkey. The dominant approach to history used to be, according to Sabanci Univeristy Professor of literature Hülya Adak, "'if it's not in the archives, it didn't happen.' We have to redefine where we look for history and what sources we should use" (Adak 2009). New spaces of historical knowledge are being created in Turkey all the time. For example, in the "I'm sorry" apology campaign of 2009, prominent Turkish and Kurdish intellectuals signed an online statement apologizing to Armenians for the 1915 Catastrophe and associated suffering, thereby challenging the state's denial (Gellman 2012a). In addition, in 2005, an academic conference on the events 1915 took place that brought together an array of social scientists and historians to discuss the effect of 1915 and ethnic pluralism on Turkey's democratization (Gellman 2012a). These alternative sites of historical memory show that Armenian memories of violence and agendas for their potential uses in cultural rights movements are evolving.

Arguably, it is critical for Turkey to accept these new spaces for historical knowledge as the state claims it is a consolidated democracy and tries to enter the European Union.[97] Yet the memory of 1915 and denial of these memories by the state have had major repercussions for the process of citizen development. "Memory shouldn't inhibit modern development of the national state, but sometimes it does," scholar Ahmet Evin told me as we sat in his starkly modern office in the Istanbul Policy Center of Sabanci University (Evin 2009). Regarding the Armenian catastrophe, memory inhibits the full incorporation of Armenians as citizens with legitimate rights to their distinct ethnic identities. Only by remaining silent about the memory of 1915 can Armenians integrate into Turkish society, and the cost for not doing so is high. Though I don't

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[97] Even though Turkey's bid for EU membership has been controversial, with different leaders showing varying degrees of enthusiasm, there is no doubt that the membership application process has contributed to more discussion on human rights, and specifically minority rights in Turkey.

address the Armenian diaspora in this project, to some extent the silence-and-integrate paradigm

explains why Armenians outside of Turkey are able to be so vocal about their demands for

recognition of the genocide – they don't have to pay the cost of living in Turkey. On the other

side of the spectrum, an interviewee in Leyla Neyzi's oral history project shares that "[t]hose

who have to live with it [an exclusive structure] become conservative, fearful" (Neyzi and

Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010: 29). The toll of denial on the Armenian community in Turkey is

high: "You have to prove your own death every day – your whole mission of living is proving

your death" (Adak 2009). Not all are willing to pay such a cost. Yet the focus such narrative

produces could, with institutional channels to claim-making, facilitate a highly mobilized group

of citizens. With the rhetoric of denial maintained by the state, however, institutional channels

are unavailable, and thus memory contributes to the isolation of the Armenian community.

Private narrative serves as a powerful channel of cultural continuity, but there must be a larger

audience for cultural rights claim-making.

Political and economic accommodation: The Armenian community's engagement with identity

politics and the "the right to have rights" (Arendt [1951] 1968: 177) has changed in the face of

Turkey's democratization process. Kurds as well as Armenians have found the European Union

membership process to create greater space for minority rights claim-making in Turkey (Gellman

2012a). Democratization offers the promise of genuine pluralism, but legal and institutional

provisions for minority rights are still inhibited by myriad factors, including state rhetoric and

cultural adherence to Turkification policies. Another complexity of the democratization process

is how negotiations for cultural rights take place, and who is entitled to leadership roles within

minority communities themselves. This is clearly a problem among Kurds, where the PKK has

long dominated the visible ideological leadership. The Armenian community, too, faces its own dilemmas of internal accountability.

The question of who has the power to speak on behalf of a community has long been of interest to social movements research (McAdam 1982: 47-48). Each case study in this project presents a different matrix of actors and spokespeople who are empowered to make rights claims on behalf of minority groups. Depending on the qualities of the actor, in-group leaders or rooted cosmopolitanists can foster or inhibit political mobilization. For Armenians in Istanbul, there are rigid controls on who has been traditionally allowed to speak on behalf of the community. The most influential actors in the community are the Patriarchate, as the voice of the religious community, and donors from the upper class who give money to the church. Referring to this problem, a journalist at Agos told me, "there are hierarchical, traditional, feudal relationships that inhibit political participation or new action on behalf of the community" (Koptaş 2010). In this light, it is not only Turkey's democratization that needs to take place, but democratization within the Armenian community as well. The role of religious leadership in this instance should not be underestimated. Aris Nalcı of Agos[98] told me bluntly:

> Religion is a big political actor [organizer] in the Armenian community. *If people have something to say to the Turkish government, they go through the Patriarchate.* The Patriarchate has been the channel for the older generation to petition government, but the younger generation is using different organizations[like Agos, Nor Zartonk, etc]. (Nalcı 2010, emphasis mine)

Neither the Patriachate nor wealthy elites are particularly consultative with the wider Armenian community, especially young Armenians. Newer actors like the staff at Agos, the only bilingual

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[98] Nalcı has since left *Agos*.

Armenian and Turkish newspaper, capture younger readers, while Jamanak and the Marmara

Daily, which only publish in Armenian, are restricted to an older generation of readers.[99]

Agos takes its role seriously and recognizes its obligation to serve as a catalyst to

democratize by creating new spaces for dialogue (Koptaş 2010). Shaking the social hierarchy is

not easy to do, however, and there exists both resistance and fear among older Armenians, made

all the more evident in the wake of Hrant Dink's assassination. Nalcı offers a thumbnail sketch

of how different generations of Armenians navigate their identity in relation to the catastrophe

and their connection to Turkey:

> Since the genocide, the first generation is afraid to talk, the second generation
> didn't want to talk because they hate Turkey, the third generation forgets Turkey
> and becomes the diaspora, and the fourth generation is starting to think about
> memory, culture *–it is this fourth generation that has started to communicate with
> Turkish people.* (Nalcı 2010, emphasis mine)

Nalcı and his colleagues at Agos use a media platform to capitalize on the energy of this

"fourth generation" and channel it into advocacy for dialogue and democratic relationships with

the Turkish state. They serve as the community's internal democratizers, pushing new voices

into the public sphere. Rober Koptaş, Executive Editor of Agos shared his reflections with me

about the role of his newspaper:

> *Agos is challenging the passive stance that most people in the community prefer.*
> Regarding Hrant Dink, his assassination proved for the older generation that their
> way of thinking was right, [namely that] the state is incapable of giving rights to
> non-Muslims, and it is dangerous to advocate for them. (Koptaş 2010, emphasis
> mine)

In the face of a skeptical older generation of Armenians, Koptaş and Nalcı represent the new

wave of authority-challenging, younger Armenians who claim their Armenian identity even as

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[99]When asked about the effect on his circulation of the dwindling number of Armenian-fluent readers in Istanbul,
the founder of the Marmara Daily quipped that "every time an Armenian person dies, we lose a reader" (Haddeciyan
2010).

they also demand the rights of active citizenship within Turkey. Over the din of clacking printers

and computers in the press room next door, Koptaş waxed optimistic in our interview, saying,

"we can change our society and then the state. We are Turkish citizens and we have rights as

such" (Koptaş 2010). Though the readership of Agos is small, it nonetheless serves as a powerful

platform from which to advocate simultaneously for Armenian identity and participation in the

Turkish polity.

Next door to Agos, the Hrant Dink Foundation shares office space and members with Nor

Zartonk, a youth-driven NGO staffed by young Armenian social change activists who put on

conferences covering a range of topics such as the EU application process, the environment, and

issues of concern to the Armenian community they survey (Tekir 2010). Over a cramped desk

overflowing with newspaper clippings and Armenian language books, Sayat Tekir spoke with

me in a messy mix of Turkish and English about his identity as an Armenian and as a democracy

activist. Echoing many of the Kurdish youth mobilizing for cultural rights in Dersim, Tekir

reflects how fear around memories of 1915 have paralyzed the older generation of Armenians

while catalyzing the younger one. "My mother and father say, 'don't go out, don't speak.' Their

parents told them the same thing because their grandparents died in 1915 so they are afraid. They

want us to also be quiet but at the same time they are proud" (Tekir 2010). Thus, in both Kurdish

and Armenian cases, a generational divide influences how narratives of historic violence are

used. The effective citizenship claimed by Tekir, Nalcı, and others through their outspoken

writing and conferences contrasts with the external silence of previous generations of Armenians

who chose to seek safety by insulating themselves within the Armenian community. Though this

older generation may believe in the legitimacy of their grievances, the fear of violent

repercussions for pushing a cultural rights agenda diminishes their visibility and that of their

narrative at the same time.[100]

Low political accommodation of Armenians is evident in the lack of political

representation that excludes their voices in institutions such as Parliament, the army, and the

state apparatus. A Turkish academic who has been involved in the solidarity movement with

Armenians put it this way:

> When faced with people who deny unfair treatment of minorities in Turkey, ask:
> How many non-Muslim officers are in the army? Zero. How many non-Muslim
> deputies are there in Parliament? Maybe one. How many non-Muslim state
> officers are there? A few. Non-Muslims don't have representation! (Keskin 2009)

During the Ottoman Empire and earlier years of the Turkish state, capital taxes were used

to financially dominate Armenians and other minority business owners. Yet today Armenians

experience the highest economic accommodation of all the cases in this project, as many

Armenians are members of the middle and business classes and nearly all Armenians in Turkey

are based in Istanbul, the country's economic, though not political, capital. Economic integration

diminishes the impetus for Armenian mobilization to some extent because it lessens material

grievances that social movements often mobilized alongside narratives of violence. Despite a

history of discriminatory economic practices such as additional state taxes for minorities,

Armenian community members do not want to lose the economic status they have gained. This

economic inclusion of Armenians in Turkey contributes to the lack of public narrative developed

around Armenian grievances. Though this factor does not determine the degree of mobilization,

as the only case in the project that experiences high economic inclusion it is worth noting its

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[100] Recent targeted attacks on older Armenians in Istanbul have exploited this fear by the older generation. See Nalcı 2013, at http://www.armenianweekly.com/2013/02/01/behind-the-police-lines-attacks-against-armenians-in-samatya/.

significance, as in all other cases there is little risk of non-mobilization due to economic well-being. As a counterfactual, we can consider that if Armenians were not so economically integrated, they would have less to lose materially in making public the potent private narratives of 1915. Yet even though high economic accommodation impedes the translation of internal narratives about 1915 into public claims on the state, private narratives still exist.

In sum, in this section, I have highlighted the role of Armenian media and NGOs in facilitating space for new actors in Turkey's democratization process. I have also identified a generational divide in Armenian attitudes, paralleling that of Kurds in Dersim, towards using memories of violence as tools to catalyze cultural rights claims. While certainly a force to be acknowledged, the young, multilingual subgroup of Armenians in Turkey represented by the staff at Agos and Nor Zartonk do not have sufficient political power to reach a higher level of mobilization for cultural rights. Indeed, much of the young Armenians' success in organizing is based on their willingness to use Turkish as the language of communication, recognizing its greater communicative potential than Armenian, which more and more becomes the language of a dying generation.[101] Having just discussed the relationship between democratization and identity for Armenians in Turkey, the following section assesses the status of Armenian language politics and presents an argument for why language matters for cultural rights in this case.

Cultural accommodation for Armenians: As in the other cases, the status of minority language rights serves as a powerful signifier of state commitment to democratic multiculturalism. Less contentious than Kurdish language rights, the right to language is still a pressing issue for

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[101] There is an interesting parallel to the Kurdish case here, in that Turkish was the language of instruction even in such bastions of Kurdish cultural pride as the PKK training camps until fairly recently.

Armenian cultural survival in Turkey. The Treaty of Lausanne, signed by Turkey as a concession to the Allies after defeat in World War I, grants special cultural rights for Armenians, as well as for Greeks and Jews, an ostensibly progressive measure of accommodation. Turkey has used the Lausanne protections to grant to these three minorities only, thus excluding myriad other minorities in the country. In practice, the Treaty of Lausanne provides only modest cultural rights protections, particularly in the face of so-called Turkification policies. Constitutional provisions for citizen homogenization and policies in institutions such as the Ministry of Education, effectively minimize the already limited power that Lausanne rights could offer Armenians.

One Treaty of Lausanne provision is the right to educate Armenian children in their own language. What this means in practice is that Armenians are *allowed* to create Armenian-language schools governed by foundations that collect money from the community to fund all school expenses. The Turkish government, in return for its generosity, is not *required* to fiscally support Armenian schools. The Turkish Ministry of Education has the right to monitor the schools, however, and does so by requiring that the vice principal of all "foundation schools," as they are known, must be an ethnic Turk. In practice, Turkish teachers working at Armenian schools submit work reports to the Turkish vice principal while Armenian teachers give their reports to the Armenian principal. This rather "big brother" arrangement of monitoring Armenians within their own self-funded schools is even recognized as an imposition by some in the Turkish government. When school board member Garo Paylan pressed an official about the need for this practice, he was told "'*if we give you more rights, we would have to give some to the Kurds*'" (Paylan 2011, emphasis mine). In an attempt to soften the insult of this control mechanism, "nowadays the government sends liberal Turks as vice principals to our schools so

they don't make so many problems" (Paylan 2011). In effect, rights provision granted to any minority in Turkey creates a slippery slope where any group, especially Kurds, could demand the same treatment. But the Turkish government also has the Treaty of Lausanne as a legal reason they can continue unequal treatment of minority citizens – Armenians are granted protections, but Kurds are not.

The reported statement by the official above comparing Armenians and Kurds provides insight into the thinking of the state regarding minority language rights policies. All minority rights represent a threat to the state policy of ethnic Turk domination and unification, but Kurds represent the biggest threat because they are the largest minority group and the one that has voiced demands for independence. Armenians do not pose a threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey the way Kurds do, but the government fears that granting more rights to Armenians and not to other minorities will stoke resentment and accusations of discrimination. In light of this constraint, Armenian cultural rights activists continue to work for greater rights within the boundaries of Treaty of Lausanne privileges, of which the foundation schools are the keystone.

The operation of Armenian foundation schools can be confusing to outsiders because their exact relationship to the Turkish Ministry of Education and hence their degree of autonomy is complicated. In an interview, Minority Rights International expert Nurcan Kaya explained that major challenges to Armenian-language education come from lack of learning materials, lack of qualified teachers, and lack of money, as schools only receive funds from their own foundations (Kaya 2011). Because Armenian schools must get Ministry of Education approval for all Armenian-language textbooks they want to develop, this drastically extends the timeline and cost to get new school materials. Texts must be translated into Turkish and are then subject to long

waiting times as the Ministry intentionally delays permitting new Armenian language publications to be used (Paylan 2011).

In addition, there is a lack of new teachers capable of teaching subjects in Armenian because Turkish universities have never provided subject-specific training in the language (Paylan 2011). While bringing teachers from Armenia to Turkey has been suggested as a solution to this teacher shortage, eastern and western Armenian are quite distinct – Paylan estimates they are only about sixty percent the same, and thus the dialect difference poses a formidable obstacle for bringing teachers to Turkey who are actually fluent in both the language spoken there and the subject matter (Paylan 2011). The lack of high quality Armenian language textbooks and teachers is an increasing concern for families. Many middle and upper class Armenian parents are now opting to send their children to French or English-language based private schools instead. This creates a whole new challenge for the survival of the Armenian language in Turkey. "We have to find a way to teach Armenian to better compete with private schools. Armenian textbooks have to be better than English materials. I am explaining to parents that kids can learn more than two languages, [but parents aren't sure]" (Paylan 2011). Thus, Armenian children end up going to school in English and speaking Turkish on the street, and Armenian becomes relegated to the language of their grandparents. Paylan is well aware of this problem:

> Of course there are problems with the textbooks, but *the biggest problem is that we can't make kids speak Armenian in social life*. Ninety percent of kids come to school not speaking any Armenian, thirty percent of these might know a little, and ten percent come to school only speaking Armenian, but then they see other kids speaking in Turkish, socializing in Turkish (Paylan 2011, emphasis mine).

While theoretically, students' immersion in Armenian should make them fluent in the language by the time they graduate, this is generally not the case. Even a committed Armenian activist like

Nalcı said that despite going to Armenian schools his whole life, it wasn't until he began

working at Agos and had to write articles in Armenian that he actually became fluent in the

language. As Armenian schools face myriad obstacles, and as Armenian children feel the pull of

assimilation into Turkish culture, Armenian language becomes less and less a marker of

Armenian identity. Put differently, Armenian identity itself becomes less visibly disinct from

Turkish identiy as assimilation occurs.

  For example, Armenian school foundation board member Garo Paylan told me, "You call

yourself an Armenian because you feel it, but if you don't speak Armenian, if you don't speak

your language, you lose your identity" (Paylan 2011). Paylan equates ethnic identity with the

ability to communicate in the language of the ethnic group, and this was a theme across

interviews in all six project case studies. The degree to which Armenians in Turkey feel

connected to their identity *as* Armenians is to some extent based on their capacity to speak the

language. For example, in one of Leyla Neyzi's oral history projects, she and her colleague

document the reflections of a young Armenian woman in Istanbul who told them, "'I always

avoided the [Armenian] community because I don't speak Armenian'" (Selin in Neyzi and

Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010: 55). In this quote the way that language serves as a ticket into group

membership is evident. This continuity of Armenian identity therefore seems tenuous as

Armenian schools in Turkey face a host of challenges to provide Armenian-language education.

  With only Lausanne cultural accommodations to protect them, Armenians face the

problem of socialized language loss in Turkey. Reflecting on the current status of Armenian

language transmission through Armenian schools, Paylan opines, "we pretend we are teaching

Armenian, but if you talk to kids they can't even make a full sentence. This is why we have to

accept that Armenian is not a living language"(Paylan 2011). As the population of Armenians in

Turkey dwindles, the relevance of speaking the language in the social life of youth has also decreased. Paylan woefully relates that "parents say, 'good morning' in Armenian, but they don't have enough of the language to answer their kids' questions in it" (Paylan 2011). Armenians' ability to keep their language 'alive' by using it in daily life, particularly the home, the traditional location of mother tongue transmission, is slipping.

Culture can be maintained in other ways, but the loss of Armenian as a mother tongue strikes at the core of Armenian identity, and the up-and-coming intellectual class of Armenians like Paylan and the Agos staff are searching for ways to encourage spoken and written Armenian. Paylan told me, *"we have to see Armenian as a foreign language to teach. This is something teachers don't want to accept. In my childhood it wasn't like this; we spoke Armenian everywhere"* (Paylan 2011, emphasis mine). There is the possibility that the promise of an identity achieved through one's mother tongue will appeal to young Armenians in Turkey who, like Nalcı, come into the language as young adults as they advocate for a whole host of rights along with their own. Paylan's reflections on the Armenian foundation schools highlight the struggle to keep Armenian culture and identity alive as Turkey tries to democratize while maintaining Turkification policies. In sum, the degree to which Armenian narratives of 1915 inform cultural rights mobilization is informed by policies and practices of political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state. For Armenians in Turkey, there has been limited but dynamic leadership by a new generation of cultural rights activists to reshape narratives about the past to better petition for cultural rights, but such mobilization is slow in coming. The state project of forgetting 1915 has diminished activism for cultural rights, in addition to other factors. The Turkish state has accommodated Armenians economically, allowing an Armenian business class to develop in Istanbul, which has facilitated institutionally channeled discourse between

Armenians and Turkish state representatives, undercutting the voices of a more radical youth

contingent. Political organizing is also difficult in Istanbul, a highly monitored and centrally

controlled city,[102] adding an extra obstacle to the new intellectual Armenian generation that is

interesting in redressing cultural rights using memories of 1915. Taken together, these factors

explain why the Armenian community engages in low mobilization for cultural rights in Istanbul.

Conclusion: mother tongue politics at a crossroads

        This chapter has shown how memories of violence and their associated narratives, in

addition to political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state, are useful in explaining

divergent levels of mobilization for cultural rights in both Kurdish and Armenian communities in

Turkey. Kurds have mobilized intensively to claim cultural rights, while Armenians have

mobilized only tentatively. I have argued that memories of violence, and the public narratives

produced about them, exert causal power in explaining levels of mobilization. While Alevi

Kurds in Dersim have found ways to invoke the massacres of 1938 in shaping the narrative and

claim-making process for cultural rights, Armenians in Istanbul are still trying to find a way to

use memories of 1915 to move forward their own claims. Kurds are forcefully trying to shame

the state and claim their rights, while Armenians engage in isolated incidences of shaming and

claiming, rather than sustained campaigns. Even as Kurds herald the victims of 1938 as martyrs

and create powerful narratives about them, Armenians are reluctant to champion their own right

to the memory of 1915 because of vehement state denial of the genocide. Though Armenians

maintain strong internal narratives about the violence of 1915, it has proven exceedingly difficult

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[102] While middle class Armenians have difficulty organizing in the midst of the public eye, Kurds in Istanbul have continually organized there, though mostly in shanty towns outside of the public eye. In this way, the visibility of Armenians as assimilated prosperous citizens may cyclically inhibit the capacity for organizing, while lower class Kurds have not faced these same barriers because they are already more subaltern.

for them to create a public narrative of these events. This chapter has documented how memories of violence, and the public and private narratives around them, play a vital role in the divergent mobilization processes of these two communities.

However, an ability to produce public narratives of violence is itself constrained by structural conditions. This chapter has documented political, economic, and cultural accommodation policies by the Turkish state that have created different pressures for inclusion and exclusion on Kurds and Armenians. The right to speak one's mother tongue has been a potent example of the cultural rights struggle, and I have traced the right to mother tongue education as a specific indicator of cultural accommodation of minorities in Turkey. While Turkey's EU membership application process has encouraged support of minority languages, especially the right to mother tongue education, institutional practices and cultural norms of Turkification are entrenched. Though Kurdish languages have larger speaking populations and a more consistent history of language rights mobilizations than Armenians, state barriers to speaking Kurdish have been much higher than barriers to Armenian because of Treaty of Lausanne protections. The Armenian language, though still spoken, is not experiencing anything akin to the renaissance occurring among both Kurmanji and Zazaki-speaking communities. My research suggests that differences in accommodation patterns are significant for explaining these trends. Though both communities constitute visible minorities within twenty-first century Turkey, they vary greatly in how they perform their citizenship. While Kurds actively use memory to contest the way the Turkish state wants to incorporate them, Armenians have not found space for their narratives in the interest arena and instead are increasingly assimilating.

Overall, both Kurdish and Armenian language use has withered in the face of Turkification policies and practices. Yet each language also has its champions willing to pressure

the state to do right by its supposed commitment to democratization, and by proxy, to pluriculturalism. Turkey may have not yet accepted its own status as a multicultural state, but the international community considers respect for cultural diversity part of good democratic practice, thus leaving Turkey in a bind. To claim democratic status means releasing the myth of ethnic homogeneity the state has clung to since its founding. Such a rhetorical shift may prompt an increase in cultural rights claims, requiring meaningful changes in Ministry of Education policies and constitutional reform. As Turkey's political landscape continues to shift at the close of 2013, state intentions to move forward in the democratization process remain vague.

CHAPTER 5. EL SALVADOR: NEGATING "PUPUSAS"[103] BUT EATING THEM, TOO

> *"Before, indigenous people were seen as folkloric, but we are not.*
> *We are people, and we need our own space."*
> *(Juliana Ama de Chile 2010, former bilingual school director and Nahuat language activist,*
> *Izalco)*

Many people both in and outside of El Salvador do not believe that indigenous people still live in the country. El Salvador, with roughly seven million citizens in a sliver of land the size of Massachusetts, is a much-studied case of civil war, post-conflict reconstruction, and democratization. Yet only recently have scholars begun to acknowledge and address the existence of contemporary originarios,[104] or original, indigenous Salvadorans (DeLugan 2012; Peterson 2006; Tilley 2005) and the dynamics involved in originario participation in democratization processes remains largely undocumented. Even as originarios in El Salvador begin to be written into existence, the reasons why some communities choose to mobilize for cultural rights claim-making while others remain invisible is under-theorized; it is here that I offer my contribution. This chapter links memories of violence to contemporary ethnic minority mobilizations for cultural rights claim-making in a democratizing El Salvador. Viewing memories of violence as a potent force that impacts collective behavior and in turn affects democratization processes, I bring together both agentive and structural explanations for why some originarios mobilize while others do not. An increased understanding of why some

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[103] In an apt summary of the mainstream national discourse, and commenting on the Nahuat origin of the word *pupusa*, the stuffed corn tortilla that is El Salvador's staple meal, a Nahua activist said, "we negate the people who invented pupusas, but we eat them" (Tepas Lapa 2012), thus inspiring the chapter title. See also Tilley 2005: 30-31.

[104] Throughout this chapter I use the term "pueblos originarios," original peoples, or often simply "originarios" to refer to El Salvador's indigenous ethnic minority citizens. This was the preferred term among many ethnic minority activists I spoke with (Pañada and Rafael Latin 2012), though some people also continue to use the term "indigenous" or "indigenous people," along with "native" (Tepas Lapa 2012). There are historically based power relationships bound up in potential terms to label groups of people, and I generally mimicked the word choice that interviewees utilized themselves. "Pueblos originarios" appears the most politically correct at the time of writing, so it is employed here much of the time, though I am aware there are other perspectives.

communities assert their originario identity even as others continue to blend into the dominant

national mestizo[105] identity, will further contribute to knowledge about the politics of

multiculturalism in a democratizing, post-conflict context.[106] The El Salvador cases show that

despite low levels of accommodation by the state, originario communities mobilize for cultural

rights to different degrees, based in part on how they have used powerful narratives of violence.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I outline the main challenges to ethnic minority

rights in El Salvador, touching on problems in Salvadoran originario identification and the state's

fragile democratization process. Second, I examine the case of the Nahua-Pipil[107] people in

Izalco, referred to throughout this paper as Nahua for brevity, as the first of two case studies in

Salvadoran mobilization for cultural rights claim-making. I particularly focus on the effect of the

1932 massacre in community and scholarly narratives about originarios rights. Third, I situate

the Nahua community[108] in theoretical context with special attention to the role of memory in

addition to political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state as factors guiding

mobilization choices. Fourth, I discuss the right to Nahuat language as emblematic of Salvadoran

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[105] Mixed Spanish and indigenous ethnic make-up.

[106] Charles Hale's work on multiculturalism in Guatemala is useful for exploring this topic (Hale 2002), as is his exploration of how identity politics emerged in Latin America (Hale 1997).

[107] There remains much internal discussion with Salvadoran scholars and scholars of El Salvador about the correct terminology for the originario group in Izalco, as any act of naming involves an exercise of power. After consulting myriad sources, I chose to follow the labeling of three Salvadorans prominently involved in cultural rights in the region. They recommended that Nahua-Pipil is the most accurate term for the ethnic group, though Nahuatl-Pipil is also sometimes used (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 241), while Nahuat refers to the language spoken by Nahua people (Lemus 2013; Pineda 2013; Tepas Lapa 2013). Though some academic works use the term Pipil to refer to the ethnic group, this term is linked to colonial legacies of discrimination. For example, Tilley discusses her choice to use the term "Nahua" instead of Pipil (2005: xvii-xviii). Other naming options include DeLugan (2012), who uses Nahuat, with a final "t" to refer to the ethnic group and the language, as this is commonly heard in the local vernacular among Nahua people themselves. Debate on the appropriate terms is ongoing.

[108] I recognize that grouping the diverse population of Izalco residents who identify as Nahua into one "community" that they may or may not feel part of is problematic. However, to achieve a broad comparison of ethnic minority rights mobilizations both within El Salvador and across the other four cases in Mexico and Turkey, I take the liberty of consolidating a range of political behaviors by Nahua people into something that is happening with a "Nahua community." I am aware that such a consolidation of thoughts, opinions, and actions may be concerning to those involved in more micro-level ethnographic work, but I do it with the intention of gaining cross-case insight rather than performing yet another homogenization on an already beleaguered population.

originarios struggles for cultural rights in the twenty-first century. Finally, I present the case of

Lenca originarios in Morazán and similarly place the case in theoretical context, evaluating the

role of memory as well as background causes of political, economic, and cultural

accommodation by the state as a means to explain the predominantly low level of mobilization

for cultural rights claim-making there. As the two largest originario communities in El Salvador,

Nahua and Lenca cultural rights initiatives show that the myth of mestizaje has not in fact made

El Salvador a nation of mestizos. The map below shows the two case study locations.

Figure 38: El Salvador map. Locations of Izalco (at left) and Morazán (at right) indicated by red arrows. From
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/elsalvador.jpg.

Originario rights in El Salvador: Originarios in El Salvador face grave challenges to cultural

continuity and have experienced predominantly low levels of state accommodation in political,

economic, and cultural policies and practices over the past several decades. Nevertheless, some

groups have more visibly embarked on cultural resuscitation projects, government lobbying efforts, and public education projects, while others dwindle to near extinction. Several divergent population estimates exist for originarios in El Salvador. Rough estimates by scholars and activists place the total Nahua, Lenca, Kakawira, and Maya populations of El Salvador at between 500,000-600,000, or nearly ten percent of the total population (DeLugan 2012: 70; Peterson 2006: 172; Tilley 2005: 34, 171). The 2007 Salvadoran census documented 13,319 indigenous people in the country, or only two percent of the total population, though this is a problematic source as both the quality and quantity of questions pertaining to originarios fosters their low figures (Anaya 2013: 4-5). Of the census's two percent documented indigenous citizens, 27 percent identified as "pipil" (Nahua), 15 percent as Lenca, 31 percent as Kakawira, and 27 percent as "other" (Anaya 2013: 4-5). These figures are at odds with demographic information in the international literature, which generally cites the Nahua group as the largest and Kakawira one of the smallest. For example, the Panamerican Health Organization says that of El Salvador's 687,492 indigenous people, 94.4 percent are Nahua, 4.1 percent are Lenca, and 1.5 percent are Kakawira (Organización Panamericana de la Salud 2007: 326). Overall, originarios in El Salvador remain poorly documented by their own government and under-documented in the international community.

If signifiers of indigeneity such as language and dress alone were used to calculate the indigenous population, the numbers of Salvadoran originarios would be even more miniscule, making a strong distinction between El Salvador's performance of indigeneity with that of neighboring communities in Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Honduras. To reach the figure of originarios constituting ten percent of the total population in El Salvador, broader indications of connection to indigenous culture are invoked by activists, for example, the presence of

"cosmovision, orientation to community, connection to place and environment, and traditional medicine" (DeLugan 2012: 70). While some originario activists rely on self-identification in order to be counted, the legacy of racism has made many incentives for people to not auto-identify, and it is possible that false consciousness among originarios who claim mestizo identity drastically reduces the numbers of communities that should in fact be considered indigenous (Peterson 2006: 172). The widespread disappearance of originario dress and language in everyday life challenges us to see beyond conventional signifiers both in identifying originario citizens and also in deigning which aspects of originarios culture should be protected by the state. Nonetheless, as in proceeding chapters on ethnic minorities in Mexico and Turkey, this project follows the story of mother tongue language[109] use as a telling example of state non-accommodation for minorities and traces the connection between memories of violence and mother tongue use as a means of showcasing how memories of violence affect originario rights mobilizations.

El Salvador is the only country of the three in this project that is considered a post-conflict country in the classic sense of the term, meaning a country that has transitioned from a civil war to post-peace accords. In part because of its inclusion in the post-conflict literature, much of the scholarly work in El Salvador focuses on the conflict and its aftermath from a human rights perspective. For example, Cath Collins discusses transitional justice and the role of

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[109]There is debate about the degree to which language rights can be considered political rights. In other cases such as for Kurds in Turkey, language rights are highly political and connected to a host of other political rights demands. In El Salvador, language rights are also political because they demand recognition of originarios as Salvadoran citizens entitled to equal protection. However, Hale includes language rights in the category of "cultural work which, due to its unthreatening character, the dominant bloc allows in the first place" (Hale 2002: 520). While language may be perceived as unthreatening cultural work in some countries, this is not so in the cases for this project, where the Mexican, Turkish, and Salvadoran states have in practice undermined the potential for real bilingual education because it is seen as a threat to their nation-building projects.

the judiciary in El Salvador (Collins 2008), Martinez and Linares discuss the role of the Supreme

Court in facilitating what they term "punitive populism" (Elena and Linares Lejarraga 2011), and

a host of scholars have documented specific challenges for women in the post-conflict era

(Gellman 2010; Hume 2008; Shayne 2004; Theidon 2007; Viterna 2006). El Salvador has also

been a testing ground for conceptions of civil society (McIlwaine 1998), theorization on the role

of NGOs (Thompson 1997), and analysis of the role of media in perpetuating cultures of

violence (Moodie 2006; Moodie 2009). Other authors have explored the role of schools, along

with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to

promote cultures of peace (DeLugan 2012: 25-28).

While drawing on these insights, I approach El Salvador as a case of "successful"

mestizaje discourse that shows the perils of multiculturalism in democratization. The

predominance of mestizaje as a mythical force of political and cultural power in El Salvador is

having a real impact on quotidian rights for people who identify outside the mestizo box.

DeLugan describes mestizaje as the "sub-text for state-led efforts in postwar El Salvador that

represented national society as homogenous and mestizo" (DeLugan 2012: 61). Hale, discussing

Gould's study of indigeneity in Nicaragua, says the "'myth of mestizaje' holds that indigenous

culture is inevitably, almost naturally, destined to disappear, replaced by a hardy and unique

hybrid national culture" (Hale 2002: 500). In this way, mestizaje is "successful" in El Salvador

because many people think originarios *have* already disappeared.

A recent documentary, *Herederos de Cushcatan* (Heirs of Cushcatan), highlights the

problematic success of mestizaje in interviews with young urban Salvadorans. Along with a right

wing politician,[110] these youth deny the existence of indigenous people in the country even as the documentary splices in footage of Lenca rituals, Nahuat-speaking grandmothers, and academics testifying to the presence of Nahua and Lenca communities (Dubón 2011). This rendering of the nation as mestizo-and-ladino-only, without acknowledging unique originario contributions to contemporary political life, poses deep-rooted problems for El Salvador's democratization process, that should in theory enable *all* Salvadorans to access their civil liberties.

For all the focus on its high crime rate and questionable state monopoly on violence, El Salvador has undertaken note-worthy democratization efforts in recent years. In the electoral arena, the change of presidential power from the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) with the election of Mauricio Funes in March 2009 has been seen as a benchmark on the road towards democratic consolidation. Also, the FMLN has considerable power in the National Assembly. In 2009 the party held the majority there, though it was down to thirty-one seats, less than ARENA's thirty-three seats after the 2012 elections. At the same time, in the interest arena,[111] the non-electoral political space where citizens' interests are voiced, progress toward the protection of some of the country's most marginalized citizens remains uneven.[112] For example, the Salvadoran Constitution does not currently recognize or protect originarios, though many other Latin American countries such as Mexico and Guatemala have revised their constitutions to address originarios rights. On April 25, 2012 the National Assembly approved (but has not ratified as of this writing) an additional clause recognizing indigenous persons in the Salvadoran Constitution. However, the proposed

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[110]Gloria Salguero Gross, former President of the National Assembly. See her interview fifteen minutes into the documentary at http://vimeo.com/30330674.
[111] See Collier and Handlin 2009 for theorization of the interest arena.
[112] El Salvador's exceptionally high rate of non-state-sanctioned gang violence does call into question the ability of the state to protect the basic right to life of its citizens. Gang violence in this way is simply one of many factors that illuminate the potential pitfalls of El Salvador's transition to full-fledged democratic status.

changes are not in line with the demands of some originario activists. Some people want the

Constitution to guarantee rights to "pueblos originarios," original *people*, not "*poblaciones*

originarios," original *populations*, as the 2012 draft does, because the conflict in terms can pose

problems when trying to match rights across government documents (Dominguez 2012; Pineda

2012a).

The push for Constitutional revision to grant recognition to originarios comes amidst

multiple projects to put human rights into mainstream politics internationally. Organizations and

individual activists have picked up human rights terms as such language becomes an increasingly

salient tool in facilitating state consideration of citizen demands.[113] El Salvador is by no means

unique in the recent wave of rights-based language utilization—similar terms can be found in the

discourses of Palestinians, Egyptians, Native Americans and Occupy members in the United

States, as well as in Mexico and Turkey. In fact, there are few places around the world where

people do *not* make demands on governments, whether at local, state, national, or international

levels, and do *not* invoke the discourse of rights to support their petitions. Mayra Gómez

comments:

> "[R]ights," because they imply certain social entitlements, have also become
> salient as political tools and rhetorical strategies. At the level of social agency,
> rights claims have become part of the standard language and strategy of many
> modern political and social movements. Rights claims have become so powerful
> in part because they serve to link modern day political and social struggle to a
> more abstract and idealistic philosophy about the "dignity" of the human person.
> (Gómez 2003: 4)

To put it differently, rights discourses are useful to marginalized communities because they

invoke the social contract and remind states of their obligations to the rights petitioners. Not only

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[113] Omar Encarnación has an excellent example of how citizens engage human rights discourse for domestic mobilization in his forthcoming Political Science Quarterly article (2013) on the gay rights movement in Argentina.

are citizens supposed to have their dignity as people, as long as they fulfill their duties to the

state, but the state is also supposed to guarantee minimum rights. The substance of rights toward

indigenous peoples has expanded in recent years as new mandates such as ILO Convention 169

and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have been introduced. In fact,

Gómez sees this expansion of rights as a primary function of the human rights movements,

which fortifies otherwise often insufficient citizens' rights (Gómez 2003: 18). Though human

rights discourses are expanding at the international level and many communities adopt these

discourses locally, El Salvador's history of originario marginalization poses challenges for

institutional reform and the transformation of identity politics into concrete cultural rights.

Part I: Being Nahua in Izalco, El Salvador

All
we were all born half dead in 1932
we survived but half alive
each with a count of thirty thousand full deaths
that they used to fatten up their interests
their revenues
and reaches today to stain the death of those that continue
being born
half dead
half alive
(Roque Dalton 1974, excerpt from his poem "Todos," my translation)[114]

The town of Izalco has approximately 20,000 people and includes a visible originario

community.[115] Along with nearby communities such as Nahuizalco, Pachimalco, and Santo

Domingo de Guzmán, Izalco has a reputation for being a site of ongoing originario identity. In

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[114] Thanks to Maggie Von Vogt for fine-tuning this translation. Excerpt is used without copyright permission as of 8/30/13.
[115] See Tilley for mention of three historic pillars of a visible Indian community: community, *cofradía*, and the People's Mayor (Tilley 2005: 111).

part, this is due to its visible efforts at language resuscitation through community-funded

Spanish-Nahuat bilingual education in the main primary school, and also because of the

existence of an Alcalde del Común, the Peoples' Mayor, who serves as the leader of the

originario community much as the political party-elected Mayor governs the town. These two

institutions —bilingual education and the People's Mayor—which will be discussed further on,

show how Izalco has become more easily identifiable as "indigenous" than other communities,

even if these other communities may continue certain cultural practices without institutionalizing

them.

At first glance to the outsider, Izalco may appear like any other Salvadoran town. Men

and women wear western clothes, speak Spanish, and attend any of the myriad crumbling,

hodgepodge churches that line the roads. But a few originario activists are trying to bring back

the *refajo*,[116] the woven skirts more recognizably worn by Guatemalan women, and several

Nahuat language programs exist that increase access to Nahuat as a second language for

Izalqueños,[117] especially to children. Geographic segregation in the town has been the same for

generations. While fair-skinned mestizos and *ladinos* (also mixed race but connoting colonial

heritage)[118] live in gridded cement blocks and colonial era houses in the area above the central

plaza, the core of the originario community lives far below, across the highway in a tangle of

more rural compounds with chickens and turkeys scurrying about next to outdoor kitchens.

Izalco is a town inhabited by several worlds at once, with ARENA-FMLN graffiti

splashed across walls next to wood-fired *comales,* clay grills, where locals gather to eat

traditionally prepared pupusas before some commute to San Salvador to school or work while

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[116] Explanations for why refajo is no longer used include the fact that it is expensive because it is now imported from Guatemala, not just that there is fear of stigma for wearing it (Ching and Tilley 1998: 125; Peterson 2007: 68).
[117] Residents of Izalco.
[118] See Erquicia Cruz 2011 for a discussion of the term "mestizo" and "ladino" in the Salvadoran context.

others walk to the woods to collect firewood. This is also a town laden with memory—from the central plaza with its memorial to José Feliciano Ama, a local Nahua leader who was instrumental in mobilizing originarios for the 1932 insurrection, to the eco-park built over the town reservoir, symbolizing a tentative compromise over generations of fighting between originarios and ladinos over water rights. As one of El Salvador's few communities consistently recognized in the literature as having some degree of ethnic diversity over time, it also stands as a model center for experimentation in mobilization for originario cultural rights claims in the twenty-first century.

La matanza of 1932: The western region in El Salvador has a long history of originario mobilizations for rights claims, most prominently in the struggle for land rights. In the nineteenth century, land distribution policies embedded intense socioeconomic discrepancies between colonial *criollos*, or Spanish-born people, ladinos, and originarios.[119] Despite a short period of openness in the 1920's, citizens experienced steadily diminishing political space to voice their concerns and petition the government (De Zeeuw 2008: 34). The 1930s brought a sharpening of oligarcharchic behavior amongst political elites as they stepped up the use of military repression to achieve self-serving ends. This included the ousting by military coup of democratically elected President Arturo Araujo in December 1931 who had advocated for land and labor reform (De Zeeuw 2008: 34; Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 90). The military brought to power Vice President General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, who would go on to lead a repressive campaign in the countryside to quash dissent among the peasants. These events occurred in the

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[119] There is detailed discussion of how colonial economic and political relations led El Salvador on a path dependent march towards twentieth century authoritarianism (Mahoney 2001).

context of the global economic recession that began in 1929, eviscerated the coffee industry, and

drove peasants further into poverty (Gómez 2003: 124).

After fraudulent elections in January 1932, peasants in western El Salvador followed

several leaders, including Communist Party of El Salvador (PCS) collaborator Augustín

Farabundo Martí, who acted as the local representative of International Red Aid (SRI),[120] and

José Feliciano Ama, among other indigenous leader in Izalco, into a rebellion against the state

that was suppressed by president Martínez. The suppression of revolt turned into large-scale

assassinations of anyone who appeared to be either indigenous or aligned politically with the left

and with the communists. *La matanza*, or the massacre, left between 10,000 and 30,000 people

killed by the state, and fewer than 100 people killed by the "rebels" (Ching 1998: 206; Lindo-

Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 2; Tilley 2005: 31),[121] leaving a legacy of fear, shame, and

misinformation for future generations. Mayra Gómez characterizes the massacre as genocide

because of its explicit targeting of indigenous victims:

> Individuals who so much as looked as if they belonged to the indigenous Indian
> community, who were found carrying machetes, or who were wearing *campesino*
> dress, were in many cases killed on the spot (HRW 1982, p. 52). In one specific
> case, government firing squads shot dead all of the persons who had Indian
> features, or who were wearing peasant clothes, living in or around the western
> town of Izalco. (Gómez 2003: 101, citing a 1982 Human Rights Watch report, p.
> 52)

In general, local Salvadoran activists tend to favor the term genocide to describe 1932 (Alegría

1987: 20; Herrera 1983: 107), whether for dramatic resonance in the international community or

because for those who lived through it, and their descendants, it felt like an attempted

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[120] See Ching 2013: 295-6 for more about Martí's role in organizing Sonsonate.
[121] See DeLugan 2012: 67; Stanley 1996: 42 or De Zeeuw 2008: 34 for different numbers of victims. One scholar
stated that "Government terrorism in the countryside combined with a 'scorched earth' policy of retaliation claimed
the lives of up to 30,000 peasants, a number which represented nearly 3% of El Salvador's total population at the
time (HRW 1982)" (Cited in Gómez 2003: 101).

extermination. While la matanza itself was genocidal in targeting indigenously identified people, the arguments that have been made about why El Salvador's contemporary originarios population is so small and not mobilized has sometimes relied too heavily on the legacy of 1932. One testimonial[122] writer comments that:

> Indians as a distinct group vanished after 1932: hounded for any vestige of clothing, custom or physical feature that might mark them out as 'savages', they had to shed their distinguishing characteristics in order to survive at all. Names, clothes and habits were changes, native languages and traditions suppressed. (Alegría 1987: 18)

Though originarios probably dropped overt signs of indigeneity at a faster rate after 1932, to characterize 1932 as the direct cause of the loss of indigenous identity in the country is oversimplified. More likely, survival-necessitated assimilation of indigenous people into the myth of mestizaje after 1932[123] made the racial and ethnic divides in El Salvador more opaque to outsiders. This is apparent in the dearth of scholarship on Salvadoran originarios over the years, though happily the trend has been broken with recent works (Ching 2013; DeLugan 2012; Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008; Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007; Peterson 2006; Tilley 2005).

Today, scholars working on Salvadoran history are divided over two interesting lines of inquiry about 1932. The first line of inquiry decreases the amount of importance typically ascribed to 1932 as a direct cause of indigenous assimilation in El Salvador, and the second calls into question the 1932 uprising as a communist-led revolt. The role of 1932 in contemporary mestizaje sheds light on how memories transform over time and contribute to identity construction and consequential identity politics. How 1932 is remembered, whether as an indigenous or communist-driven political mobilization, has far-reaching implications for

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[122] Testimonials are a genre of writing that uses personal narrative often to describe political violence and resistance and such writings give space to voices that often have few other avenues for expression. See Chapter 2 and Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 3.
[123] The events of 1932 have been called a cultural genocide (Alegría 1987: 18).

understanding originarios political behavior. Foremost, omitting the role of originarios in the uprising diminishes their agency as political actors, which in turn minimizes the grievances originarios rose up to address. The various arguments are summarized below.

The first line of scholarship around 1932 and originario politics in El Salvador questions the degree to which the matanza was directly responsible for originario assimilation into mestizo culture. This assimilation is characterized largely by the loss of typical dress and mother tongue usage. Gould and Lauria-Santiago explain that:

> For decades there was a consensus among scholars and activists about the consequences of La Matanza: the killings directly produced the annihilation of indigenous culture by repressing the Nahuatl-Pipil language and indigenous dress. Moreover, a culture of fear and dependence emerged in the western communities, whose principal effect was political passivity. (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 241)

However, this chapter joins the call to rethink the effects of 1932 on language loss among the Nahua by not ascribing *all* cultural loss to the aftermath of the matanza. This intervention comes mostly from historians who have returned to archived government documents and found proof of government protection for indigenous citizens after 1932, albeit in a strategy rife with ulterior motives. Lindo-Fuentes et al. persuasively argue that Martínez defended the rights of indigenous people and campesinos as part of a broad "fascist-style populism" that included them as part of the state-controlled masses (Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 62). Ching extensively documents the way that the government communicated with indigenous people and challenges elite land-owner interests on their behalf following 1932, particularly around wages for coffee plantation works, the majority whom were indigenous (Ching 2013: 287-333). For example, President Martínez sent a message to Izalco's municipal government condemning ladino persecution of indigenous residents there after he heard about the ladino take-over of the town's (traditionally

indigenous-controlled) water reservoir and beatings and incarcerations of indigenous people with no cause (Ching 2013). Ching and Tilley point to the military's complex patterns of tolerance and repression regarding indigenous culture in the country after 1932 to further complicate the story (Ching and Tilley 1998).

There are also examples of government encouragement for indigenous culture in Sonsonate, such as Gould and Lauria-Santiago's finding that after 1932, "not only did the Martínez regime refrain from prohibiting use of the Nahuatl-Pipil language, but at least one National Guard officer actively tried to revive it" (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 253). Martínez's post-1932 regime was certainly coercive and discriminatory as it tried to bring in the working class, much of which was indigenous, into his populist agenda, but this is a different kind of persecution than denial of indigenity. These examples show that the matanza itself was sufficiently traumatic to form a narrative among Salvadoran originarios about the dangers of indigeneity even as the state did not continue a consistent campaign of ethnicity-based violence. Rather, everyday practices of domination and cooptation extended the legacy of 1932 in the collective memory of originario communities.

The loss of indigenous culture is still visible throughout popular media and everyday conversations in El Salvador (Fonseca 2012) as well as in scholarly and policy work (Minority Rights Group International 2013). Gould and Lauria-Santiago counter the prevailing theory that 1932 itself catalyzed cultural loss by arguing that in fact the loss of identity had begun decades before 1932, was partly endogenous, and that in fact it was much later, during the 1970s, that originario communities lost what remained of indigenous language and dress (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 241). These authors look to other time periods and a variety of obstacles to originario lifestyle to justify this alternative explanation for the loss of originarios culture. For

example, they cite Conte, who, writing in the 1930s, describes how in addition to the trauma of the 1932 massacre, indigenous people's loss of land, as well as ladino control of local cultural and political institutions contributed to the erosion of indigenous identity in western El Salvador (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 104). "According to Conte, the language entered a rapid decline in the Jayaque highlands between 1912 and 1930, years of expansion of the coffee industry" implying that indigenous contact with ladinos in the coffee sector contributed to cultural erosion (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 104). Moreover, they cite the role of the church in pre-matanza language loss, saying that the church tried to diminish the use of Nahuatl-Pipil prior to 1932 in ways reminiscent of priests repressing the Lenca language in western Honduras in the late 1800s (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 114).

Though Gould and Lauria-Santiago demonstrate that originario mother tongue usage was decreasing in western El Salvador by the late 1800s (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 104), they also document originario resistance to government attempts at cultural assimilation around the same time. For example, according to a government document from 1913, indigenous parents in Nahuizalco tried to keep their children out of school to avoid contact with ladinos (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 114). Tilley also examines birth registries in Sonsonate and finds that the number of babies registered as indigenous actually goes up after 1932, suggesting that parents continued to assert (or at least not explicitly subvert) their ethnic identities in public spaces (Ching 2013: 321; Tilley 2005, chapter 8). Other archival evidence suggests that castillianization (Spanish language) learning programs by the state, especially in schools, were unwelcome in indigenous communities (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 114). Children would speak Spanish in school but go back to speaking Nahuat after school (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 114).

Post-matanza there lacks an analysis of the link between targeted violence against ethnic minorities and language loss. For example, in 1935, a ladino educator working in Izalco wrote that Nahuat was in decline and that people seemed to want to forget the language and younger people were ashamed to speak it, but he does not mention the events of 1932 as a potential explanation for this behavior (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 255). In fact, Gould and Lauria-Santiago look to the 1960s and 1970s as the more critical time period for originarios cultural loss in El Salvador. As ladinos in positions of power shamed originarios for their cultural practices, originarios began to drop markers of indigeneity that they saw brought them suffering in their daily interactions with ladinos. The 1960s and 1970s generations saw indigenous dress and language as markers of discrimination that they wanted to avoid (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 258-259). For this reason, western clothes were more frequently adopted and, as is the story in so much of the world, originario mother tongue usage declined as parents insisted their children use the dominant language instead. Intense discrimination against originarios in the 1960s and 1970s partly fueled their participation in the guerilla insurgency that challenged the ladino-dominated state control in the 1980s, and is discussed in the Morazán section of this chapter.[124] Though the full debate exceeds the scope of this project, Gould and Lauria-Santiago (2008), as well as Lindo-Fuentes, Ching, and Lara-Martínez (2007) and Ching (2013) serve as jumping off points for scholarly debates about the degree of ethnic targeting before and after 1932.

The second debate this chapter touches on is about what Lindo-Fuentes et al. have termed the "communist causality" argument (Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 7-11). Were communist

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[124] For discussion of *ressentiment* and the way resentment of discriminatory practices fueled indigenous mobilization in El Salvador, see Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 147.

agitators the principle agents behind the uprising that preceded the matanza, or were indigenous people? The work of documenting the misuse of the matanza by actors across the political spectrum is being carried out by The Museum of the Word and the Image (MUPI) in its print and audio-visual publications. MUPI is a leading center for reconstructing and guarding historical memory in El Salvador and has served as a resource for many scholars who work on memories of violence in El Salvador (Consalvi 2010). Gould and Lauria-Santiago, authors of an authoritative work on 1932 and collaborators on past MUPI work, summarize the situation: "For six decades, from the 1930s until the 1990s, the left described the mobilization and rebellion of 1932 in solely class terms and the right described it as a communist manipulation of ignorant rural folk (with ethnic identity unimportant)" (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 285). Ching's work in Soviet archives further shows that while both the left and right have erroneously described 1932 as a communist revolt, in fact, El Salvador's communist party and actors from the then-Soviet Union had minor roles in what was really an uprising from below (Ching 1998: 207-210). Those who mobilized in December 1931 and January 1932 were mostly indigenous people and the rural working class, culturally separate from urban ladino communists in El Salvador and not particularly supported by them (Ching 1998: 207-210). In an attempt to counter the loss of agency by indigenous actors in the historical record of 1932, Ching documents the autonomous organizing capacity of communities like Nahuizalco, a predominantly originario community in the early 1930s through to today, showing that originarios would have been capable and motivated to mobilize in defense of their rights (Ching 1998: 237; Ching 2013: 123-131). Though the historical distortion of 1932 in the collective memory of the country took place by actors across the political spectrum, the result is a blow to more progressive forces in the

country. As originarios were not included as actors in the story of the matanza, they continue to be remembered as passive recipients of other people's agency.

Gould and Lauria-Santiago discuss the problem of memory framing at length as they describe how the government tried to characterize the 1932 massacre through the phrase "They killed the just for the sinners," portraying indigenous people as innocents killed for the sins of the communists rather than being explicitly targeted through genocidal policies (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 238). "'Indigenous innocence' allowed the regime to attempt to forge political links with the survivors despite the atrocities it had committed" in part by circulating pamphlets demonizing communism within indigenous and *campesino*, or peasant communities (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 238). The government reframed memories of 1932 as the result of previous regimes ignoring the needs of the people, which made space for communist ideas, and that communists fooled "poor and ignorant Indians into fighting for something hopeless" (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 238). This manipulation of historical memory pushes the communist causality argument and diminished the potency of 1932 as a source of narrative that could fuel ethnic minority mobilization for claim-making.[125]

One reason why scholars may have overemphasized the role of communists and minimized the role of originarios in 1932 was the reliance on testimonial writing about the life of 1932 survivor and communist party leader Miguel Marmól in recreating the historiography of that time (see Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: Ch. 1). Historians have documented how Marmól's chance meeting with famed Salvadoran poet and communist activist Roque Dalton in Prague, and his subsequent narrating of his life story to Dalton, had a major role shaping

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[125] See Peterson 2007, especially pages 59-66 for more on the communist framing of 1932.

historical understanding of the events.[126] Dalton eventually published Marmól's testimony and it remains one of only a handful of eyewitness accounts of 1932 and therefore a widely cited source. This example shows how memories of violence in the form of testimonial writing like Marmól's and Dalton's are salient for understanding mobilization, even as Marmól's communist lens contributes to a distortion of indigenous agency.

There are plausible reasons for this distortion in the historiography. Ching and Tilley note the difficulties in performing research in a freshly post-war environment, including risks of asking certain kinds of questions and the unavailability of many government documents that had not yet been released to open archives (Ching and Tilley 1998: 123). However, as time goes by, more documents become available, the archives at MUPI grow, and more researchers probe the reality and impact of 1932 to slowly set the record straight. Nonetheless, the potency of old narratives continues. The generation of leftist activists who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s, commonly cite 1932 as the central event in the downward spiral of culture loss (Anonymous 2012b; Dominguez 2012; Galindo 2012).

The work of Gould and Lauria-Santiago, as well as that of Ching, Tilley and DeLugan, give cause to reevaluate the way that the memories of state violence against originarios in 1932 have shaped originario mobilizations for cultural rights claims. Identifying causal relationships between memory and political behavior is not easy. Gould and Lauria-Santiago say:

> We have neither the empirical evidence nor the methodological tools to posit traumatized memories as a key causal explanation of the long term social and cultural transformations wrought by the massacres of 1932. Nevertheless it behooves us intellectually and morally to recognize the probability that the survivors' witness of atrocity and experience of fear did scar them, and that their

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[126] See Ching 2013: 296-298 and Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007, especially chapters 4-6 for more on Dalton and Marmól.

> inability to mourn publicly impeded their ability to heal themselves. (Gould and
> Lauria-Santiago 2008: 245-246)

It is operating on this premise—namely that memories of violence do have long-term social implications, in this case the implication that it is safer to be perceived as non-originario than originario—that I offer my own contribution. The assertion by originarios in El Salvador today that 1932 was at least in part responsible for their loss of cultural practices is part of the discursive renaissance about originarios' right to culture in the twenty-first century, and is evidence of shaming and claiming patterns that are also occurring in Mexico and Turkey. The reframing and reclaiming of memories of this violence are evident as Nahua citizens mobilize to make increasing cultural rights claims on their democratizing state.

Theorizing Izalco

"Memory opens doors to participation because people become conscious of their identity."
(Carlos Henriquez Consalvi 2010, Director, Museum of the Word and the Image, San Salvador)

The Nahua community in Izalco reaches its medium degree of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making through a combination of narrative production about memories of violence and structural factors including political, economic, and cultural accommodation patterns by the state. Elisabeth Wood defines political mobilization as taking place when certain sectors of society try to convince the state to meet their demands (Wood 2008: 543).[127] She reminds us that mobilization is not always an obvious process taking place in the public eye, but may also be a

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[127] Elisabeth Wood's work traces the insurgent path to democracy, emphasizing the role that marginalized but organized people played in catalyzing El Salvador's transition to democracy. The insurgent path she describes consists of three processes: first, political mobilization is a reaction to economic and political marginalization that is not addressed through moderate protest; second, some economic elites decide to come to the bargaining table as a result of political mobilization; and third, insurgents accept watered down economic reforms in exchange for political inclusion (Wood 2001: 864). This conceptualization informs my own description of political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state as important and interrelated background causes of originario mobilization.

covert process, such as the preparations made by insurgents in the lead up to the civil war in El Salvador (Wood 2008: 543). Attempts to get the state to recognize grievances come in many different forms. In Izalco, mobilization has been both institutional, through petitions via letters and in-person meetings between originarios leaders and government officials, and extra-institutional, through protests, for example in front of the National Assembly where demands were made for constitutional revisions to include originarios rights.

As discussed in the preceding section, the distortion of the matanza in the collective memory by actors on both the political left and right has complicated how originarios are able to use 1932 as an instrumental tool in rights claims. The partially successful cooptation of the memory of 1932 by both the state and communist factions has decreased its potency as a narrative of originario agency. Though originario activists now turn back to 1932 to reclaim the memories of those events, its mobilizing potential has been somewhat diminished by the intervening eight decades.

In conjunction with problems in narrative formation and utilization, levels of state accommodation help explain why Nahua people have reached only medium levels of mobilization for cultural rights claims. El Salvador's history as an authoritarian state up until the last decade of the twentieth century makes it evident that political accommodation of originarios, (and anyone else opposed to rightist state control), is low, as they are excluded both from constitutional protections and quotidian political access to state power. Economically, originarios have been exceedingly marginalized in El Salvador and receive decisively low economic accommodation by the state. Culturally, medium state accommodation accounts for passive state acceptance, and no intentional dismantling, of local cultural initiatives. As in the other cases, cultural accommodation stands out as an important explanatory factor in contemporary rights

mobilizations. The mélange of these factors offers insight into why Izalco's Nahua community has moderately mobilized in order to make cultural rights claims. The model below illustrates this argument.
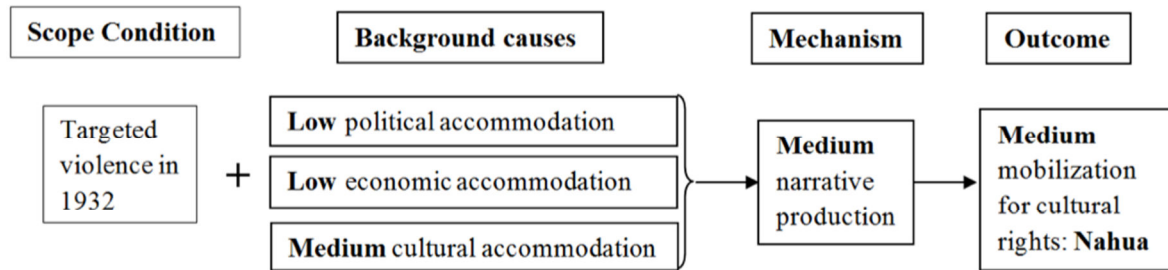
Figure 39: Theory of Nahua mobilization.

Grievances from remembered violence facilitated through the mechanism of narrative production, in combination with low political and economic accommodation and medium cultural accommodation, fosters medium mobilization in the Nahua community.

Highlighting memory: The role of memories of violence, as described previously by Gould and Lauria-Santiago, is particularly challenging when describing originarios' political behavior. As presented in Chapters 1 and 2, memory plays a foundational role in human identity and memories of violence can serve as powerful catalysts of either mobilization or assimilation.[128] In El Salvador, as in Mexico and Turkey, the way originario communities remember and respond to

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[128] Ellen Moodie's work makes an interesting contribution here as she reminds us of the problematic way in which memories of certain kinds of violence such as that of the civil war are more valued than other kinds of violence such as death from traffic accidents brought about by a range of neoliberal economic circumstances (Moodie 2006: 76). Moodie has also challenged us to see how violence sensationalized by the media can be transformed into a catalyst for community mobilization (Moodie 2009). In essence, Moodie's work presents question about how to categorize worthy memories of violence and how to determine who has a right to use tragic memories instrumentally in making rights claims. She also pushes readers to consider the non-ideological violence of the democratizing post-war period on its own terms (Moodie 2010: 3), thereby questioning the monopoly on violent memory that sometimes permeates discussion about both 1932 and the civil war in El Salvador.

events such as 1932 are very different from how the state remembers and responds to the same

events. Education researchers Bush and Salterelli include this anecdote and analysis in a

publication on the role of education and schools in forming citizens after violent conflict:

> As the critical thinker George Santayana put it, 'History is a pack of lies about events that never happened told by people who weren't there.' In other words, 'history' is a process by which certain stories and events are highlighted while others are minimized or ignored. One particular set of facts (or 'lies') is agreed upon tacitly and given social sanction and the political seal of approval. (Bush and Saltarelli 2000: 12)

This scenario rings true in El Salvador, as seen in the debates about 1932 as a cause of cultural

loss, and as communist or indigenous-led action, described above.

The agreed upon narrative of 1932 continues to facilitate the assimilation of some

originarios descendants into the mestizo population, which is seen as a safer identity than being

an originario. I met Juliana Ama de Chile, a leading figure in the Nahuat language resuscitation

efforts in Izalco and descendent of originarios martyr of 1932 Feliciano de Ama, for the first

time in 2010. An articulate woman who tries to encourage others to reclaim their culture by

example, she has worn a traditional refajo each time I saw her, albeit with matching high heels

and blouses. Like every interviewee, Ama's framing of past violence is connected to her family

history, her personal, ethnic, community, and national identity, and her specific agenda in

speaking with me in the first place. As a Nahua cultural activist, Ama has found memories of

1932 useful in making her case for garnering support from MINED, international solidarity

members, and local community members to protect Nahua cultural rights. This is not a criticism

of Ama, but rather one example of how collective memories can be activated instrumentally for

mobilization. Instrumental use of memory does not assume misuse of memory, but rather

underlines the way the memory is integrally part of the discourse about originario rights. Ama reflected:

> The general population still feels a little afraid to talk about who we were before 1932, and who we are now. People in Izalco now don't know their own history. In January 2010, the commemoration of 1932 was attended by more than 400 people, but only 100 or 150 from here. People deny their own history. There are some people who do not want to know their own identity. We need to work in the pueblo so that they accept their history. (Ama de Chile 2010)

Ama de Chile shows how she sees the interrelationship between history, memories of violence, and originario identity in Izalco. New understandings of history emerge as the past is revisited through scholarly and community investigations of the past. As communities like Izalco have struggled to maintain memories if 1932 and their own originario identities, it is not the accuracy of the memories, but the way they are harnessed in contemporary mobilization for cultural rights claims that is of interest here.

Efforts to recuperate memories of violence in El Salvador, spearheaded by MUPI, constitute part of the movement to create "history from below," in the words of MUPI founder and former FMLN militant and radio journalist Carlos Henriquez Consalvi, known by his *nom de guerre*, "Santiago" (Cañada undated: 11). This includes the arduous task of integrating subaltern histories into the national discourse where they become legitimate options for understanding the past, rather than a marginalized subset rendered continually silent (Cañada undated: 11). Organizations like MUPI attempt to create alternatives to state-generated history through educational outreach, school visits to their museum displays, film, literature, and community forums.[129] However, only in the last few years with the change of presidency from ARENA to

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[129] See MUPI's website for a description of all MUPI's activities, as well as Cañada's writings (Cañada undated).

FMLN has MUPI secured MINED support for school fieldtrips to the museum, and growing awareness of this new history from below remains a long-term project.

Of course, remembering historical events is riddled with bias that emphasizes desired perspectives over less desired ones, rendering the entire process of memory subjective (Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 14-15, 18). But there is no denying the strength of such memories—one interviewee commented about her fight to retain her originario identity, saying: "Like the tree, you can take off the branches, the leaves, but the roots you can never take out" (Dominguez 2012). Originario agency may have been diminished in Salvadoran history, but Salvadoran indigeneity persists, albeit in more discrete forms that in other ethnic minority communities. However, the medium levels of mobilization for cultural rights claim-making that occurs in places like Izalco are not the norm—assimilation is *de rigeur* in Salvadoran society, driven in part by a legacy of ethnically targeted violence.

Respondents across dozens of interviews referred to 1932 as a memory of violence that generated fear, which in turn catalyzed assimilation for survival. In light of Gould and Lauria-Santiago's (2008) and Ching's (2013) arguments that 1932 was not actually the turning point for cultural loss among El Salvador's originarios, one must also interrogate the power that the narrative itself holds in silencing marginalized citizens. Even if the narrative may not be true, it still can influence people's behavior. As one group of historians put it, "what people *think* happened in the past can be just as important as what *actually* happened" (Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007: 252, emphasis in original). For example, multiple interviewees perceived Salvadorans in the west of the country as non-participatory in the FMLN because they were

scared about another 1932 (Anonymous 2012b; Galindo 2012; Pineda 2012a).[130] One originario

activist described how, both physically and metaphorically, in 1932 the military cut the tongue of

people so they couldn't speak, and that even now there is fear about speaking out. She recounts,

"I remember a 92-year old woman interviewed by a journalist during the anniversary of 1932

who said, 'yes, I will explain what happened [in 1932], but be quiet' [the interviewee held her

finger to her lips demonstrating what the woman did]. The fear still exists" (Dominguez 2012).

The concern that people could still be persecuted for things that made them a target in 1932

belies the underlying structural challenges in El Salvador's democratization process, where the

memory of state repression lingers. DeLugan has also documented the way that the legacy of

state violence against originarios has different effects across generations, assessing that the

combination of the older generation's fear of continued violence and the younger generation's

shame of their own indigenous identities facilitated the loss of indigenous culture in the post-

1932 period (Ching 2013, chapter 8; DeLugan 2012: 68).

     Long after the immediate repercussions of the matanza occurred, originario communities

kept memories of violence in the community narrative, which translated to fear-driven silence

and assimilation. This stands in marked contrast to cases like the responses of Kurds in Turkey

and Tzotzils in Mexico to their own legacies of state-perpetrated violence, where memories

served as instrumental tools to make increased rights claims. The Nahua case is more akin to

Armenians in Turkey where long-term distortion of the community's narrative of violence by the

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[130] This parallels a trend I heard in my interviews in Dersim, Turkey, where Kurds were cautioned to not be overly critical or demanding of the state because they didn't want "another 1938," or large-scale massacre of Kurds by the military.

state also facilitated silence and cultural assimilation, though recently people are reclaiming their

ethnic identities as a platform to shame the state and claim their rights.[131]

I have focused on the role of memory as a rich source of material forming collective

narratives that can be rallied around as communities make cultural rights claims. In the following

section, I argue that the degree of mobilization for claim-making is determined by this narrative

production in combination with the degrees of political, economic, and state accommodation

originarios experience from the state.

State Accommodation for Nahua originarios

> *"I have heard, including from people who work for human rights in this country, that here there are no indigenous people." (Pineda 2012a, Coordinator of Pueblos Indígenas, Secretary of Culture, Government of El Salvador)*

> *"In the El Salvadoran Constitution it says that the government should preserve culture, but it is open to interpretation as to what culture consists of." (Parras 2010, teacher at bilingual Spanish-Nahuat school, Izalco)*

Originarios in Izalco are not well accommodated by their state. Ongoing denial of their

very existence makes access to political, economic, or cultural concessions particularly difficult

for originarios. The interrelatedness of these three types of accommodation means that an

increase in any one type could threaten the entrenched system of privileged heirarchy in the

country. Overall, state accommodation of originarios has been continually low in Izalco over

time, and the memories of state violence against originarios there fuses with these

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[131] The closing of Monsignor Romero's legacy institution, Tutela Legal, in October 2013 by El Salvador's current Archbishop is the most recent platform for shaming the state and claiming rights in El Salvador, though the resonance of Tutela with indigenous communities is not yet clear as of this writing. Tutela's office holds all the archives cases of human rights violations from the war and its forced shut-down is causing major concern in the scholarly and human rights community in El Salvador and internationally.

accommodations to create narratives that encourage ongoing submission to the status quo of mestizaje. Yet the tide is shifting as El Salvador's authoritarian legacy unravels in the post-war democratization process. This section describes the state's levels of accommodation toward Nahua originarios in the political, economic, and cultural realms, and assesses the way these accommodation levels affect Nahua mobilization for cultural rights. When joined with narratives about the 1932 massacre, low political and economic accommodation and medium cultural accommodation, make for tangible but moderate mobilization for cultural rights claim-making in Izalco.

Political and economic accommodation: Nahua originarios experience low political and economic accommodation by the state, as measured both by the kind of concrete legal protections and initiatives in place for them as well as more subjective measurements of originario perceptions of how the state attends to their interests. Without constitutional recognition, there has been little institutional political protection for originarios in El Salvador. While past governments have refused to sign treaties and conventions to protect originarios rights, the democratization process is having a limited but significant impact on political accommodation. For example, originarios achieved a major milestone on 12 October 2010 when President Funes declared that El Salvador is a multicultural and pluriethnic country, and asked the pardon of the citizenry for what had happened to originarios[132] under past governments. Though it carried no immediate promise of reparations or other material benefit, Funes' acknowledgment of originarios and his state apology created an opening in the discourse about

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[132] Funes used the term "indígenas" in his speech.

originario rights in the country and is a testament to the symbolic power of apology in post-violence situations.[133]

Funes' government has been more open to demands for constitutional revisions, and also invited Special Rapporteur for Indigenous Rights James Anaya to visit the country in 2012 to document the status of originarios. Anaya's report to the UN General Assembly on 25 June 2013, documents the concerns of Salvadoran originarios that government efforts to protect their rights have not been sensitive to community needs or had much of an impact (Anaya 2013: 10). Anaya recommends that the Salvadoran government comply with many originario demands including among others; constitutional recognition, preparation of bilingual, intercultural teachers and educational materials, and economic support for community-based mother tongue language learning programs (Anaya 2013: 18-22). None of the recommendations are binding, and Funes' term expires in 2014.

Under pre-2009 ARENA leadership, the Salvadoran government consistently adopted a contradictory approach to recognition of its indigenous population in relation to universal protections for the rights of indigenous people. By 1940, the Salvadoran government had removed the category of "indigenous" from the census, and a 1952 statement to the International Labor Organization (ILO) regarding protection of indigenous people through Convention 107 made it clear that the government no longer thought indigenous people existed in El Salvador (Peterson 2007: 68). In 1958, the government tried to have it both ways, negating the existence of originarios in El Salvador even as they affirmed ILO Convention 107 on indigenous protection (Amaya Amaya 2012; Peterson 2006: 164) in order to stay in line with international norms. More recently, in 2005, the state submitted a report to the United Nations Committee on

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[133] See Gellman 2012; Nobles 2008 for more on the role of apologies in comparative context.

the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) stating that the country had no significant

indigenous population but simultaneously stated that new attention was being given to protect

indigenous communities (DeLugan 2012: 72).[134] Those in the development field will quickly

identify the second half of the statement as telling international agencies what they want to hear,

while the first part of the statement makes it clear that the government continued ignoring

indigenous people. The lack of a democratic commitment to a social contract for all citizens

obstructed the ability of originarios to achieve genuine recognition. Though mobilization can

happen in any political context, the potential for governmental fulfillment of cultural rights

claims is more likely with a democratic social contract in place than under authoritarianism.

DeLugan analyzes misguided report-writing, such as the statement that since the

indigenous population in El Salvador lacks geographic concentration, there is consequentially no

racism (DeLugan 2012: 72). Not only does such a government stance dangerously conflate

correlation with causation, it also blatantly disregards the long history of racism embedded in

Salvadoran history. The refusal of the state to sign onto the International Labor Organization's

Convention 169 on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples represents another signifier of

state denial of originario rights through non-accommodation (Anonymous 2012a). As discussed

in Chapter 3 in the context of Mexico, Convention 169 recognizes a range of rights for tribal and

indigenous peoples, and some states, including Mexico, have revised their national and state

constitutions in order to be in compliance with Convention 169. Past ARENA governments, on

the other hand, argued that granting special protection to indigenous people would violate

constitutional provisions of equal protection (DeLugan 2012: 72), a concern that has not stopped

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[134] This schizophrenia affected originarios organizing in that they went very slowly, not knowing what could be
expected by the government and frustrated by these mixed messages (Amaya Amaya 2012).

other states such as Mexico from constitutionally adopting Convention 169 protections.[135] Under Funes, in 2009 El Salvador became a signatory to the UN Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (OP-ICESCR), which creates mechanisms for originarios to present grievances regarding violations of these rights. Ratified by El Salvador in 2011, the OP-ICESCR, though not enforceable, represents a progressive approach to indigenous rights that the Salvadoran government is endorsing. Neither Mexico or Turkey have signed the OP-ICESCR.

A major point of contention for originarios in El Salvador is the lack of recognition of their existence in the Constitution. ARENA governments shot down previous efforts to achieve constitutional revisions, but activists persisted in demanding constitutional reform, which is seen as an important juridical backbone for originarios rights protections (Anonymous 2012a). The National Indigenous Coordinating Committee of El Salvador (CCNIS) serves as an umbrella organization, mobilizing originarios for rights claim-making throughout the country.

During a demonstration coordinated by CCNIS in front of the National Assembly building in San Salvador on 17 April 2012, originario representatives from all over the country petitioned the National Assembly to revise the Constitution to recognize pueblos originarios, a recognition that currently does not exist in any legal or binding form in El Salvador. The legislative building is sealed behind barbed wire, but a large cement expanse in front was accessible to the public. Several long-haired middle aged men gather near the central convocation zone, lighting incense, setting up a campfire-style fire, and chanting prayers in Spanish, Nahaut, Potón, and other tongues. Nearby, a man and woman in "native" dress—fake

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[135] Mexico's subsequent updating of its federal and several state Constitutions since signing Convention 169 reflects more a mastery of democratic rhetoric than real protections for indigenous peoples. Like Mexico, El Salvador has the option to sign Convention 169 and other measures to protect originario rights without real implementation or enforcement, though the signature itself does hold symbolic weight.

leopard print cloth covering their groins—danced to the rhythm of a drum. Organizers gathered

attendees to form a large circle around the fire and the dancers. As various men took turns

blowing conch shell horns, the group paid respects to the four directions, and this and other

traditionally "indigenous" symbols were displayed throughout the day.

Figure 40: Nahuizalco music group. Opening ceremony of cultural rights demonstration, demanding constitutional recognition in front of National Assembly on 17 April, 2012, San Salvador. Photo by author.

Figure 41: Originario invocation and dancing. 17 April 2012, San Salvador. Photo by author.

Figure 42: "Indigenous communities with Mother Earth". One of the many banners hung up in front of National Assembly, 17 April 2012, San Salvador. Photo by author.

Figure 43: "Indigenous Rights have been negated – today we reclaim them!". 17 April 2012, San Salvador. Photo by author.

Bordering the gathering, CCNIS banners proclaimed the need for indigenous rights, and more specifically for those rights to be inscribed in the Constitution. Many people held the multicolored squares flag of indigenous peoples most recognizable as the Bolivian MAS flag, and others held solid flags of white or dark blue, the colors of the Salvadoran flag. This was a demonstration meant to shame the state into granting the basic claim to indigenous existence in El Salvador.

Gustavo Pineda, Coordinator of Pueblos Indígenas under the Secretary of Culture and trained as a Mayan[136] priest took the microphone to state that since the president has affirmed that El Salvador is a multicultural, pluriethnic country, the next steps would be constitutional recognition, the signing and ratification of Convention 169, and the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous People (Pineda 2012b), which was signed by El Salvador in 2007. Numerous Salvadoran originarios demanded these three institutional steps throughout the rally. These steps, if undertaken, could signify and increase, albeit modestly, the political accommodation of ethnic minorities by the Salvadoran state. At the same time, Tilley's discussion about the dangers of performing indigeneity to comply with donor visions is worth heeding (Tilley 2005), as even in the ceremony described above there was evidence of symbolic stretching to make Salvadoran originarios more recognizable to national and international[137] audiences.

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[136] Though outside the scope of this paper, the co-optation of originario culture in El Salvador by misconstruing it as Maya because the government wants to promote as part of its tourism campaign has problematically, though successfully included El Salvador in the Ruta Maya. See DeLugan 2012: 78.

[137] Though I was the only obvious foreigner present at this event, CCNIS is accustomed to liaising with international researchers and activists.

Originarios in El Salvador rarely discuss the role that the state's highly centralized institutional arrangement plays in preventing local or regional strategies of accommodation for originarios. Unlike Mexico, where states at least give the option of limited autonomy to communities that wish to govern by their own traditional principles, in El Salvador, all policy flows through the capital. This is akin to Turkey, where entrenched centralized bureaucracies make any regional provisions for cultural rights nearly impossible, as the state is conceptualized and actualized as a unitary and homogenous actor. Within this framework, Nahua community members have found limited space in which to be accommodated politically.

Specific to Izalco, there was a brief and moderate act of political accommodation that transpired at the local level between the Mayor of Izalco and the Alcalde del Común, the People's Mayor, the spiritual and political leader of a subsection of Nahua originarios. In cooperation with the People's Mayor, outgoing municipal FMLN Mayor Roberto Acevedo, signed the Municipal Ordinance on the Rights of the Indigenous Community of Izalco as one of his last acts before turning over his office to ARENA victor José Alfonso Guevara Cisneros on 1 May 2012.[138] This Municipal Ordinance represents an unprecedented document in El Salvador that establishes a commitment on the part of the municipal government to recognize, respect, and protect the rights of originario residents (Alcaldía Municipal de Izalco 2012: 6).

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[138] The Común is not legally allowed to be politically partisan by the nature of its charter (Pañada and Rafael Latin 2012). Like many non-profits in the U.S. it is required to maintain political neutrality in order to qualify for its organizational status.

Figure 44: Assistants to the People's Mayor. (Left) Ismael Pañada, (seated in front) is known as "El Segundo," The People's Mayor's assistant, and Mateo Rafael Latin (seated behind) is the Second Register in the Commune. Photo by author.

Figure 45: FMLN Mayor Roberto Acevedo. On his last day in office, April 30th, 2012, Izalco. Photo by author.

Based on the structure of the Catholic Church's *cofradía* system of saint worship, the

People's Mayor of the originario community was created as an institutional structure by

colonizers to bind the indigenous community together and make it easier to control (Pañada and

Rafael Latin 2012; Alcaldía Municipal de Izalco 2012: 14). It has since been appropriated by

some originario communities in El Salvador but only in Izalco has the People's Mayor gained

such a degree of recognition by the municipal Mayor. The Izalco ordinance details at length

ways in which the municipal government should support cultural rights of Izalco's originarios,

and includes subsections describing specific rights and protections for originarios women,

children, disabled people, midwives, and the elderly (Alcaldía Municipal de Izalco 2012: 7-11).

As with many treaties and conventions that protect originarios but lack enforcement

mechanisms, it is unclear how much fruit the Ordinance will bear for Izalco residents.

However, the very nature of its existence offers an alternative model of political accommodation for ethnic minorities in El Salvador.

Despite the potential positive effect of the Ordinance, an ongoing challenge remains to unify originario mobilization in Izalco: the originario community contains deep divisions that manifest in disagreements about tactics as well as political alliances. While a portion of the community is on board with the Ordinance, other originarios in Izalco felt the document was created too exclusively, without soliciting real public input, and that it would not have any effect (Anonymous 2012g). Each of the originario leaders I spoke with across the divide felt that the other side was claiming a leadership role without real legitimacy (Anonymous 2012g; Pañada and Rafael Latin 2012). There are also political party alliances that divide leaders within the originarios cultural rights mobilization in Izalco, and this discord has, and will mostly likely continue to pose a real hindrance to better coordinated and effective mobilization for claim-making. These community divisions are extremely sensitive and I mention them in order to acknowledge the range of challenges Izalco's originarios face in addition to the lack of political accommodation by the state: the originario groups in Izalco also grapple with accommodation of each other's vision for the Nahua community.

Political accommodation is bound up with economic accommodation in El Salvador, and an increase in one accommodation may facilitate the increase in another. Nahua people's low economic accommodation in Izalco reflects the intense poverty that has followed loss of traditional lands to colonizers, ladinos, and large-scale haciendas over time. A 2007 report by the Pan-American Health Organization shows significant discrepancies between urban and rural communities' progress towards Millennium Development Goals (Organización Panamericana de la Salud 2007: 320). As much of El Salvador's indigenous population is in rurally based (Banco

Mundial, Unidad Regional de Asistencia Técnica et al. 2003: xiv), it can be assumed that their

economic accommodation is best reflected by the rural indicators, which show rates of poverty

and malnutrition higher than in urban areas (Organización Panamericana de la Salud 2007: 320).

Though some originarios in the community appear to have access to the same chances for

economic success and upward mobility as their mestizo counterparts, this has come more from

international actors funding cultural activities than from the state.

A striking difference for originarios in El Salvador is the different treatment they are

accorded by their own state and by the international community. While economic

accommodation by the state is low, outside actors like UNESCO and the EU have offered

significant economic assistance to further originarios culture. However, as Tilley points out

through pointed section headings such as "Being Indian for UNESCO," it is complicated for

Salvadoran originarios to match the type of indigeneity that outside funders seek in order to gain

access to their resources (Tilley 2005: 230). For example, in the mid-1990s UNESCO offered

funding for a range of cultural programs including bilingual education, artisan craft production,

and cultural media, but would not consider funding agricultural endeavors that would allow

Nahua farmers access to credit or fertilizer (Tilley 2005: 230-231). Though corn is a central

element in Nahua cosmology, in addition to being a core component of subsistence livelihood,

these requests were dismissed as not being cultural enough to warrant UNESCO funding (Tilley

2005: 230).[139]

Economic non-accommodation is a potentially potent tool for mobilization, as seen in the

Kurdish and Triqui cases, but it has not been used as forcefully in the Nahua community, where

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[139] In a rather damning comment that reveals a lack of awareness about the interconnectedness between cultural and economic issues, Tilley cites an anonymous interview with a UNESCO worker who disparages the use of UNESCO funds for "'mere farmers'" (Tilley 2005: 230).

campesinos and originarios alike have "settled" for their lot in exchange for minor concessions.

Here is an example:

> In 1999, 62 percent of the rural population of the country lived in poverty and the rural minimum wage was at most enough to supply rice, beans, and tortillas to a small family. The acceptance of the social economic status quo in order presumably to gain national legitimacy and organization stability led directly to the squandering of political capital. (Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008: 278)

In 2011, the United Nations Development Programme ranked El Salvador 105 out of 187 countries based on its Human Development Index, and showed that while El Salvador is close to medium development indicators, it is lower than most other Latin American and Caribbean countries in this measure (United Nations Development Programme 2011). World Bank data shows that 42.5 percent of El Salvador's population lived in poverty in 2010 (World Bank 2013). Neither of these indices separate out indicators for originario populations, but time spent on the originario side of town in places like Izalco show that much of the originario population still lives in poverty, as do a significant portion of the mestizo population. This is observed through material measures such as access to indoor plumbing and building materials for homes, as well as through subjective measures like how people view their own job opportunities and how they describe their dependence on subsistence agriculture.

Originario poverty is in part produced jointly through political and economic non-accommodation on the issue of land rights. There is concern that if the government signed Convention 169, which states that tribal and indigenous people have the right to ancestral territories, originarios could reclaim lands stolen from them (Pineda 2012a). Deeply vested interests in the agricultural sector exist that want to avoid any possibility of land reclamation, yet, as in Mexico, political accommodation is tied to economic accommodation in the form of land rights. Though there is a general situation of economic distress in the region for originarios

and mestizos alike, originarios continue to be particularly un-accommodated economically based on the refusal of the state to address land reform, a long-standing demand of originarios. As in many other Latin American countries, El Salvador experienced loss of originario cultural identity through seizing of land and manipulation of originarios' cultural and political organizations in the process of national myth-making (Gould 1998: 70). Though it can be analytically useful to separate categories of political, economic, and cultural accommodation as I do here, it is clear that the lived experiences of these non-accommodations are in fact messy and intertwined. As Gould points out, loss of land—an economic non-accommodation—impacts loss of culture, as does the loss of political organizations. Land is the basis for subsistence farming, a long-practiced originario tradition, but it is also connected to cosmovision and to political clout in a country ruled by the landed class. The right to land highlights how state non-accommodation in one area affects another, to influence mobilization for cultural rights claim-making as a whole.

Cultural accommodation: Though Nahua originarios, like all originarios in El Salvador, have experienced low levels of cultural accommodation by the state, Izalco has experienced a small recent opening in cultural space for originarios. Thus, though Izalco's Nahua community has had low levels of both political and economic accommodation, at the local level there is medium cultural accommodation. This coding is rather tenuous because nationally cultural accommodation remains low, but local-level movements like Izalco's Nahuat language resurgence challenge this. As in the proceeding chapters on ethnic minorities in Mexico and Turkey, this subsection uses the accommodation of claims to mother tongue language as an indicator of cultural accommodation. I first address cultural accommodation at the national level by looking at Ministry of Education (MINED) policies towards bilingual, intercultural education

and the influence of the National Council for Culture and Art (CONCULTURA), and then at the local level through the experience of an elementary school in Izalco.

Under previous authoritarian governments, the national myth of mestizaje was preeminent and originarios found few opportunities to express ethnic identities outside of their communities or in non-tokenistic ways. Without a social contract to uphold the right of originarios to be treated equally as Salvadoran citizens, there has been a disincentive to own originario culture. Some meaningful shifts in national approaches to culture have been achieved since Funes came into power in 2009, pointing to the importance of a democratization framework for increased cultural rights. One significant way Funes boosted El Salvador's democratic commitment to originario citizens was through reform of cultural institutions. Funes transformed the old ARENA stomping ground of CONCULTURA into a more autonomous Secretary of Culture, replete with its own Indigenous Affairs office. CONCULTURA was a problematic institution for originarios as it tended to promote culture by romanticizing ancient indigenous histories at the expense of contemporary indigenous communities (DeLugan 2012: 41-43). Many interviewees reinforced this point by describing frustration at being treated as "folklore" (Ama de Chile 2010; Guzman 2012; Hernández 2012) by the national government through CONCULTURA and their associated staff at local level Houses of Culture.[140]

The way education is used to either further myths of homogeneity or promote genuine tolerance for multiculturalism serves as an indicator to measure the degree of cultural accommodation of ethnic minorities by states. I evaluate the role of education in cultural accommodation through factors such as the availability of bilingual, intercultural education,

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[140] See the second half of this chapter on Morazán for specific examples of how the Culture Houses do not serve originarios.

implementation of culturally appropriate schooling, and the degree of diversity appreciation visible in school textbooks. The importance of education in citizenship formation has been discussed already in previous chapters.[141] To briefly recapitulate, schools are "privileged sites" where young people are socialized into dominant norms (Bénéï 2008: 21), including norms of cultural practice but also norms for tolerating the cultural practices of others.

Classrooms become cauldrons for state philosophy, meaning that states have students as rather impressionable captive audiences that will be shaped by the content to which they are exposed. In the words of anthropologist Veronique Bénéï "school is not just a space for learning and official education but one of the most omnipotent manifestations of the state in people's lives" (Bénéï 2008: 21). This principle is well understood by the Salvadoran state as well. Former CONCULTURA employee and current Vice-Minister of Education Hector Samour, emphasized this point, saying, "Education is the principle instrument of socialization. Through it we have culture, values, knowledge, attitudes; therefore education plays a fundamental role in the development of competent and engaged citizens" (Samour 2012). In addition to citizen development, education can help or hinder the national collective memory about contentious events. According to former MINED Director Cecilia Gallardo de Cano, as she wrote in the introduction to the first volume of the History of El Salvador textbook, "'We need to reconstruct the past…[and] enrich the collective memory'" (in DeLugan 2012: 49). The solidification of a new formally decreed approach to history can chart a fresh path to citizen formation in El Salvador. Just as national myths have rendered originarios invisible, a new collective memory could potentially reinsert them in the discourse about multiculturalism.

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[141] See Chapter 2, citizenship section, and Chapter 4, cultural accommodation for Kurds section.

However, national history may also continue giving small margins of space for originario communities to put forth their own versions of the past. Educational researchers Bush and Salterelli find that: "Under conditions of inter-ethnic tension, national elites often force teachers to follow curricula or use textbooks that either homogenize diversity and difference or worse, present it as a threat to be feared and eliminated" (Bush and Saltarelli 2000: 13). Diversity has certainly been a threat to Salvadoran nation-making over time, and MINED was historically used as an instrument of diversity suppression. Former MINED employee Manuel Menjívar told me, "I found some textbooks to be maybe too confrontational, including photos of massacres saying 'Nunca Mas [Never Again],' 'El Mozote,' 'Romero' are too politicized, too gruesome to be presented in texts because they are used in a political way" (Menjívar 2010). The idea of creating Salvadoran history books that do *not* include the massacre at El Mozote or the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, both by right-wing aligned military groups, is cause for deep concern. Though these acts of political violence may be used in political ways by people creating textbooks, this is the case for all sensitive or contested historical events.

In addition to textbooks, multicultural education is another important topic of discussion with implication for the national collective memory. Educative practices are integral in citizen formation, itself a key process in democratization and one that can further empower ethnic minorities in mobilization for cultural rights. In fact, originario activist group CCNIS pressed the topic of intercultural and bilingual education on Funes when he was still a presidential candidate, declaring it as a component of originario claims (Anonymous 2012a). Unfortunately, even with government agencies more sympathetic to originario claims than under previous administrations, it appears unlikely that intercultural or bilingual education will be incorporated by MINED

anytime soon. When pressed on this topic, Vice-Minister of Education Héctor Samour said to

me:

> Yes, there are indigenous associations, but there are no geographically
> concentrated [indigenous] zones, they are diluted—in some zones, yes, like the
> Nahua, but in reality there are few speakers. Therefore it would not serve to have
> a bilingual or intercultural curriculum. There are other spaces to make sure culture
> does not disappear, but not in the schools. (Samour 2012)

Originarios, however, through the leadership of CCNIS have made clear that a small population

size does not diminish their demand for the cultural right to learn their langauge (Anonymous

2012a). The nature of intercultural education should theoretically allow people from different

cultures to better understand each other, with the hope that by socializing young people in

schools, peaceful co-existence rather than ethnic antagonism or misunderstandings will transpire

in society. El Salvador's originario population is small, but size does not discredit the need for

better understanding across ethnic divides. Also, if schools are not the place for culture, as

Samour alleges, where is indigenous culture's place in Salvadoran society? CONCULTURA and

the Houses of Culture left a dismal legacy of homogenized nation-building in their wake, making

these institutions unlikely, or at least more challenging spaces for cultural revival. Though the

new Secretary of Culture, with the input of Gustavo Pineda as the Coordinator for Indigenous

Pueblos may be able to create new venues and methods for cultural preservation, the absence of

intercultural or bilingual education in schools demonstrates non-accommodation of originarios

by the Salvadoran state. In this way, civic formation through education, and specifically

representation of originario culture in schools, serve as important measures of cultural

accommodation in El Salvador as it also does in Mexico and El Salvador.

The right to language: Previous chapters have shown that use of one's mother tongue can have a profound effect on identity. In El Salvador, the erosion over time of originario languages has undermined the maintenance of minority identities and signifies cultural non-accommodation by the state. National policies of homogenization chipped away at originarios culture through many mediums, including Spanish-only education. Though it may be "more natural to learn in one's mother tongue" (Bénéï 2008: 73) as Kurds currently argue in Turkey, Salvadoran educational policy never subscribed to this philosophy.

Excluding bilingual education from MINED's agenda has had both short- and long-term effects on the cultural maintenance and identity of Salvadoran originarios. It also has created long-term effects on the perception of El Salvador's attempted democratization, a process which in theory is dedicated to the equality of all citizens. Education experts Bush and Salterelli comment that "the imposition of a dominant language on ethnic groups (both inside and outside the formal school system) is a repressive act, both in intention and outcome" (Bush and Saltarelli 2000: 11). This repression is evident in the way that Nahuat struggles to continue as a living language. Though some originarios in Izalco talk with optimism about how their project is to strengthen, not rescue, Nahua culture in the region (Dominguez 2012), others told me that there are only four remaining semi-fluent speakers of Nahuat in Izalco (Pañada and Rafael Latin 2012). With such a low number of speakers, claiming the right to language in Izalco is not an easy task, and makes the several language learning initiatives in Izalco all the more exceptional.

The primary school "Mario Calve Marroquín" sits on a corner of the central plaza in Izalco. Colorfully decorated with murals and bilingual Spanish-Nahuat posters, the school serves as a model of language rescue in the country. Begun in 2001 under the initiative of then-School Director Juliana Ama de Chile, the school hired local Nahua teachers who themselves had

learned the language as adults to teach Nahaut language classes (Ama de Chile 2010). Children

not only hear Nahuat through daily classes, but also attend school where Nahuat words line the

walls and where "dignity day" celebrations give them the chance to dress in tradition clothing,

practice speaking Nahuat, and engage in ceremonial activities that encourage originario cultural

participation (Ama de Chile 2010). In this way, Chile's approach to Nahuat language learning

attempts to normalize it as part of Izalqueño culture, thus counteracting the stigma of speaking

what is no longer truly a "mother tongue" for children, but perhaps "grandmother or great-

grandmother tongue." Convincing families that learning Nahuat is a worthwhile endeavor,

however, remains a challenge. Discussions with families about the importance of Nahuat brought

up memories of violence that have shaped the community's response to the new curriculum.

> Some parents say, 'why do my children learn Nahuat, it is not going to serve to earn a living. But one child brought her new language book home, and when her grandma saw it she pulled out her Nahuat language book that she had had hidden away, and for the first time the family began to talk about their culture. *The impact of language is that it starts to break the shame around indigenous identity.* Mainstream culture did this, to make us feel like outsiders—because I am very brown, I don't fit—but this has started to change, people are starting to feel more pride. There are some parents that are starting to accept it [Nahuat language learning at Marroquín School], but in the beginning there was much resistance. *Speaking Nahuat after 1932 was seen as dangerous, stupid, ridiculous.* (Parras 2010, emphasis mine)

In this way, Irma Parras, a teacher at the Marroquín School, describes the many interrelated

layers of contention that faced the community with the introduction of the Nahuat language

program. There is concern that learning Nahuat as a second language will not lead to a lucrative

career, especially when high out-migration places a premium on English as a means to an

economic end. Alongside this concern, family histories remain connected to the 1932 massacres,

where fear of persecution caused originarios to repress their own identities. Parras illustrates the

positive way in which the school program facilitated family dialogue about their identity, but she

also notes the ongoing stigmatization of being "brown." Though now the school program enjoys

community support, Parras' insight reminds us that learning Nahuat has been perceived as

dangerous at worst, and unproductive at best. Shaming the state to make rights claims first

requires one's one shame about being indigenous. These concerns outline some of the challenges

that Izalco faces in perpetuating Nahuat language education.

When I first visited the school in 2010 I sat in on a Nahuat language class. Thirty primary

school students repeated words pointed at on the blackboard identified by their teacher, a man

whose salary line-item MINED refused to pay, but who instead was funded by other portions of

the school's budget as well as by local family contributions (Ama de Chile 2010). The children

sang the Salvadoran national anthem and several other songs in Nahuat, and use out-of-date

Nahuat textbooks for grammar and vocabulary lessons.

Figure 46: Nahuat language class. Mario Calve Marroquín Primary School, Izalco, 2010. Photo by author.

Figure 47: "The absence of culture is civic death". Sign posted in the Mario Calve Marroquín Primary School, Izalco, 2010. Photo by author.

When I returned to the school in 2012, Chile had retired after a long career there, but she

continued to work for language rights, teaching Nahuat to groups of students through Izalco's

House of Culture. Chile's presence in the House of Culture perhaps indicates a successful take-

over of a local institution that for so long had not served the interest of the originario community. The new Marroquín School Director told me the Nahuat language classes and cultural activities continue, including the addition of a Nahuat choir, but she also gave me a letter to take home to my university asking for financial support for the school. While on one hand this may represent an astute use of international contacts that regularly pass through demanding her time, on the other hand the director's passing this letter also highlights the ongoing non-accommodation of originarios culture by the Salvadoran state. If MINED saw Nahuat language classes as a worthy part of a bilingual and bicultural approach to education and funded it accordingly, the school would not have to petition for outside support from international researchers, a rather awkward use of quasi-solidarity networks for a public, state-run school.

It is useful to pause for a moment and consider the status of Nahuat in El Salvador in juxtaposition to that of Mayan languages in Guatemala, as Mayans have also worked to protect mother tongue usage in the aftermath of state and paramilitary violence. As in El Salvador and everywhere else, Mayan languages link people to their cosmovision and wider identity as indigenous peoples (Kaqchikel Cholchi 1995: 14, cited in French 2010: 34). Some Guatemalans perceive danger in speaking originario languages in the aftermath of violence that specifically targeted particular ethnic groups. French describes her findings that the older generation of indigenous Guatemalans who survived *La violencia*, the violence, speak in Spanish because they remember too vividly the consequences for using their indigenous language during the 1980s (French 2010: 22). French connects the loss of mother tongue with the mestizo nation-building project in Guatemala as well, saying:

> when indigenous Kaqchikel and K'iche people become imagined as monolingual Spanish speakers, their perceived linguistic assimilation is, from the essentialist

and dominant perspective of the state, hegemonically conceptualized as a victory
in erasing 'Indian' identity for the good of the nation. (French 2010: 21)

In this discussion we can see parallels to the myth of mestizaje in El Salvador, where originarios

must be rendered invisible in order for the nation to consolidate its vision of itself. However,

dedicated language rights activists have persevered in Guatemala and achieved legal recognition

for their mother tongues with the 2003 passage of the National Languages Law.

> The law formally recognized that 'the right of the peoples and indigenous
> communities to their cultural identity in accordance with their values, their
> language, and their customs, should be fundamentally guaranteed" by the State
> (Congreso de la República de Guatemala 2003). Such an explicit invocation of
> guaranteed rights was a new position for the state. (French 2010: 1)

The Guatemalan example provides a model for cases like El Salvador that currently provide no

legal recognition of originarios or aspects of their culture. Laws can change if people mobilize

for cultural rights claims. This concludes discussion of Izalco and the chapter now turns to

originarios mobilizations for cultural claim-making in several communities in Morazán, in

northeast El Salvador.

Part II: Originario Persistence in Morazán

*"Those communities still recognized as distinctly indigenous were typically regarded as
vestigial holdouts of a culture whose disappearance was inevitable." (Peterson 2006: 170)*

Unmentioned in much of the contemporary literature on El Salvador, and receiving far

less attention than Nahua communities in Sonsonate, Lenca originarios are the marginalized of

El Salvador's marginalized originario population. Though their level of mobilization for cultural

rights claim-making is correspondingly low, several communities in Morazán still identify as

originario and advocate for cultural rights. Lenca people have not vanished, but these

communities hover on the brink of continuity and will need increased state accommodation to perpetuate Lenca culture from one generation to the next.

I conducted interviews in Guatajiagua, San Fransisco Gotera, Cacaopera, Segundo Montes, El Mozote, Perquín, and Arambala, all small towns in Morazán, some of which are shown on the map below.
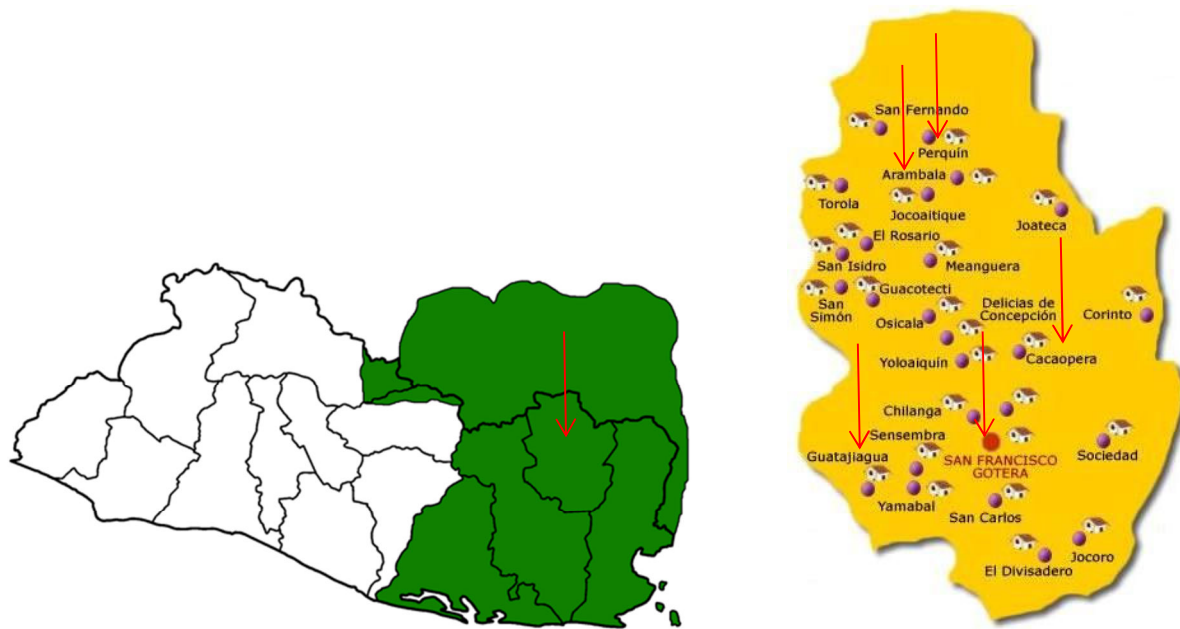
Figure 48: El Salvador map. (Left) Traditional Lenca areas shown in green, with Morazán department indicated by red arrow. From http://mapsof.net/el_salvador/static-maps/png/principado-maya-lenca-najochan/large-size.

Figure 49: Principle towns in Morazán department, El Salvador. (Right) Red arrows show some fieldwork sites. Map from http://www.zonu.com/imapa/inmoguanaco/images/Mapa_Departamento_Morazan_El_Salvador.jpg.

A close look at Lencas in Morazán helps explain how originario culture can still exist but in ways that do not gain real recognition either by fellow nationals or researchers abroad. Lenca originarios in Morazán are spread across several small towns in isolated, rural hamlets and have not been particularly mobilized in recent years. However, *low* mobilization is not the same as *no*

mobilization. Though the case of Lenca people, like Armenians in Turkey, show how some

communities are pushed towards assimilation rather than mobilization, this chapter also

documents small-scale culture rights claim-making efforts taking place in Morazán.

El Salvador's Lenca population began to dwindle long before the civil war in the 1980s.

As in western El Salvador, interviewees cited the massacres of 1932 as forcing originario culture

further underground or making it disappear altogether (Anonymous 2012b; Galindo 2012;

Guzman 2012). Memories of targeted violence against originarios in 1932 also acted as a

deterrent to originario claim-making during the civil war and up to the present day (Anonymous

2012b; Galindo 2012). Though this chapter has explored through Gould and Lauria-Santiago's

work how memories of 1932 alone are not really responsible for loss of originario identity to the

extent proclaimed by many Salvadorans, the fact that this misunderstanding persists across

interviews in both Izalco and Morazán makes the potency of the narrative compelling. Even if

the story is not exactly true empirically, it has taken on the ability to explain an aspect of reality

for the speakers, and therefore exists as a causal factor in its own right.[142] What is certain is that

by the time of the civil war, originario identity in Morazán had dwindled but not vanished. Some

people participated in the insurgency as originarios, others as campesinos, and still others as

mestizo, ladino, or foreign allies. Memories of past violence motivated some and deterred other

originarios to participate on both sides of the civil war, and these memories also fuel divided

responses to mobilization for cultural rights. This section offers a brief summary of the civil war

followed by theoretical context for the Lenca case, and then detailed examination of each of the

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[142] This project does not address the effects of false consciousness, though certainly there could be an element of this in the psychology of remembering 1932.

factors in Lenca low mobilization for cultural rights claim-making, namely narratives of violence

combined with the degree of political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state.

El Salvador's civil war: There is an extensive historiography available about the Salvadoran civil

war, and I offer only a brief synopsis to provide context for my description of Morazán's post-

violence originario mobilization that follows. As described in the above section on Nahua

communities in Sonsonate, El Salvador has a long legacy of authoritarian governance, and this

continued through the war and its aftermath. However, several attempts were made at electoral

democratization well before Funes' 2009 election—his was just the first successful attempt.

After the right-wing fraud which stole the presidency from Christian Democratic Party (PDC)

candidate José Napoleón Duarte in the 1972 election, guerilla organizations decided that

elections were not the means to power, and sought out alliances with peasant and labor

organizations to foment armed rebellion (De Zeeuw 2008: 35). State repression increased

throughout the 1970's, with basic rights such as freedom of assembly and movement suspended,

and military courts commandeering jurisdiction over civilian crimes (Gómez 2003: 135). A coup

in 1979 brought a series of brief military governments to power and an expansion of death squad

operations. The March 24th 1980 assassination of human rights advocate Oscar Romero,

Archbishop of San Salvador, the day after he asked soldiers to defy orders from their superiors

by refusing to kill fellow citizens, was a turning point in the country's history. Fifty thousand

people attended Romero's funeral, which was attacked by government troops, leaving several

dozen dead. Though repression did curb protests in the early 1980s, with 12,000 people killed in

1980 alone, violence also drove campesinos and originarios, who were and are not necessarily

separate categories of people, to join the insurgent FMLN.[143]

The right-wing ARENA, founded by the notorious death squad director Roberto

D'Aubuisson, controlled the Legislative Assembly from 1976 to 1984. D'Aubuisson was then

defeated in a presidential bid by the PDC's Duarte, who was in turn rendered incompetent by

corruption and cast out of office in 1988. ARENA's Alfredo Cristiani, a major landowner and

neoliberal businessman, became president in June, 1989. Estimates of the death toll from the

decade long civil war vary from 50,000 to 75,000 people (Boutros-Ghali 1995: 3; Wood 2008:

541), and few people have ever been held accountable for any of the killings. Many Salvadorans,

both leftists and campesinos executed during the war had closer ties to indigenous ancestors and

traditions, but the Salvadoran civil war, like the 1932 insurrection, has mainly been retold as a

class war. While class was a primary issue for the communist leadership of the FMLN, many

originarios participated in the civil war for other reasons and were targeted for persecution based

on ethnicity, as indigenous people were automatically assumed to be FMLN-affiliated. Because

of this, it is possible, as with 1932, to use the term genocide, defined as an act committed with

"intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," (United

Nations 1948: 1) for some acts of violence during the civil war. On the other hand, the forced or

heavily coerced incorporation of poor campesino and originario males into the government

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[143] Five main guerilla groups joined together in October 1980 to form the FMLN: the Popular Forces of Liberation (FLP) was solidified in 1970 by Salvador Cayetano Carpio and other former members of the PCS; the Revolutionary Army of the People (ERP) came about in 1972, though soon after a subgroup with a more overtly political agenda splintered off ERP to become the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN); a militia emerged out of the PCS to become the independent Armed Forces of Liberation (FAL); and a more regional as opposed to Salvadoran approach was taken by the guerilla group PRTC, or Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers, which had a distinctly worker and student base, as well as some initial members of the ERP (De Zeeuw 2008: 35). These groups grew in members and strength after the 1972 elections even as the national government began to send paramilitary units to exterminate them under the pretense of routing out communists (De Zeeuw 2008: 35).

forces and its rural intelligence-gathering unit, Organización Democrática Nacionalista/National

Democratic Organization (ORDEN), as well as paramilitaries, compromised this strict racial

division. However, elite mobilization theories identify the fact that most officials and landholders

the Salvadoran government fought to protect were Spanish colonial-descendent elites or ladinos

(neither indigenous nor direct colonial descendants) while the significant number of originario-

descendent ORDEN members were merely used as pawns. Campesinos were often coerced into

aiding the government out of the necessity of survival:

> ORDEN attracted many of its 100,000 members from a peasantry who
> desperately wanted arms to secure the poor plot of land they actually owned, and
> the exemption from paying land-tax that membership automatically bestowed.
> But, most importantly of all, all ORDEN members were issued with identity
> cards, and without them the rural poor—landless and petty landowners alike—
> were always open to suspicion of subversive activity. (Alegría 1987: 62)

Often these campesinos were in fact originarios who lacked "the capacity to recognize

themselves" (Galindo 2012). Whether through false consciousness or a calculated strategy for

survival, originarios *cum* campesinos found themselves on both sides of the war. The fact that

originarios and campesinos joined either the insurgency or the right-wing forces in an attempt to

protect themselves demonstrates how complex and intertwined ethnic, political and economic

factors were during the civil war. At the same time, this example makes clear the presence of

grievance that originarios in Morazán had throughout the years. Not only were they politically,

economically, and culturally marginalized in El Salvador—the war also came to their doorstep.

Theorizing Morazán

Originarios in Morazán have experienced low levels of political, economic, and cultural

accommodation by the Salvadoran state. Though originario communities had serious grievances

based on violence experienced during the civil war, the Morazán communities have not been able to produce public narratives about the violence in ways that would galvanize significant mobilization for cultural rights claim-making. Instead, many Lenca originarios in Morazán have assimilated into mestizo culture. This section summarizes the argument of why such low mobilization has transpired in Morazán.

There is low state accommodation for Lenca people in Morazán across all background cause categories. There have been almost no political, economic, or cultural provisions or protections for originario communities there. This was explained by a government official in Morazán as stemming from resentment and translated into neglect, by the government for the northeast region of El Salvador in general because it was a rebel stronghold during the war (Anonymous 2012a). Another explanation is that lack of recognition of originario existence, combined with the burden of discrimination as originarios, created a paradox that traps Morazán's originarios. The Vice-Governor of the department explained that "there is the perception that indigenous people are concentrated in the western zone, in Izalco, Nahuaizalco, and there is the perception that they do not exist in the east and this is purely misinformation" (Guzman 2012). The unseemly position of first being subject to non-accommodation as originarios but also being ignored as such because originarios in the west of the country are more visible, leaves Morazán's Lenca population in a vulnerable position not conducive to narrative production.

Though there are ample reasons for Lenca people to be angry about their treatment by the state, the weak link in the causal chain of this case is in the extent of narrative production about grievances, which leads to low mobilization for cultural rights claims. In other words, minimal narrative about memories of violence created a disincentive to rally around perceived injustice as

part of mobilization for claim-making. Instead, the lack of cohesive identity platform to channel grievances led to higher rates of assimilation in Morazán than in Sonsonate. The figure below illustrates the case.
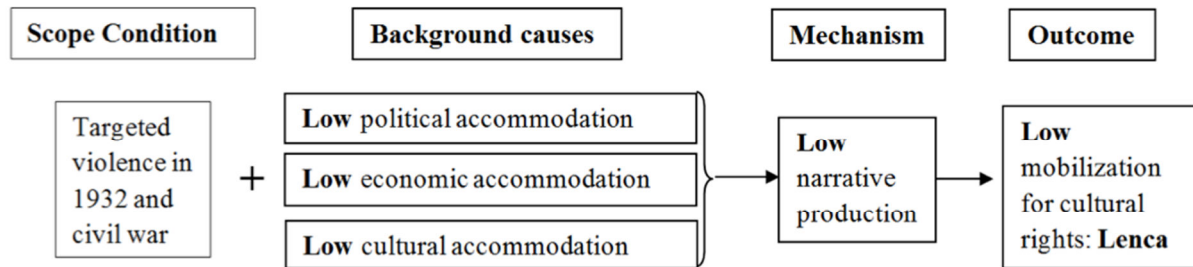
Figure 50: Theorizing Lenca mobilization in Morazán.

Narrative production can be low in communities for many reasons. For example, generations of non-accommodation led to the erosion of originario cultural cohesion in Morazán, which caused stories of originarios-specific narratives to dwindle. Also, the civil war may have replaced uniquely originario narratives with guerilla-infused narratives, as the political and class framework became especially salient during the 1980s. Because originarios had been marginalized to the point that ethnic identity was not a potent organizing tool, it may have been easier to absorb originario claims into those of other campesinos that formed the base of the FMLN. The following section addresses each element of the theoretical puzzle in turn to explain low mobilization for claim-making in Morazán.

State Accommodation for Lenca Then and Now

> *"That is the vision, to put the information [about originario culture] into an institution so that it will last."(Salvador Hernández 2012, Lenca activist, Guatajiagua)*

> *"'Democracy' has been little more than a mandate for dictatorship."*

This section looks to the post-war reconstruction period to understand why state accommodation of Lenca *originarios* has been so low. I consider factors such as impunity, the effects of the civil war, and aspects of the democratization process that showcase why *originarios* in Morazán had cause to hope that a new social contract would be put in place. I also present ways in which the state disappointed some of its most marginalized citizens in cultural rights access.

Political and economic accommodation: By 1992, with the peace accords signed and considered successful (Popkin 2000: ix), attention turned to the FMLN transformation into a political party as elections loomed. With little support to familiarize themselves with how to generate political party structure and platforms, the FMLN did not experience a seamless transition from guerilla army to electoral competitor, but their role was nonetheless crucial in the democratization process. By the end of 1992, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) confirmed that the FMLN had completely demobilized, transforming itself from guerilla movement to political party, signaling the beginning of El Salvador's democratization phase.[144] Though lacking technical support to assist them in becoming a viable option in open elections, the FMLN did become a legal entity with a legitimate right to contest incumbent politicians.

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[144] After the 1994 election, several sub groups broke away from the FMLN. Within the FMLN a chasm emerged between interests of the *renovadores*, or reformists who wanted to make a feasible political party and maximize their number of offices held, and the *ortodoxos*, or orthodox members who did not want to set down the revolutionary socialist principles they had fought for, preferring to maximize their ideology and policy (De Zeeuw 2008: 40; Manning 2008: 124). This mimics the divide that took place between guerilla factions prior to democratizing, with some groups choosing more political and other more military paths. Despite winning Legislative Assembly and mayoral seats throughout the 1990s, it was only after the 2000 elections that internal FMLN divisions were officially undone, though in-fighting continued (and still continues to this day) between *renovadores* and *ortodoxos* (De Zeeuw 2008: 42).

Representation in the electoral arena did not translate into representation of FMLN claims in the interest arena, however. As one human rights activist put it, "The only democracy we have is the word itself, spoken in the air" (Tula and Stephen 1994: 176). ARENA continued to dominate the government until 2009 and many civil liberties grievances, including the marginalization of originario cultural rights, continued unabated.

The nation's democratization process is sometimes held up as exemplary in that a previously authoritarian government shifted through popular action towards a regime of competition, inclusion, and to some degree, civil liberties protection. However, deep structural problems lie embedded in this conversion process from authoritarian regime to democracy. These problems are rooted in weak institutions that do not allow for regional variation in administration strategies, but do allow impunity for all sorts of crimes, including crimes from the civil war as well as contemporary gang and state violence.[145] Legal mechanisms to seek justice were not readily available to people in the post-war environment, in part because El Salvador's legal infrastructure is weak, and also because no regime change accompanied the transition until seventeen years later, in 2009.

As noted in the section on Izalco, the concentration of El Salvador's institutional structures in San Salvador, and the entrenched central design of the state, means that there is little room to accommodate regional diversity. Federalism, though hardly a tonic for countries with problems of multiculturalism as seen in Mexico, Nigeria, India, and the United States, is a useful indicator for state commitment to political accommodation. This is because federalism offers potential strategies to further cultural rights of regionally grouped minority citizens within

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[145] While criminal behavior might be seen as a flaw in a country's modernization (Piccato 2001: 4), lawlessness also served elite interest by preventing justice when members of the powerful class were perpetrators, or when it served to increase elite power.

a unified state. For example, while MINED has made clear that originario populations in El Salvador are too small to warrant a wholesale shift in school curricula to be intercultural and bilingual, this is in part the case because El Salvador's centralized MINED does not allow for regionally tailored programming. In other federal countries, decentralization at the regional level has allowed for the adoption of unique curricula within local communities, which may be appealing in places like Izalco or Guatajiagua. Similarly, decentralizing financing for certain projects like the Houses of Culture could make them more accountable to the local populations whose culture they are ostensibly preserving. Also, for communities like Guatajiagua, decentralization of economic resources might allow funds to be used for activities such as artisan work of potters and other economic initiatives rooted in originario practices.

Decentralizing the institutional arrangement of the state to make limited autonomy provisions in political and economic ways is one way originarios could gain cultural rights that may remain unlikely under El Salvador's current highly centralized configuration. Of course, the possibility of such a tremendous change in El Salvador is unlikely, especially because of the small numbers of originarios demanding these rights, and the relatively low level of mobilization groups like the Lenca have achieved. Yet presenting decentralization and autonomy as options at least opens the dialogue about what kinds of remedies are available to increase state accommodation in El Salvador.

Institutional change is slow because it requires political and socio-cultural change. While sometimes change is desirable, in other instances, "the preservation of systemic values becomes an important consideration in criticizing and reforming the law" (Merryman and Pérez-Perdomo 2007: 63). Regardless, by definition, a tradition is something that does not want to change (Merryman and Pérez-Perdomo 2007: 159), and there are many entrenched traditions of non-

accommodation, including centralized institutional structures, that fit this definition. At the local level, El Salvador's political traditions were formally codified in the mid-1980s with the national creation of a municipal code. However, "[e]ven after the municipal code was passed, it played no significant role in governance, as municipal governments were short on both financial and political resources" (Manning 2008: 121). This is to say that without decentralization, changes would have to come from San Salvador. Though I am not advocating for El Salvador to transition to a federal system, a highly unlikely proposition in any case, the state's inherent institutional design contributes to its lack of political accommodation for originarios.

Economically, Salvadoran originarios face grave challenges to meet their daily needs, with almost the entire population at or below the poverty line (Banco Mundial, Unidad Regional de Asistencia Técnica et al. 2003: x).[146] 61.1 percent of Salvadoran originario families are at the poverty line, with another 38.3 percent living in extreme poverty, and less than 1 percent are estimated to be able to cover their daily needs line (Banco Mundial, Unidad Regional de Asistencia Técnica et al. 2003: x). Originarios continue to be the most marginalized citizens in El Salvador and I confirm the perceptions of Lencas regarding their own economic accommodation by the state. In both Guatajiagua and San Fransisco Gotera, Lenca representatives commented on historic legacies of racism and economic injustice, often centered around land use, that made upward economic mobility very difficult (Anonymous 2012d; Hernández 2012), and this is reinforced by studies that show the highest rates of extreme poverty concentrated in rural indigenous communities, like those in Morazán and Sonsonate (cited in Lemus 2011: 11). This poverty is unsurprising, as trends in Mexico, Honduras, and many other Latin American

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[146] For comprehensive studies see FLACSO 2010 on urban poverty, PNUD 2010 on human development, and Lemus 2011: 11 for a brief overview relating to originarios. The FLACSO 2010 report, for example, documents urban poverty using complex indices that is convenient for better understanding challenges to urban populations, but the report does not address rural poverty, nor does it separate out originario economic status as a specific category.

countries with indigenous populations show that originarios are generally more marginalized economically than their mestizo and ladino counterparts. In fact, Salvadoran anthropologist and sociologist Alejandro Marroquín defines originarios in El Salvador in socio-economic terms, as the original inhabitants of the region who were the most marginalized and oppressed, and whose descendants continue in those circumstances today (Lemus 2011: 11). In relation to the outcome of interest, mobilization for cultural rights claim-making, however, there is diversity in economic accommodation patterns for cultural rights activists. Among Nahua and Lenca civil society leaders, there were some who could be considered living in poverty and others who enjoyed more middle class circumstances and advocates for increased language rights emerged at various levels on the economic spectrum. Overall there is very low economic accommodation of Lenca originarios in Morazán, and while this may facilitate assimilation into the mestizo majority in hope of gaining increased economic opportunities, it also may serve to reinforce a sense of entitlement, that as the country's most marginalized citizens they deserve additional protections. This kind of rhetoric also appears in discourses about cultural accommodation, described below.

Cultural accommodation: Lenca originarios have received extremely low cultural accommodation by the state despite requests for resources to aid their small-scale language classes, funds to support artisan cooperatives, or more control over the Houses of Culture in their communities. Though Lenca communities have quietly turned inward to meet their own needs, having seen that the state will not meet them, there are several powerful figures in Morazán that continue to advocate for cultural rights. In Guatajiagua, the CCNIS representative there, Salvador Hernández, who greets me barefoot and pauses to consult his daily indigenous almanac before speaking, carries much of this responsibility as language teacher, potter, bearer of the

cosmovision, and activist. He bluntly states that "We always maintained ourselves as pueblos originarios… our vision is to one day reclaim our rights as people, as indigenous people" (Hernández 2012). Any talk of Lenca disappearance in Morazán is tempered by his assertion that the community still very much exists.

One right being modestly reclaimed by Lenca communities is the right to language. Though language no longer constitutes a large amount of originario identity in El Salvador in comparison to countries like Guatemala, it is still a standard component of ethnic identity and is often used as basic criteria of indigeneity (Bush and Saltarelli 2000: 11; Eisenstadt 2011: 55). In Guatajiagua, holding on to the Potón language of the Lenca community is a struggle. Hernández relates the loss of language to memories of violence and fear of persecution for outward displays of indigeneity.

> The bad thing is that many old people here have already lost the language. They have some words, but they use them with fear because of what happened in 1932. Since then there has always been the question of being fearful to speak…the truth is that we haven't achieved another way, to leave the fear. (Hernández 2012)

Hernández showed me several Potón vocabulary workbooks[147] that he uses to teach around ten kids from ages five and older every Sunday in the space created by a Spanish non-governmental organization (NGO). The language classes are his own initiative, with NGO support, but without any connection to MINED. When I ask him why he has been unable to gain MINED support for his language classes, he responds:

> The truth is that the Ministry of Education does not think we are important—what is important is the culture of the system. There needs to be recognition that the culture of pueblos originarios is different than the culture of the system. We are

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[147] The Potón language books were published by the Universidad de El Salvador (USAL) and authored by Consuelo Roque, a former FMLN guerilla who now lives in Chalatenango on Cooperativa El Manzano, and Manuel Ramirez Suarez, a professor at USAL.

> not folklore, we are a pueblo, truly, which maintains its identity, which maintains its spirituality. (Hernández 2012)

Hernández articulates the fact that MINED has traditionally been a keeper of the mestizaje myth and asserts the failure of that myth in his community, where a portion of the pueblo[148] still maintains its identity. Nevertheless, the challenges of standing up to the myth are real: lack of resources and constant struggle for program survival. As CCNIS's organizing power grows and the Pineda's Indigenous Affairs section of the Secretary of Culture is able to disperse funds to programs like Hernández's, there is the potential for cultural accommodation to increase in places like Guatajiagua.

Though language as a benchmark of indigeneity is no longer the most useful indicator of ethnicity in El Salvador, it is still an important indicator for identifying cultural rights mobilizations. Following the trajectory of language rights in Morazán shows just how neglected cultural rights there are. By examining the way that originario language preservation initiatives in Guatajiagua have fallen to local originarios acting on their own volition without state resources, Morazán's low level of cultural accommodation of originarios becomes evident.

Memory and non-accommodation: The mechanism of narrative production in this project links memories of violence with the background causes of political, economic and cultural accommodation to help explain why certain ethnic groups are more mobilized than others for cultural rights claim-making. Lenca communities in Morazán have had a low level of narrative production about their experiences of violence, both in the aftermath of 1932 and during the civil

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[148] In Guatajiagua I was told that the hotel where I was staying constituted the dividing line between populations; originarios lived downhill from the hotel and mestizos uphill towards the central plaza. This mirrors the geographic division in Izalco.

war. The connection between 1932 and the 1980s is apparent: guerillas invoked the matanza during the 1980s civil war to illustrate the long-term violations of human rights they experienced and to justify the taking up of arms. However, though potent memories of violence exist in Morazán, these tend to be absorbed into class-based discourse about violence towards campesinos or communists rather than against originarios, whose ethnic identity appears to get subsumed by other categories. For example, though there is much evidence that the FMLN was kept alive by local support bases who brought them tortillas and beans, these communities and individuals are usually referred to as campesinos, though these same people might be remembered for performing originario-associated rituals such as sacrificing local birds at nearby springs to ensure the continued flow of water (Martínez 2012a). At the local level, memories of violence and the actors within that violence seem to be caught up in the same myth of mestizaje that has enveloped El Salvador's national level memory. One of the limited ways that El Salvador has been willing to institutionalize memories of the civil war is through a Truth Commission that it participated in under pressure from the international community.

The United Nations designed the Truth Commission as a justice and reconciliation mechanism, but it also served as a claim-making tool against the government for those brave enough to use memories of violence in this way. The UN released the report of the Commission on the Truth on March 15th, 1993, and those accused by it of violating human rights vehemently decried its release. Condemnation of the report caused fear that the fragile peace could be undone, especially since perpetrators had not completely been purged from the armed forces[149] (Boutros-Ghali 1995: 37). The report documented more than 22,000 complaints of violence, of which approximately 60 percent were extrajudicial executions, 25 percent were forced

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[149] See Popkin 2000: 108 for more on the need to purge human rights abusers from the military.

disappearances, and 20 percent were torture; 95 percent of all violence was carried out by the military[150] (Boutros-Ghali 1995: 38). The report deemed El Salvador's judicial system incapable of impartial judgment and punishment for the crimes it documented, and thus the 22,000 claims served as individual grievances against the state. By bundling them together, people from across El Salvador joined together their claims for redress by the state for the atrocities committed, relying on memory, and the transcription of memories of violence to serve as proof that their claims were legitimate. This claim-making act transcended the domestic interest arena because of the involvement and attention given by the international community through the vehicle of the UN. Originarios have no special role in the Truth Commission and any claims they made were absorbed into the larger class and political discourse of the civil war, and not based on having been targeted because of an originario status.

Speaking of the 22,000 claims, the Truth Commission declared that "acts of this nature, regardless of the sector to which their perpetrators belong, must be the object of exemplary action by the law courts so that punishment prescribed by law is meted out to those found responsible" (1993: 192). In this way, memory of the violence was to be institutionalized through retributive justice measures that would facilitate a certain kind of claim-making process in the interest arena. The Truth Commission report itself documented claims of interest representation made on memories of violence that had affected individuals and communities, and these vetted, recorded memories called out for representation institutionally, through the judiciary. However, the mission of the Truth Commission was ultimately unrealizable due to a variety of political

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[150] MacLeod breaks down the numbers differently using Americas Watch 1993 sources, saying that 85% of documented abuses were by "state agents, paramilitary groups, or death squads allied with official forces," and 5% of abuses committed by the FMLN, but she doesn't account for the other 10% (MacLeod 2006).

obstacles. Though it continues to serve as a location of memories of violence in El Salvador, the report never gained adequate redress for the claims it represented.

That the Truth Commission began its work less than six months after the signing of the peace accords provides one explanation for why it faced so many obstacles in its work. Trauma, routine suppression of grief, and disbelief that the war was actually over contributed to the commission's information gathering capacity being underutilized (Popkin 2000: 134). With only a six-month mandate and limited resources, it nevertheless did open space for people to begin participating in the documentation of human rights violations. The structures of power that led to the violence in the first place, however, continued to remain above the law and outside the sphere of influence for foreigners and Salvadorans alike. The Truth Commission report fulfilled its mandate of recording violence that took place during the civil war with the intention of preventing such acts from ever reoccurring (United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador, Bentancur et al. 1993: 188). However, whether or not the documentation of abuse translated into redress of claims is difficult to assess because the backlash against the report, and the ability of the government to suppress it, distorted its potential impact.[151]

The Truth Commission report has not played the important role that some hoped it would in contributing to a national historical memory. ARENA President Cristiani, in his 1993 address to the nation, called for "erasing, eliminating, and forgetting everything in the past" and the UN Secretary General noted that the government largely ignored the commission's recommendations, bypassing the opportunity to foster national reconciliation (Popkin 2000: 136, 159, 160). The commission's report is not law and therefore could not mandate

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[151] Salvadoran judges repeatedly created legal barriers to prevent the prosecution of high ranking military officers for human rights abuses (Popkin 2000: 45), in part because the judges felt connected to the military through patrimonial, familial, or class relationships. This elite bond arguable fortified the decision of the Salvadoran courts to deny justice processes from taking place after the signing of the peace accords.

recommendations; in some cases members of the executive, judiciary, and legislative branches derailed justice for perpetrators. The government at the time of the report's release sent a clear message that regardless of international assistance in representation, opposition voices still would not find claims for justice and memorialization addressed. This is indicative of the fragility of claim-making in the interest arena for post-conflict, democratizing countries that have not yet experienced changes in government. Though Funes has taken the initiative to apologize on behalf of the state to the citizenry for the civil war violence since his election in 2009, this does not correct the impunity that permeated the documentation of violence in the Truth Commission report. It does, however, show how memories of violence continue to be politically powerful tools in El Salvador's democratization process.

In El Salvador, ARENA influence over justice-dispensing mechanisms not only precluded the attainment of justice, it also contributed to the distortion of memory. The way that "truth" is passed down through the generations can influence the willingness of citizens to dialogue with each other. Distortion of memories of violence by suppression and condemnation of the Truth Commission has negatively affected El Salvador's prospects for creating vigorous civil society claim-making, and as some of the most marginalized citizens, orginarios' memories of violence continue to be some of the most repressed in the country. The institutional context of memory repression, then, shows how the outcome of low mobilization for cultural rights claim-making is unsurprising in Morazán when viewed as an outcome of low degrees of political, economic and cultural accommodation in combination with low narrative production about violence. Because ethnic minorities repeatedly blend into the mestizo myth through generations of forced homogenization, with no institutional accommodation of their particular needs and no

acknowledgement of their distinct memories and history, low mobilization for cultural rights is the anticipated and actual outcome in Morazán.

Conclusion: replacing the myth of mestizaje with pluricultural recognition

This chapter has described recent initiatives in originario mobilization for cultural rights claim-making in El Salvador. To frame current challenges for El Salvador's small but present originario population, I began by presenting some of the institutional challenges to the population gaining greater rights, including a lack of constitutional recognition, as well as the historical marginalization and invisibility of originarios through El Salvador's discourse of mestizaje. The significance of these historic inequalities came to bear through the use of two case studies; the medium and low mobilizations for cultural rights of Nahua originarios in Izalco and Lenca originarios in Morazán, respectively. For each case study I gave historical background for the region and the main incidents of state-perpetrated violence that formed collectively held memories, and also addressed ways in which the Salvadoran state has accommodated (or not) these communities politically, economically, and culturally. By tracing the attempts at language resuscitation in both El Salvador's west and east, I examined within-country variation in cultural rights mobilization, while also commenting on the main preventative factors to these mobilizations reaching their goals: lack of interest or belief in originarios existence or importance by the state, rampant impunity for past violence, and divisions and weak identities within the communities themselves. As El Salvador continues to consolidate its democracy by strengthening the social contract with its citizens, originarios may continue to find new spaces in which to mobilize for their claims to a culture long since mythologized by their own state.

CHAPTER 6. COMPARISONS AND ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Culture matters, but sometimes it matters too much. There is the temptation to rely on specific cultural attributes when explaining many political behaviors. We hear these generalizations all the time, whether for complimentary or discriminatory purposes, for example, "so-and-so does X (action) because she is Y (ethnic group)." Yet ascribing political behaviors to certain groups based on cultural background in this format over-simplifies the rich complexity of factors that contribute to collective action choices. To avoid the cultural-specificity pitfall, this study contains multiple layers of comparison in order to study cultural rights movements without being reduced *to* culture.

There is tremendous variation in the structural environment at the regional, state, and national level that influences each case. For example, Triquis in Oaxaca and Tzotzils in Chiapas maintain different cultural traditions from each other and from the mestizo majority, and they operate under different state laws and political settings. While this study provides an explanation of the uniqueness of each case, grouping Triquis and Tzotzils together as "Mexican originarios" allows analysis of the differing national level accommodations these communities experience as compared to their counterparts in El Salvador. Latin American countries share some political, economic, and cultural attributes, including histories of colonialism, close relationships with the US, and the cultural and ethnic mixing of mestizaje, which makes countries within Latin American well situated for comparative analysis. At the same time, this project also includes Kurds and Armenians in Turkey for cross-regional comparison, allowing explanation of *minority* mobilization patterns, not just among Latin American originarios.

Memories of violence and narrative formation emerge from many different cultural traditions in myriad forms. Oral histories and the culturally learned habits of communities to speak or not speak openly about their problems factor into how public narratives are or are not constructed. Cross-regional and cross-cultural analyses of minority mobilizations provide insights about how people exhibit political behavior when they do not dominate the norms and practices of a country regardless of place particularity. Rather than asserting one path to mobilization, this broad regional comparison, supported by rich ethnographic data, documents some of the many ways that narrative about memories of violence interacts with political, economic, and cultural accommodation to create varying degrees of institutional or extra-institutional mobilization for cultural rights claims. Such comparisons are possible due to a range of similar factors present across the cases such as histories of targeted violence against ethnic minorities, regime democratization, and trends in state policies of exclusion or inclusion of minority citizens. Importantly, each community uses a mix of institutional and extra-institutional mobilization tactics to make rights claims that are linked to cultural identities.

This chapter summarizes key themes of the project across the six cases in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador and highlights ways in which the communities resemble or differ from each other, and also the way states are similar or diverge in ways that affect mobilization for cultural rights claims. I pay special attention to cross-cultural comparisons and also consider unique factors that impact communities from local, regional, and national levels. In addition to focusing on the outcome of mobilization across the cases, I compare the importance of cultural accommodation in determining how the right to mother tongue language becomes significant in narratives about rights.

The second half of the chapter addresses alternative approaches to, and explanations for, mobilization across the case studies. Though I considered theoretical alternative explanations in Chapter 1, this section allows a rear-view mirror assessment of the theory in light of empirical observations presented in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Comparisons across communities, states, and regions

Minority groups share a range of common concerns, among them legacies of ethnically targeted violence, linguistic domination, and the absence or misrepresentation of minorities in school textbooks. These shared legacies show similarities across the six cases even as the extent of narrative production about violence and the degrees of political, economic, and cultural accommodation have varied. State accommodations of minorities as ethnically distinct actors, viewed through institutionalized norms and decrees about inclusion and exclusion in the polity, similarly share characteristics and also vary in their influence in each case. Political accommodation as a causal factor helps to explain differences between communities in federal states, but is less useful accounting for differences in mobilization across types of institutional design. Economic accommodation is low in most cases and dissatisfaction about this fact generally serves as an additional catalyst of mobilization, showing how state responses to mobilizations for cultural rights cannot be addressed through cultural inclusion alone. Cultural accommodation has been most explicitly tracked through provisions for ethnic minority language use in education, and the role that ministries, unions, and other assimilationist institutions play is significant in shaping mobilizations. In the face of these policies and practices to include or exclude minorities, the ability to articulate grievances has been fundamental for communities to

find audiences for their agendas. The table below combines factors presented in separate tables in Chapter 1 and will be briefly discussed across the cases.

	Political accommodation	Economic accommodation	Cultural accommodation	Extent of narrative production	Institutional mobilization	Extra-institutional mobilization	Outcome: aggregated mobilization
Tzotzil	medium	low	medium	high	medium	high	high
Kurdish	medium	medium	low	high	high	high	high
Triqui	low	low	medium	medium	high	medium	medium
Nahua	low	low	medium	medium	medium	low	medium
Armenian	medium	high	medium	low	medium	low	low
Lenca	low	low	low	low	low	low	low

Table 4: All theoretical components.

Comparing mobilization: Why did Tzotzils employ such a different configuration of mobilization techniques than Triquis, or than Kurds and Nahua people? To address such a puzzle, in this subsection I consider three questions in light of each case study. First, what accounts for different *types* of mobilization, that is to say, *institutional* versus *extra-institutional* mobilization across the cases? Second, how can the theoretical model of this project account for different *degrees* of mobilization? I look to differences in state accommodation patterns and narrative production to answer these two questions. Third, what accounts for the prominence of language rights as a part of the demand for greater cultural accommodation?

Tzotzils and Kurds both exhibit high narrative production and high aggregated mobilization for cultural rights, but their mobilizations do not look the same. Las Abejas, the

Tzotzil group in Acteal, use a mixed package of medium extra-institutional and high institutional claim-making, drawing heavily on memorialization of the 1997 massacre through monthly commemorative assemblies, the choir, and their regular communiqués to government and civil society members. They also enact marches, sit-ins, land occupations, and a portion of the community is EZLN-affiliated or sympathetic, signifying a willingness to use militancy, though Las Abejas itself is strictly non-violent. Highly organized and tight-knight, Las Abejas relies on strong networks of solidarity contacts and its own cosmovision to make up for the lack of material resources in their mobilizations. The overall driving momentum behind Las Abejas mobilization for cultural rights is bound up in words, and using words legally or illegally, in Spanish and in Tzotzil, whether in songs sung in public concert halls or as slogans shouted in unpermitted marches, as tools to shame their state and national governments into providing the cultural and political autonomy they seek.

Dersim's Alevi Kurdish population uses words, especially in Zazaki, to make its point as well. From the new Zazaki language classes created since the government lifted the ban on Kurdish being spoken in the country, to the bilingual signs posted in Dersim's municipal government building that violate the ban on using Kurdish in political contexts, words constitute Dersim's mobilization. Dersimis are highly mobilized both institutionally and extra-institutionally and in part, this mobilization, as for Las Abejas, may rest on previous traditions of organizing through Marxist groups. Also, though below I counter the argument that population size determines mobilization patterns, I do allow that the large Kurdish population in general has made institutional claims, presented primarily through BDP-elected governmental positions, much more significant than in the other five cases where minority groups are too small to constitute separate, ethnically based political parties. At the same time, because so many legal

challenges have blocked BDP's institutional mobilization, Dersimis are also highly mobilized extra-institutionally through their affiliations with the PKK and other more locally based Marxist groups. Identity discourses remain central to Dersim's cultural rights movement, where words and language, both highly politicized, are intimately bound up with the political behavior of the community. Both Tzotzils and Kurds have found ways to vocally incorporate narratives of past violence into their robust mobilizations, though particular tactical approaches vary.

Triquis from San Juan Copala have harnessed memories of violence into narratives to a medium extent, but community leaders have not yet managed to streamline grievances into a cohesive and compelling story for audiences the way Las Abejas and Dersimis have. Instead, Triqui stories of violence remain mired in accusations of intra-ethnic conflict, obscuring the subnational authoritarian control via PRI-supported paramilitaries that continues the displacement and assassinations. Nonetheless, Triquis have the strongest legal claim to political and cultural autonomy of any cases in the project based on Oaxaca's constitutional adoption of usos y costumbres. MASJC residents have well utilized institutional means of mobilization, including numerous meetings with Oaxaca's state level government representatives, to claim their right under law to live autonomously. Entrenched political interests have prohibited follow-through on Triqui requests for enforcement of their right to autonomy, however, and the community has thus engaged high levels of extra-institutional mobilization as exemplified by their extended sit-in in Oaxaca City's central plaza and numerous marches and demonstrations.

The divergent experiences of political accommodation in Oaxaca and Chiapas provide an opportunity to explore how state policies and practices of cultural inclusion or exclusion operate in comparative detail. Tzotzils and Triquis have mobilized to various degrees and in different ways in part because the context of political accommodation through autonomy is so different in

Chiapas and Oaxaca. Cruz Rueda told me that because Oaxacan autonomy is limited to leadership selection, movements for autonomy are more unified because the parameters of claim-making are clearer (Cruz Rueda 2012). By contrast, communities in Chiapas appear to be more willing to challenge state control with a broader range of tactics because the boundaries of autonomy are not yet defined. While Chiapas follows federal provisions recognizing the rights of indigenous communities to self-determination, Oaxaca is the only state in Mexico that provides a legal framework for local leadership selection through usos y costumbres (Rodríguez Castillo 2012). If Chiapan autonomy was truly more contestable, we should see a much higher percentage of Chiapan communities mobilized for rights claims, but in fact, Oaxaca has a significant contingent of originarios also making extra-institutional claims, despite their theoretically guaranteed legal accommodations.

I agree that the legal boundaries of autonomy in each state help shape the political environment in which each community mobilizes, but there are also ethnic minorities in both Chiapas and Oaxaca that have organized more or less than their Tzotzil and Triqui counterparts. Political accommodation thus serves as an important background factor in explaining why differences in degree and type of mobilization exist. However, though differences within political accommodation of minorities are useful for parsing mobilization levels and strategies within states, this background factor holds less explanatory power in cross-case analysis. Kurdish, Armenian, Nahua, and Lenca communities all operate under central state systems that do not have provisions to offer different political accommodation between regions or populations and these four groups exhibit very different mobilization patters. While Kurdish people are often mobilized in the streets, their Armenian co-minorities tend to mobilize behind closed doors, and neither of these patters resonate in El Salvador, where non-contentious community-driven

attempts to create cultural accommodation become locally, though not nationally institutionalized.

Many Nahua people from Izalco in El Salvador have also mobilized to medium degree for cultural rights, but their mobilization contrasts that of MASJC's Triquis, with medium institutional and low extra-institutional tactics employed by Nahua people. After meetings with Ministry of Education officials failed to convince the government of the importance of Nahua language programs, administrators and families at the local primary school collaborated to create Nahua classes themselves. The classes, like the Las Abejas choir, are not illegal or visibly controversial like the Triqui sit-in, nor do they defy laws about only using the ethnic majority language, as is the case in Turkey. Nahua language classes are institutionalized locally in that they have become a standard part of the Izalco's culture and the school curriculum, even as they are unsupported nationally. Though Nahua activists occasionally take part in CCNIS-led protests in San Salvador, in general extra-institutional claim-making remains low. This is in part because the community has been so highly assimilated in Sonsonate, but also because they have found a way to protect cultural rights on their own.

Even as the economic condition of the Nahua language program remains tenuous, the *cofradía*, a religious order that fuses Catholic and originario practices, is robust in Izalco and forms the basis for many originario ceremonies. Also, the People's Mayor in Izalco is both a political and cultural leader of the Nahua community and has some institutional recognition from local municipal government. Though narratives about 1932 remain prominent in Izalco, its salience as an ethnic story has been corroded from continual framing as a communist story, and thus the 1932 narrative has lost some of its power in mobilizing the Nahua community.

Armenian stories about the genocide of 1915 have also suffered from denial and mischaracterization domestically, resulting in even lower public narrative production than Nahua stories of 1932, though private and diaspora narratives are plentiful. Like the Nahua community in Izalco, the Armenian community has found ways to locally institutionalize cultural rights through privately funding their own schools where the Armenian language is taught. Treaty of Lausanne provisions grant them the right to maintain these schools, and Armenians have mobilized to medium degree in demanding Lausanne provisions be enforced, even as anachronistic government provisions to control the schools remain in place. Fear of repercussions for speaking out have rendered Armenians in Istanbul mostly unwilling to engage in extra-institutional mobilization, with rare moments like the funeral of Hrant Dink as occasions when Armenians could protest with the protection of their solidarity community. In addition, medium levels of political accommodation via the institutional claim-making of the Patriarchate, and high levels of economic accommodation have disincentivized many Armenians from upsetting the fragile but comfortable status they have achieved in Turkish society. The Treaty of Lausanne provides a high degree of cultural accommodation compared to accommodation for Kurds and other non-Lausanne minorities, but Armenians use institutional channels to claim these cultural rights as they try to negotiate with the Ministry of National Education to support Armenian language education.

Finally, Lenca originarios in Morazán have low narrative production and low levels of institutional and extra-institutional mobilization. Like the Nahua community, Lencas have seen their stories subsumed into class discourses, particularly stories around violence that they experienced during the civil war. Though originarios faced extra levels of discrimination based on their visible indigeneity, the assumption that all indigenous people were communists or at

least FMLN sympathizers has made ethnically targeted violence less easy to identify during the war, and particularly in the FMLN stronghold of northeast El Salvador. There is no doubt that Guatajiagua's population was persecuted throughout the war, but the myth of mestizaje, joined with both the right and left's misconception of the conflict as strictly a class war, impeded accurate documentation of ethnically specific dynamics, as was also the case for documentation of 1932. The packaging of violence towards Lenca people as anti-communist violence has muted the narrative production that Guatajiagua's cultural rights activists could otherwise harness in their campaigns for state financing of language rescue projects. Today, modest participation in CCNIS petitions and activities in the capital, in addition to a local project teaching children the mother tongue of their grandparents on Sunday afternoons, for which the teacher has requested MINED support, is the extent of the community's mobilization. Overall, the six cases show how narratives about memories of violence emerge at varying levels, interact with political, economic, and cultural accommodation, and are harnessed by communities in various mobilization tactics such as petitions, meetings with government officials, and locally supported cultural projects, as well as in sit-ins, marches, and boycotts.

Comparing accommodations and language rights: Though communities engage institutional or extra-institutional mobilization in ways that best suit their purposes or fit their resources and motivations, the common threads of narrative production and cultural rights demands runs through each case. In Mexico, claim-making is high, as are legally entrenched state accommodations. On paper, Mexico is a signatory to many international protections for indigenous rights, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, but in practice there is still intense discrimination against indigenous people throughout the country.

Politically, both Tzotzils and Triquis benefit from federal institutional design that grants them regional indigenous autonomy, though Oaxaca's state law on usos y costumbres makes more space to localize autonomy than does Chiapas state law. Even as Mexico tries to capitalize economically on its indigenous heritage through ethnic tourism in both Oaxaca and Chiapas, discrimination continues at all levels of society and in countless quotidian practices. Economically, indigenous Mexicans remain some of the state's poorest citizens, and the economic plights of Tzotzils and Triquis are comparable.

Culturally, both Acteal and San Juan Copala should be served by bilingual, intercultural education programs to allow cultural transmission within the schools, but national SEP and SNTE practices, in addition to local self-inflicted mestizo discourses that prioritize Spanish over mother tongue languages have made classrooms assimilationist spaces. A key difference between Tzotzil and Triqui mobilization can be found in how the communities respond to the education situation. While in Acteal Las Abejas have allied with EZLN factions to create an autonomous bilingual school that has served as a vibrant site of mobilization and memorialization for the community's radical history, in San Juan Copala, the violence against the MASJC portion of the community drove them out of the community altogether. Even as displaced Triquis return to Copala, they have not generated a cohesive narrative that a receptive audience could build solidarity upon. Though both Tzotzils and Triquis draw on similar state institutions and indigenous cosmovisions to frame their rights moblizations, their narratives of violence, and ultimate mobilization patterns, differ.

El Salvador's Nahua and Lenca people also draw on cosmovision to fuel their discourses about the cultural rights they are mobilized to reclaim, and share comparable state institutional constraints. Politically, both communities have been invisible for the most part, and both have

been highly economically marginalized. While Izalco and Guataijiagua are subject to the same highly centralized state structure that includes a monocultural, monolingual public education curriculum, Nahua people in Izalco have taken the narratives of 1932 and woven them into stories compelling enough to create a community-funded Nahuat-language program in the local primary school. In Morazán department, communities like Guatajiagua also have powerful narratives of violence from the war, but these have been framed for so long as class-based grievances that originarios struggle to reclaim them as ethnic stories.

Despite differences in the extent of narrative production and the degree of mobilization, it is significant that Nahua and Lenca communities are both mobilized around the right to transmit indigenous languages to the next generation. Both communities dialogue with the Ministry of Education to encourage funding of their local initiatives and use language learning as the primary cultural activity to raise ethnic identity awareness in their communities. The visibility of language rescue projects in El Salvador is notable for its contrast with the Mexican cases and its comparability with the cases in Turkey. Mexican originarios have state accommodations through usos y costumbres that extend beyond "mere" cultural provisions. The ability of Tzotzil and Triqui people to cast political autonomy as a cultural rights demand downplays the prominence of other cultural rights such as the right to mother tongue education. Though the right to language is part of the rights discourse in Acteal and Copala, indigenous languages are also the medium for daily life and many mobilization activities, so they are not yet *lost* and therefore in need of *rescue*, as they are in El Salvador.

In Turkey, cultural accommodation for Kurds has been so low that the right to language has become a safe, tangible alternative issue to advocating for separatism. Also, as generations of Kurds complete Turkish-only schooling and can no longer talk with their elders, the importance

of language as a cultural right has achieved new recognition in the community. For Armenians, the right to language has not featured prominently in identity-based mobilization because the community is relatively politically, economically and culturally accommodated in Turkey, despite important problems in the quality of that accommodation. However, language rights have made it onto Armenian activist agendas as Armenian schools deteriorate and more and more young Armenians leave foundation schools with low levels of language fluency, leaving Armenians to worry that they are being culturally absorbed into a state that still doesn't recognize their narratives.

This analysis leads to two conclusions. First, language rights become more important when other kinds of cultural rights are less available. Second, language rights become more central to cultural rights mobilizations in circumstances of high assimilation and when language use becomes less mainstream. Regardless of regional cultural contexts, institutional design, or historical, cases-specific divergences, all six communities consider the structural environments in which they operate when they choose to make mother tongue language use a demand, and they also take into account how their identities and associated stories are being otherwise incorporated into ethnic majority states. There are many other potential lines of comparison for the cases, and some of them will be addressed in my discussion of alternative explanations below.

Alternative Explanations

This section addresses alternative explanations for collective action broadly and in the case study communities themselves. My project addresses the role of memory and narrative production in determining the *type* and *degree* of ethnic minority mobilization at the local level. This subsection considers eight alternative explanations for why Tzotzil, Triqui, Kurdish,

Armenian, Nahua, and Lenca communities have mobilized the way they have. In brief, the

alternative explanations are: the scale of violence and time elapsed since the violence, the size of

the community, geographic conditions, historical inevitability, mestizaje discourses, genuineness

of community representation, outside funders, and revolutionary dreams as alternative causes of

mobilization. I do not dismiss these alternative explanations outright, but rather explore the ways

they contribute to aspects of my own argument.

First, violence that either occurred a long time ago or on a small scale (or both) is open to

being labeled irrelevant to contemporary rights mobilizations. Violence, the violation of the self

by the 'other' (de Vries and Weber 1997: 1), takes the form of genocide, massacres, or

assassination, but all cases in this project have been affected by it. In fact, a history of targeted

state or paramilitary violence was a scope condition for case inclusion in this project. The model

below shows the comparative populations, scale of violence, and timing of violence in all six

cases.

Ethnic minority group	Location	Number people who identify with ethnic label	Number of people killed in main incident of remembered violence	Year of main incident of remembered violence
Tzotzil	Chiapas, Mexico	297,561[152]	45	1997
Triqui	Oaxaca, Mexico	23,097[153]	30	2006-2012
Kurdish	Dersim/ Tunceli	3 million	13,000-40,000 in 1938, 30,000 in civil	1938, 1980s-1990s

[152] As of 2005, these are number of Tzotzils who speak their indigenous language. From (INALI 2005b). Demographic data on the Mexico groups in this table, far more detailed than that available for Turkey and El Salvador, is from INALI (INALI 2005a; INALI 2005b; INALI 2005c). Numbers of co-ethnics and those killed were originally discussed in respective empirical chapters unless otherwise noted.

[153] As of 2005, these are number of Triquis who speak their language, though it combines both Triqui baja and Triqui alta (INALI 2005c).

			war	
Armenian	Anatolia and Istanbul, Turkey	60,000[154]	1.5 million	1915
Nahua	Sonsonate Department, El Salvador	Some percent of 50,000*	Tens of thousands[155]	1932
Lenca	Morazán, El Salvador	Some percent of 50,000	Some percent of 75,000 killed in civil war	Late 1970s-1980s

Table 5: Population and violence across cases. The variation of detail at which population and death statistics have been collected across the three countries makes a complete comparative perspective impossible.

These physical transgressions committed against minorities are mirrored in ongoing structural violence (Galtung 2004) that is captured through state policies of inclusion and exclusion—the patterns of (non)accommodation.

Yet historic violence is open to the criticism that it is less relevant to current struggles than contemporary violence. That is to say, one could argue that Armenians are the least mobilized using memories of violence because the violence perpetrated against them occurred such a long time ago and is no longer pertinent to the identity of current generations of activists. However, interview data and the literature show that the amount of time since the occurrence of violence is actually a poor predictor of memory and narrative strength. For example, Kurds in Dersim use memories of 1938 robustly in their rights claims, and Nahua people in El Salvador similarly use forceful narratives about 1932 in their own mobilizations. In fact, Armenians themselves prove that time since the violence does not exert a causal influence on memory

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[154] From Kaya 2009: 8.
[155] From Tilley 2005: 9.

production, as seen in the potent stories of 1915 events that still circulate privately within the community (see Neyzi and Kharatyan-Araqelyan 2010 for many examples).

The case of Armenians in Turkey is also useful for dispelling another tempting explanation, that the degree of violence informs the potency of the narrative that in turn determines the strength of mobilization. The scale of the catastrophe in 1915 was so huge that surely memories of this time should provide sufficient material for rights-based mobilization. In fact, both private and public narratives can be created out of any scale of grievance—more bodies do not necessarily mean more narrative power. This is starkly visible in the difference between low mobilization for rights based on memories of the massacres of 1915 versus high mobilization after the assassination of Hrant Dink. The temptation is then to argue that the length of time since violence occurred is determinate, which is to say that as memories fade, people are more likely to assimilate. Yet this explanation also does not stand up in the case studies.

Time elapsed since the remembered violence does not determine the strength of the narrative created. If it did, Armenians should have forgotten 1915; Dersimis would not have 1938 play such a large role in their identity, nor should 1932 loom so large in the Nahua imaginary. Despite a 70 to a100-year gap in time since the violence occurred, private narratives are strong in all these communities. Ultimately, *when* the violence happened is far less important than *how* the state responded to minority interests in its aftermath. In fact, political, economic and cultural accommodation by the state influence how communities remember the violence regardless of how long ago it occurred or how large its scale. For example, medium political accommodation of Armenians and Kurds seem to lay the foundation for both groups to feel sufficiently alienated from the state. This sense of alienation makes possible the translation of a grievance into a narrative. Yet high economic accommodation of Armenians has diminished the

urge to push a public narrative about remembered violence because economic status and associated comforts could be lost. Kurds, in the absence of such economic accommodation, have nothing to lose by thrusting their narratives into the public spotlight. Medium cultural accommodation for Armenians, based mostly on the Lausanne protections, similarly put more rights in danger of being taken away if mobilizations fail, whereas low cultural accommodation for Kurds means there is little to lose in voicing claims. As the empirical chapters have shown, any amount of targeted violence, regardless of scale or when it occurred, is sufficient to produce memories that can in turn be publically shared through narratives, but state policies of accommodation mitigate how memories of violence are used in narrative production.

The second alternative explanation I consider is that the fewer the speakers of a language, the lower their mobilization will be. In other words, the larger the group of speakers, the greater the mobilization. Language serves as a marker of distinction between insiders (the cultural dominants) and outsiders (minorities) across the cases. The six minority communities look to their languages as important tools in the forging of political and cultural identities, and they mobilize with and for their languages. The table below shows the population size of each minority group to investigate this argument.

Ethnic minority group	Population size	Number of mother tongue speakers	Aggregated level of mobilization
Tzotzil	329,937 in Chiapas,[156] a few hundred in Acteal	329,937 in Chiapas, a few hundred in Acteal	High
Triqui	23,097[157]	23,097 speakers of Triqui in Mexico, but this number compiles Triqui alta and Triqui baja. Several hundred speakers in San Juan Copala	Medium
Kurdish	Nearly 14	Unknown, but millions. Many	High

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[156] From INALI 2005a.
[157] From INALI 2005c .

	million[158]	thousands in Dersim	
Armenians	60,000[159]	Unknown, but thousands	Low
Nahua	Thousands	Dozens, with many dozens learning it as second language	Medium
Lenca	Hundreds	Less than a dozen, with another dozen learning it as a second language	Low

Table 6: Comparative minority case data. Shows total population size within a given state, number of minority language speakers, and degree of mobilization .

The table reveals three key points. First, most evident is that having many people who speak the same language *is* correlated with medium or high mobilization in some cases but *not* in others. In general, there is safety and strength in numbers—mobilization feels safer and people can pool resources to mobilize more in larger groups. Second, when trying to retain minority languages, the larger the population, the higher the chance that speaking the language will be useful in a variety of circumstances and that educational as well as cultural materials will exist in the language. Third, even if not in the same town or region, like Anderson's imagined communities (Anderson 1991), just knowing that other co-ethnics and co-speakers exist may help people remember and maintain their stories and practices. Such a notion seems to apply to the Kurdish case, where language use and mobilization is high, as well as the Salvadoran cases, where population size is small, and language use and mobilization is low.

When examining the Kurdish and Armenian cases in juxtaposition to each other, for example, it is tempting to look towards factors such as population size and geographic location to explain why the two groups have such different degrees of mobilization for cultural rights. For instance, the Kurdish population is so large that surely some fraction of it will be interested in maintaining its languages, and as Kurds constitute a majority in the southeast, there is a region

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[158] From CIA 2011.
[159] From Kaya 2009: 8.

where language use can be positively reinforced in many aspects of daily life. In contrast, the small size of the Armenian community situated in the midst of Istanbul's dense urban landscape makes its assimilation into dominant Turkish culture practically inevitable.

Cross regional comparison of cases does not bear out the salience of population size in determining mobilization. The Triqui community in Oaxaca is one of the most mobilized for cultural rights claim-making in Mexico, despite being statistically a much smaller community of people than other indigenous groups. Similarly, the tiny Nahua population in El Salvador is making vocal rights claims despite its small numbers. Size does matter, of course—one needs speakers in order to keep a language going. But with more than 50,000 Armenians in Istanbul, population size alone is an inadequate reason for low cultural rights mobilization. The relationship between population size and territorial concentration may offer more explanatory power—as minorities overwhelmed culturally by integrated urban lifestyles, language maintenance suffers, while even small populations like the Triquis are better able to perpetuate language because it is used in all aspects of village life. Density of speakers in a given environment, rather than absolute number of speakers, contributes to predicting which groups will mobilize for cultural rights more than others.

Third, geographic isolation also comes up as an explanation of why some communities are better able than others to mobilize for language rights. Benjamin Maldonado, an anthropologist who has written extensively about autonomy and indigenous rights in Mexico, proposes that one reason the Triqui community has been so strong is that as a geographically isolated, tight-knit community, it is used to being attacked by outsiders (Maldonado Alverado 2012). The high levels of cultural continuity through language and dress give Triquis a cohesive *thing* to mobilize *for*, and their historic status as marginalized people who have banded together

to survive has well-equipped them for contemporary mobilization. Tzotzils in Acteal also meet these criteria, being geographically isolated, readily identifiable to each other through language and dress, and used to working together to counter outside persecution. Other cases such as San Juan Chamula in Chiapas and Loxicha in Oaxaca would work in favor of Maldonado's insights, but there are other isolated communities such as Yavesía, Oaxaca, where usos y costumbres functions in relative harmony.

Following the geographic isolation argument, in Turkey, Dersimi Kurds are able to be so much more militant than their Armenian co-minorities because residing in a mountain hamlet steeply hemmed in by ridges and rivers on all sides allows for a greater sense of separation from the general populace than does a chic Istanbul address and a daily existence in the heart of Turkey's throbbing megalopolis. In El Salvador, mountainous and distant Morazán, where both cultural retention and cultural rights claims have been low, is more isolated than western El Salvador. Nahua people in Izalco have more dynamic culture retention and medium mobilization despite the town being very exposed to mestizo culture through its close proximity to San Salvador and a major highway. Also, while small population size may be part of the explanation for medium and low levels of Nahua and Lenca mobilization respectively, I discussed in Chapter 5 that there is strong popular perception that indigenous culture disappeared in El Salvador after the 1932 massacre–survival became equated with joining the mestizo majority. In this way, I see dwindling indigenous populations more as a *result* of state policies of non-accommodation and less as itself a driving *factor* of low mobilization.

While it is true that movements for autonomy like Chiapas' Zapatistas function well in the difficult-to-access jungle, geographic isolation seems to be a non-causative variable, present in some cases of high rights mobilization and not present in others. It seems that it is less

isolation, and more the publically narrated experience of violence and discrimination that correlates with high mobilization for cultural rights. Though Maldonado does not try to theorize why groups mobilize to different degrees and through different tactics, his explanation is still useful in that it pushes us to include geographic and historical context in theories of mobilization.

Fourth, a potential explanation for minority mobilization is one of inevitability; that mobilizations are the result of a historical progression of rejection of discrimination that culminates in rights claims. In Mexico, for example, unintentional political openings at the federal level throughout the 1980s created more space for pueblos originarios to use the discourse of democratization in their mobilizations (Neil 1999: 242), and this momentum contributed significantly to legislative reform. Even as ongoing repression attempted to silence, or at least assimilate, originario communities, institutional changes that decentralized power made it more feasible for pueblos originarios to voice their claims at multiple government levels. This was evident in Oaxaca in 2006, when a political uprising shook the state and facilitated many new opportunities for pueblos originarios to organize, collaborate, and mobilize for rights claims. Some may argue that Triquis from Copala simply followed the momentum of Oaxaca's legacy in indigenous uprisings by mobilizing post-2006.

However, there are many communities in Oaxaca—indeed, nearly two thirds of the municipalities in the state—that have declared autonomy with little incident, and there are other indigenous communities that have not mobilized at all. Therefore, the explanation that MASJC emerged from the 2006 uprising is incomplete. Similarly, the 1994 Zapatista uprising created momentum for indigenous mobilization throughout Chiapas, and originario communities have responded in divergent ways to this political opening. Similarly, many indigenous pueblos in Chiapas have been affected by violence but this does not unanimously facilitate their

mobilization. The theory of historical inevitability oversimplifies the correlation between political opportunity, grievances, and mobilization, and does not account for the differences in mobilization across pueblos originarios.

Fifth, the tension between minority rights and ethnic visibility as seen in mestizaje discourse may explain why some groups are more mobilized than others. For example, the historic transformation of Mexico from an authoritarian to a democratizing state has facilitated previously silenced groups to begin mobilizing for rights claims and the 1994 and 2006 uprisings were dynamic enough to fundamentally alter what pueblos originarios thought was possible in state-civil society relations. Following this trajectory, communities that do not build awareness about their rights, and in turn lack momentum to assert their ethnic identity as a tool in organizing, would reach lower levels of mobilization.

This argument does help elucidate why cultural rights claims in Morazán are so low because originario identity was subsumed by campesino identity in the aftermath of the civil war. This is less a true alternative explanation but rather connects to how narrative production or non-production takes place in my own argument. In an interview, the Vice-Governor of Morazán described the covering up of ethnic identity with campesino identity as the real explanation for low mobilization in the region. In his perception, "The armed conflict at the end of the twentieth century was not directly against pueblos originarios, but rather pueblos originarios suffered in an indirect manner linked to their identity as campesinos" (Guzman 2012). In fact, this explanation rests on the incorrect, but widely held perception, discussed at length in Chapter 5, that originario identity was lost in the aftermath of 1932. Echoing this popular understanding, Guzman commented that the civil war was "not a determining factor in the loss of identity in pueblos originarios because it was already lost when the armed conflict started…pueblos originarios were

persecuted because all people who lived in Morazán, including originarios, were called guerillas, communists" (Guzman 2012). This argument follows on the logic of mestizaje, that originario identity was not the most salient identity, which is supported by the perception that people were persecuted for their class or political affiliations, not their ethnicity. Given the historical denial of the existence of originarios by several Salvadoran governments, it is not altogether surprising that political affiliations were seen to be more salient both in defining who would be targeted for violence, but also who would mobilize for their claims afterwards. Yet the Kurdish case contradicts the validity of this argument beyond the Mexican and Salvadoran context. As much as the Turkish state tried to assimilate Kurds into Turkish culture and the class strata system, Kurds have fiercely maintained a grounded sense of ethnic identity often before their class or national identity. In sum, the unique dynamics of mestizaje may make this explanation more suited to Latin American cases than for a general theory of ethnic minority rights mobilizations.

Sixth, some argue that measuring mobilization of originario communities falls into another identity trap, in that it is never certain who has permission to mobilize on *behalf* of a community. This is a worthwhile scholarly pursuit, but such an argument faces dangers of firstly bypassing the important fact that *someone* is mobilizing and should be paid attention to, and secondly, that identity politics inherently requires reading between the lines on issues of the power to name and be named. Hale highlights an excellent example of these dangers from his work in Guatemala when he discusses the politics of Maya mobilization and how ladinos undermine them by asserting that there are no real Mayas left (Hale 2002: 516). This disempowerment tactic misses the obvious point that the people organizing may be Maya descendants rather than "authentic" Maya in a historically bound sense of the term, but by framing indigenous activism as instrumental identity use, ladinos have been able to undercut the

effectiveness of Mayan rights claims (Hale 2002: 516). This situation finds a parallel in El Salvador where the claim that there are no real indigenous people left has been state discourse for decades. By maintaining the myth of mestizaje in the country, government institutions such as MINED continue to ignore the unique cultural rights claims of originarios or question the ability of originario leaders to legitimately represent the needs of their communities.

The seventh alternative explanation considered here, put forth by Virginia Tilley in the example of El Salvador, is that mobilization is created by outside funders. Tilley places much of the causal power for the emergence of a new indigenous identity in El Salvador on external actors who wanted to fund indigenous projects as part of post-war reconstruction efforts (Tilley 2005). In this way she ascribes much agency to organizations such as UNESCO through its Cultures of Peace Program, the European Union through its Program of Support for the Indigenous Peoples of Central America (PAPICA), and CONCULTURA as the domestic liaison ascribed with power to invest funds in ways that emphasized particular aspects of Salvadoran indigeneity (Tilley 2005: 222-237). Tilley's argument calls to mind Keck and Sikkink's work on the leverage that international actors bring to domestic organizations through symbolic politics (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 18–25). While I acknowledge Tilley's insight about the important role of international and domestic funders in determining which versions of indigeneity became more visible, she also takes away agency from originarios in rediscovering their own identity in a contentious post-violence setting.

To counter this loss of agency, the eighth and final explanation, argued by Brant Peterson, is that mobilization comes from motivation by the "revolutionary dream" left over from periods of civil war that many of the case communities went through. Peterson's critique of Tilley is that:

> by focusing on the ways activists have struggled to 'fit' with external models it risks portraying them as merely opportunists whose political aspirations are insincere and superficial. For readers in El Salvador, Tilley's analysis too easily supports the assertion that activists are frauds trying to cash in on the resources and opportunities created by the international interest in supporting indigenous peoples. (Peterson 2006: 173-174)

Peterson, on the other hand, invokes an argument to include the personal and collective emotional, memorial aspect as a vital component of post-violence democratization. This is line with other arguments about socially constructed identity, such as that of Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford (1986), who discuss how "collective perception," or meaning-infused shared identities influence mobilization (in Gómez 2003: 51). Peterson says:

> I argue instead that an unspoken element of the indigenous movement lies in its connections to the civil war, *the revolutionary dream* that animated the war, and *the feelings of loss and disappointment* that have surfaced in the wake of the peace agreement. In addition to being caught in the bind that Tilley details, I contend that indigenous activism in El Salvador is charged with *legacies from the war* and its unsettled end in ways that have gone unexamined, and that are directly relevant to analyses of the relations between indigenous activist groups, transnational NGOs, and the Salvadoran state. The return of the Indian in the cultural resurgence thesis is read as a relatively straightforward case of the *return of the repressed*, in which the massacre of *1932 is regarded as the traumatic moment* at which indigenous culture was repressed by the state as well as by indigenous people themselves. (Peterson 2006: 174, emphasis mine)

Peterson's work expresses the importance of post-violence memory and identity in determining contemporary action. Yet our work differs in that, whereas I bring together structural factors of state accommodation to join with memory and narrative in explaining mobilization, Peterson turns more towards the impact of mourning, melancholy, and loss to explain the minimization of originarios identity in the aftermath of the civil war (Peterson 2006: 182). His analysis helps to explain why some communities have *not* mobilized, but does not effectively explain higher levels of mobilization or variation between communities in their degrees of mobilization.

I reference Tilley's work on international funding for indigenous cultural revitalization in my arguments about the role of state economic accommodation for minorities, and Peterson's work on the role of the civil war in sparking mobilization is woven into my understanding of narratives about memories of violence as a serving as a mechanism to connect state accommodation to the outcome of mobilization. In short, both Tilley and Peterson provide important insights as to why originarios have mobilized for cultural rights in El Salvador and rather that disprove them, I incorporate parts of these arguments within my own.

All eight alternative explanations make valuable contributions to our understanding of ethnic minority mobilization for rights claims, though none are able to fully explain differences in degree and types of mobilization. My own argument—that memories of violence are filtered through minority experiences of political, economic, and cultural accommodation by the state to produce (or not produce) public narratives that become salient in mobilizing tools—encompasses both structural and agentive elements that effect marginalized citizens' political behavior.

Conclusion: comparing and explaining ethnic minority rights mobilizations

Ethnic minorities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador harness memories of violence for use in narrative production in different ways, and each community operates under different patterns of state accommodation. Whether or not memories of violence play a potent role in mobilization derives in part from constraints and supports minority communities experience from the state. There are remarkable similarities and differences in how the six case studies use memory and narrative, and respond to state accommodation. If communities are so oppressed that their narratives cannot find a public avenue for expression, minority stories tend to remain

private and frequently disappear. However, the same absorption can happen if communities are accommodated through cooptation—not true accommodation but rather coerced assimilation.

Accommodation patterns by the state play an important role in determining how memories of violence appear in different types of mobilization. Higher patterns of accommodation reduce extra-institutional mobilization and promote using institutional channels to dialogue with the government about grievances in non-confrontational ways. In contrast, lower accommodation, if it is not so low as to render assimilation the only option, spurs contention. The stories communities tell about state and paramilitary-perpetrated violence permeate these mobilizations and emerge in both institutional and extra-institutional mobilizations. Cross case analysis allows meaningful comparisons of this phenomenon across all six communities. By including multiple levels of comparison, including both within and across states and regions, I am able to comment about ethnic minority mobilizations for cultural rights beyond any one locality, state, or culture, to offer insights that hold the potential to generalize to other post-violence ethnic minority groups in democratizing states.

There are many compelling reasons why ethnic minority communities mobilize to the extent that they do, and use the tactics that they do, in the process of claiming culture rights. This chapter has considered eight common alternative explanations for ethnic minority mobilization. The scale of violence, the amount of time since the violence occurred, and the size of the culturally bound, language-speaking population certainly do play a role in the dynamics of each community's mobilization. Likewise, geographic factors, the subsuming of ethnic identity by class identity, and the incentive to mobilize for international funders or for one's revolutionary ideals that persist after conflict may also influence the degree and type of mobilization that ensues.

While these and other factors create certain frameworks that citizens operate within, they do not fully account for the degree and type of mobilization of post-violence ethnic minority communities. In fact, only by considering emotion and identity-based collective memory in tandem with structural constraints can people be understood holistically as social and political actors. In the same way I do not argue that the alternative explanations are wrong, I do not put forth my own theory as an absolutist explanation. Rather, by including factors that touch on both conceptual and structural limitations and resources for ethnic minorities, I account for people as place-based, socially constructed beings who also respond to material and practical incentives from their states and abroad. With this in mind, I have argued that memories of violence, and the extent of public narrative production about them, combine with political, economic, and cultural accommodation of minorities to determine mobilization patterns for cultural rights.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

This has been a story about stories, and how narrating past violence in public allows marginalized citizens to use previously silenced parts of their identities to catalyze mobilization for cultural rights. Stories are messy and do not always have clear beginnings and endings, but they can convey powerful messages nonetheless. This story has illustrated how ethnic minorities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador form narratives about memories of violence and use those narratives to claim cultural rights in the face of political, economic, and cultural policies of inclusion or exclusion, particularly the right to mother tongue education. Though the circumstance in each country is unique, post-violence democratizing countries share common attributes, as do ethnic minority communities struggling to retain their sense of self amidst ethnic majority domination.

In the course of this project, I spoke with many people who wanted to make sure their stories were told. As a researcher, I represented another vehicle for mobilized people to convey their narratives in public, and these narratives took many forms. Some interviewees prioritized conveying their discontent to the world, while others chose to lament the lack of mobilization, the injustice of state control, or the bias in the media's reporting about their community's situation. Though I conducted *interviews* throughout the project, in fact, I was often the facilitator of *monologues*, the repository for bottled angst that embittered activists had been waiting for the right moment to spill. Fellow academics and public intellectuals also delivered monologues, seizing opportunities to make their narratives immortal on my tape recorder without taking the time for dialogue or even to catch their breath.

The experience of qualitative interviewing was thus another representation of the power that narratives hold, as person after person used my position as an audience to say things they wanted to say to their mayors or governors, or had written in articles and books but had agendas to reinforce. Performing political ethnography undergirds the fundamental premise of my argument, that stories are meaningful vehicles for people to integrate personal identity with political objectives. In fact, the line between monologue and testimony was sometimes blurred during interviews, particularly those that focused more on experiences of violence. People like Kurdish anthropology professor Ramazan Aras appeared immersed in their own memories as the spoke to me, while Reina Martínez Flores, the MASJC spokesperson for displaced Triquis, used our interviews to give testimony about collective memories of violence in hopes of disseminating the claims of her community to a broader audience. In addition to the theory of this project, my methodology illuminates the way that memories of violence interact with structural factors, defined by policies of minority inclusion or exclusion by the state, to inspire or constrain mobilization.

Questioning a democratization without cultural rights

Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador have each labored at the democratization process in their own ways, overcoming many challenges in pursuit of a democratic regime. Each state has made limited advances in consolidating democracy through electoral benchmarks, namely changes in executive branch political party control over the last decade. However, these states exhibit lacunae in meeting broader definitions of democracy that include civil liberties, particularly for ethnic minority citizens. In fact, historical analysis shows that the success of democratization in each of these three countries is in part based on projects of forgetting historical discrimination of minorities, and minority assimilation into the ethnic majority culture

(Akçam 2006; Lindo-Fuentes, Ching et al. 2007; Tavanti 2003). Minorities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador have shown mixed responses to assimilation initiatives by their states. While the degree of state accommodation varies in each case, ethnic minority groups mobilize memory in similar ways, though to different degrees, as identity-preserving tools to counteract assimilation.

Tzotzil and Triqui communities have maintained identity cohesiveness in spite of the historic genocide of indigenous people throughout Mexico's colonial and 20th century history. While many indigenous people from these groups have assimilated into the mestizo majority, there remain sufficient bearers and transmitters of cultural traditions to make continual identity reproduction viable. Despite progressive state accommodations of minorities on paper, the massacre in Acteal and targeted assassinations and displacement in San Juan Copala show how Tzotzil and Triqui communities face challenges as they mobilize to claim cultural rights. Though Mexico has numerous laws in place protecting its indigenous population, they remain second class citizens and the extent to which indigenous autonomy can be enacted under the state's democratizing regime remains unclear. High and medium mobilization by Tzotzil and Triqui groups, respectively, show how memories interact with structural constraints and supports. In both communities, memories help to create potent repertoires of both institutional and extra-institutional rights claims.

In Turkey, Kurdish and Armenian populations have different approaches to the question of citizens' rights though both confront legacies of state and paramilitary violence. Neither Kurds nor Armenians have enjoyed the benefits of full citizenship despite the promise of pluralism inherent in Turkey's democratization process. Many Kurds believe their cultural distinctness entitles them to their own nation-state rather than participating in the Turkish state as minority citizens, and some Kurds in southeast Turkey continue the battle for an independent Kurdistan.

However, the Kurdish population is extremely heterogeneous, and the diversity of opinions about how Kurds should approach their citizenship status offers insight into how minorities navigate their participation in ethnic majority-dominated states. While many Kurds still support the PKK, others have begun making demands for democratic autonomy, and still others have assimilated. As policies of cultural exclusion like Kurdish language prohibitions are updated to reflect Turkey's status as a democratizing, EU applicant country, new spaces for Kurdish identity to coexist with Turkish citizenship may evolve as well. High extra-institutional mobilization by Kurds highlights the degree to which institutional channels are unavailable to them in asserting ethnically based claims.

Armenians are still considered foreigners in Turkey despite the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne protections (Kaya 2009) and the fact that they lived in Anatolia before the modern Turkish state was created. The genocide of 1915 has never been publicly acknowledged by the Turkish state, though specific policies of political, economic, and cultural inclusion have left Armenians better off than Kurdish co-minorities in some ways. Memories of 1915 permeate private narratives of Armenians in Istanbul, but state denial has prevented a meaningful public forum for grievances about 1915. In this context, Armenians in Istanbul end up assimilating and enacting only low mobilization for cultural rights.

In El Salvador, Nahua people of Izalco, Sonsonate and Lenca people in Morazán use memories of violence to advocate for special protections and funding for linguistic teaching projects, as indigenous languages in these communities have verged near extinction. Both the massacre of 1932 and the civil war in the 1980s included state and paramilitary targeting of indigenous people and campesinos thought to be sympathizers with leftist causes (Amaya, Danner et al. 2008; Gould and Lauria-Santiago 2008; Ibarra Chávez 2008). To date, Nahua and

Lenca citizens are not institutionally recognized as being ethnically distinct by the Salvadoran state, which has no domestic laws protecting indigenous people. Yet survivors continue to petition the state for recognition and rights, not as second-class citizens but as legitimate indigenous citizens of a democratizing state.

In fact, previous ARENA administrations have publically claimed that El Salvador has no indigenous population, making the work of these communities for recognition not just as citizens but as indigenous citizens particularly challenging (see Tilley 2005). The election of FMLN president Mauricio Funes in 2009 has made these rights claims more viable than ever before. However, El Salvador's centralized structure inhibits regional autonomy and lingering ARENA control of many institutions also contributes to political stagnation. The lack of constitutional recognition for Salvadoran indigenous peoples, and unforthcoming resources from the Ministry of Education for indigenous language instruction, are major obstacles for originario cultural rights there. The cohesiveness of the 1932 massacre as a rallying narrative for Nahua people, in addition to generally low levels of state accommodation dominated by mestizaje myths, has facilitated medium mobilization in Izalco. The continued perception of civil war violence against people in Morazán as a class rather than ethnic issue has made narrative production and mobilization low there.

While mobilization for cultural rights claims takes place in many ethnic minority communities around the world, these six communities represent the full spectrum of behavioral outcomes: low, medium, and high mobilization. Some communities have assimilated and hardly make rights claims in the interest arena, others make limited institutional or extra-institutional rights claims, and still others vigorously make both institutional and extra-institutional rights claims. There are potentially many other cases that could fall on grey areas of the mobilization

spectrum, but these six cases share common experiences of state or paramilitary violence and the ongoing transition to democratic governance. But the cases also share *sites* of conflict with ethnic majorities in their states, that is to say, places where the conflict over cultural rights is particularly visible.

Language, school curricula, and textbooks are all important sites of memory and often serve as tangible representations of larger conflicts between minorities and majorities about cultural hegemony. Targeted violence, a scope condition of every case included in the project, serves as the backdrop for cultural rights mobilizations, and grievances about remembered violence are revealed by communities in these memory sites. Communities mobilize *for* concrete goals such as linguistic inclusion and textbook revision, but they also mobilize for *remembering* the incidents that represent their marginalization as minority citizens. In addition to majority language dominance both as policy and practice, the role of education in citizen formation is a common concern for minorities in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador. All six communities have struggled, or currently struggle, with educational policy and textbook creators concerning what information should be passed on through textbooks. Though the structural landscape for each community varies, communities are united in concern that their own cultures, values, histories, and stories are adequately represented in the primary setting for citizen formation, the public classroom. Misztal reflects:

> Schools and textbooks are important vehicles through which societies transmit the idealized past and promote ideas of a national identity and unity. Textbooks have always been updated and rewritten to present the acceptable vision of the past, and although now, due to international pressures and national voices, textbooks are frequently the subject of external and domestic scrutiny, in many national narratives past events that could harm social cohesion and the authority of the state are still underplayed. (Misztal 2003: 20)

In Mexico, violence like the Acteal massacre is often left out of or treated in a cursory manner by school textbooks, while the historic violence towards Triquis in Oaxaca is usually misrepresented as solely intra-ethnic violence rather than subnational authoritarianism. In Turkey, minorities have been extremely negated in texts, with little or no reference of their existence. Where represented these groups are often referred to in incorrect or derogatory ways. In El Salvador, recent interventions by Funes in the MINED textbook production have started to correct gross misinformation about the civil war in primary and secondary school texts, but more drastic revisions are needed to break away from the communist causality theory that still dominates renditions of 1932. Moreover, there remains the task of undoing the myth of mestizaje and writing originarios back into El Salvadorian school curricula. For each country, addressing the absence of memory in school curriculums and textbooks will also be part of the challenge to increase cultural accommodation for ethnic minorities by letting their stories be told.

Shaming and claiming their way to pluricultural democracy

Ethnic minority citizens face real threats to their cultural continuity in ethnic majority-dominated states. Regime transitions toward democratization provide potential openings where rules and norms of citizen-state interaction are not yet institutionalized and consequentially there is the potential for rights and duties of each party to be redrafted. Ethnic minority communities may capitalize on this opening by mobilizing through institutional or extra-institutional channels to make their demands heard. Shaming states by invoking memories of past violence against minorities may be particularly useful in states that are newly inspired to gain democratic status in the eyes of the international community. When communities put forth public narratives about

past violence as part of a strategy to claim increased rights, they use memory instrumentally to connect past discrimination to current demands.

Such *shaming and claiming*, as I have called it, works to grant minority communities the moral high ground in negotiating with sometimes belligerent states. However, shaming and claiming is also a risky tactic that not all communities are able or willing to take. If communities have insufficient momentum or motivation to shame and claim collectively, individuals who speak out may be more vulnerable to targeted attacks. Shaming and claiming works when communities can harmonize their version of past grievances in the collective memory and find audiences willing to at least tolerate the expression of their public narratives. The requirement that narratives have the potential to be heard makes the extension of this project to minority communities in authoritarian regimes untenable, as communities under authoritarian rule may expect public narratives to meet with swift repression. On the other side of the spectrum, ethnic minorities in consolidated democracies are able to present their narratives freely but with little expectation that the institutions defining their rights parameters are open to reform. For example, though the 1964 Civil Rights Act in the US drastically changed the rights of African Americans, legislation on that scale is relatively rare in consolidated democracies. By contrast, democratizing states across Latin America and the Middle East have plentiful opportunities for constitutional reforms both through public and delegated votes and institutional policy modifications due to popular petitioning and international pressure. This is not to say that such reforms do not occur in consolidated democracies, but simply that they are more likely in democratizing states which by definition are in periods of transition and therefore more open to change.

Also, though democratization represents a time when the social contract is more negotiable between citizens and their states, it is also a time when regimes may be more fearful about losing power and therefore reluctant to empower minority citizens to enact autonomy and cultural rights projects. This is evident in Mexico, Turkey, and El Salvador, where all three states appear uncertain about giving new power to ethnic minorities, whether through federal provisions, democratic autonomy, or constitutional recognition. Rather than see these new power-sharing strategies as ways to make ethnic minority citizens feel included in the polity and therefore more invested in the state, state reluctance to share power locally derives from concern that such decentralization or constitutional recognition will in some way weaken the states themselves.

In fact, empowering ethnic minorities to be capable of effective citizenship in participatory local contexts adds richness to the cultural and political fabric of multicultural states. Instead of trying to conjure up nation-states out of diverse populations, these states would do better to embrace their status as states containing many nations. Contemporary ethnically diverse states contain polities made up of many cultural worlds that come together to appreciate a shared commitment to a territory. Such an approach stands in marked contrast to past incorporation policies like those in Mexico, where indigenous people would have to drop their cultural uniqueness and become generic campesinos to access state benefits, and to Turkey's approach that anyone residing in the territory of Turkey was automatically Turkish. By making Kurds into "mountain Turks," the Turkish state stripped Kurds of the chance to embrace the Turkish state *as Kurds*, as people with recognized cultural properties that distinguished themselves from the majority but are still citizens of Turkey. Similarly, myths of mestizaje in El

Salvador rendered originarios class-motivated peasant actors instead of Nahua or Lenca participants.

In all three countries, including ethnic minority epistemologies in historiography and analyses of collective action offers the potential to correct deep-seated political and cultural misunderstandings, and to teach new lessons of tolerance and mutual appreciation to new generations. As the world continues to globalize economically, communicatively, and culturally, learning to live peacefully with diversity may be seen more as an asset than a deterrent for multicultural states. To be multilingual in the twenty-first century is to have more opportunities for economic and social advancement, allowing young people to learn the stories of their grandparents and read the newspaper online in the same afternoon. Both mother tongues and other tongues are relevant for modern identity construction. Ultimately, however, communities themselves need to maintain the power to decide what languages to use for their children's education, what form of leadership selection to use in their villages, and what traditions to pass on and which to set aside.

Resentment and anger will breed in communities subject to cultural hegemony by the majority. States need to know that minority citizen cultural empowerment and continuity can occur without threatening the territorial wellbeing of the state. This project has shown how cultural dominance through political, economic, and cultural non-accommodation creates bitter and distanced citizens who are less invested in their states. By contrast, states should make space in the interest arena for minority citizens to claim their cultural rights so that citizens can learn to live with multiple identities and commitments. Cultural practices and citizenship duties can be complementary and lead to robust and rich participation in local, regional, and state polities, but

states must be willing to acknowledge the inherent diversity of their citizens to allow

multicultural democracies to flourish.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. 1. Interview questions used in scoring
All interviews were semi-structured and therefore included different ordering of questions and phrasing depending on the interviewee, as well as many detailed questions about specific actors, events, and factors that the interviewee was uniquely placed to answer. The following questions are generalized, and in actuality were asked with basic variations across all cases to personalize them and elicit the specific expertise of the interviewee. By listing sample questions here, I provide context for how I scored key components of the theoretical argument across the cases.

Political accommodation

-What administrative provisions have been made at the national and state levels to protect originario rights?

-How have these provisions (like usos y costumbres/bilingual and intercultural education) played out in practice?

-What does federalism offer originarios? What does this mean in practice?

-What does decentralization offer X community? What problems may it face in implementation?

-How does the state include or exclude X people politically? Who is a citizen officially? In practice?

-Tell me about the quality of democracy here. How does this affect X group? Is democracy different for these people at the national or local level?

-What does the process of democratization mean to you?

-How do you interact with the state when you (as teacher/municipal official/civic leader) work with X group?

-Give examples of times when you have been helped or obstructed by state officials or regulations in your work for political/economic/cultural rights for X group.

-Where are the spaces that government enters daily life in community?

-What does the constitutional reform/EU membership application/new autonomy provisions mean to you?

-Where does political will come from in this country?

Economic accommodation

-How have economic opportunities changed for people here over the last X years?

-How does the state include or exclude X people economically?

-How has the community been economically supported by the state since the war/massacre/assassination?

-Why is X community's economic circumstances different from Y community?

-Where do funds for X (schools/language programs/heritage celebrations) come from?

-Has the government ever contributed to your organization? In what capacity? Who made this happen/preventing this from happening?

-What economic assistance have you asked for in the past? How was your request received?

-How does the state support originarios here?

-What rights are people asking for from the state? How do people talk about land rights/right to work/special taxes/poverty here?

Cultural accommodation

-How does the state include or exclude X people culturally?

-What does X community want from the state? How do they communicate their demands? Who participates? What portion of the community supports those tactics? How does the state respond to these demands?

-What is the vision of the community for itself? What are they asking for? How do they define the right to X?

-How important is language in the identity of X group?

-What kinds of programs have been useful or you would like to create to support language learning and use?

-Why does language matter? Why does it matter to X community?

-Who speaks the language? In what circumstances? How do you choose to use or not use your mother tongue in a given situation?

-What role does education play in citizen formation?

-How does bilingual, intercultural education work here in theory? In practice?

-How are human rights taught or conveyed to people in this country?

-What are biggest influences on teachers here? What are biggest obstacles for them implementing X agenda?

-Who uses the term "indigenous?" The term "originario?" Why do people choose these terms and not others?

- Why do people make the choice to assimilate? How do you know when someone has assimilated?

Extent of narrative production

-How has violence affected this community?

-How were political/economic/cultural support and constraints different during the war/before the massacre compared to now? What accounts for these changes?

-What reasons do people give for their participation or non-participation in X event? Why did you participate/not participate?

-How do people talk about X massacre? Do young people know about this event? Who tells them? How is the event talked about?

-How do people talk about their history? Their identity? How, where, and why do people tell stories here? What stories or legacies are being told?

-Are there examples of people talking about the massacre at X rally/meeting/march?

-Who decides what goes on the banner/press release/T-shirt/poster?

-Who keeps the memory of the community? Who avoids these memories?

-How is national memory influenced? How do you address geographical variations in memory?

-How did the apology affect the community's plans to petition for X rights?

-How and why has indigenous culture been lost here? How has it been revitalized?

-What role do women play in the community here?

-What is it like for you to tell the story of the massacre over and over again?

-What role do spaces like this museum/memorial play in identity-formation?

-What is the role of academics in this mobilization?

-Do you think there is more or less space for dialogue about the massacre now? Why?

Extent of mobilization for cultural rights claims

- What are the demands of X group? Have you participated in X mobilization? Why and how?

-Tell me about the formation of movement leaders. Are they from the communities? Educated locally? Bilingual? What is their profession? What percent of the community supports them?

-How many people are in your organization? Who are they (workers/teachers/farmers etc)? When did the organization form? Why? How did you get involved?

-How do you present your demands to the government?

-How does X organization relate to Y organization (for example, RAIS/CCNIS, or MASJC/MULTI)?

-How do internal divisions among indigenous people here affect the capacity for mobilization?

-How does your identity as X affect your participation in Y mobilization?

-What are biggest obstacles to mobilization in the community?

-In this region, which communities are the most and least organized? How do you measure their mobilization? Why is there this difference in claim-making across regions?

-How is this community supported in its agenda by local leaders/state leaders/national leaders/ political parties/internationals/women?

-Has the government responded to your report/campaign/recommendations/articles? If so, how?

-How has the change in government affected your community's project for cultural rights?

-What are the community's plans for the future?

-Who in this community identifies as indigenous/originario/mestizo? Why? What is role of indigenous culture in politics here?

-Where does political consciousness in the community come from?

-How did the community develop the program to use their language? What has been the easiest part of creating this project? Hardest part? How has the community gained support for this?

-What does multiculturalism mean for your country? Your community?

-How does Penal Code 301 change the way your organization chooses to present its demands in Turkey?

Methodological Justification

Political ethnography (see Schatz 2009, for an extensive discussion of this method) allows me to analyze the narratives that channel memory within their daily cultural context. Qualitative interviews, as presented in the methodology section of Chapter 1, may not always yield "the truth," but they provide important information about communities that is not always accurately documented in the literature. The case of El Salvador exemplifies the problem of missing critical case details when relying on secondary sources while outside of the country, as indigenous Salvadorans are mostly not represented in scholarly literature. There is little basic information available to remote researchers about real conditions experienced by indigenous Salvadorans or the daily reality of Armenians and other small minority groups in Turkey. The governments and international organizations operating in these countries ften collected only national level or regional data, which mixes experiences of ethnic majority citizens with those of the minority. While Mexico has done a better job collecting group-specific data, there are still discrepancies in the data that may only be contextualized in the field. By being in each of these communities for prolonged periods of time during political ethnography, I was able to identify the range of conditions and players that factor into mobilization for cultural rights.

Appendix A.2. Tzotzil and Triqui language speakers in Mexico
This table shows indicators of education level for respondents to a survey by the Mexican Institute of Indigenous Languages, an organization of the Mexican national government. Discrepancies in total numbers reflect lack of information from respondents in the original survey (INALI 2005b; INALI 2005c).

	% of pop. age 5+ speaking indigenous language only	% of pop. age six-fourteen that attend school	% of pop. age fifteen or older who are literate	% of pop. age fifteen or older who received no formal education	% of pop. age fifteen or older who received basic education	% of pop. age fifteen or older who attended college or technical school	% of pop. age fifteen or older who received professional degrees
Triqui	19.7	89.0	63.1	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.01
Tzotzil	28	80.5	57.7	40.3	55.1	3.4	1.2

Appendix A.3. Political parties and leaders in each state
This information is shown for the period during my fieldwork (2009-2013), in order to present the major political power networks contextualizing my ethnographic observations and interviews.

	State leaders, political parties, and terms	Sub-national level	Governor or Mayor
Mexico	President: Felipe Calderón (PAN 2006-2012), Enrique Peña Nieto (PRI 2012-2018)	Chiapas	Governors: Juan Sabines Guerrero (Former PRI-turned-Coalition 2006-2012); Manuel Velasco Coello (PNA 2012-2018)
		Oaxaca	Governors: Ulises Ruiz Ortiz (PRI 2004-2010); Gabino Cué Monteagudo (Convergencia 2010-2016)
Turkey	President: Abdullah Gül (AKP 2007-present); Prime Minister: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AKP 2003-present). Both men retained their offices after AKP won the 2011 election.	Dersim/Tunceli	Governor: Hakan Yusuf Guner (AKP-appointed in 2012): Mayor: Songül Erol Abdil (DEHAP/DTP 2004-2009); Edibe Şahin (BDP 2009-2014)
		Istanbul	Governor of Istanbul Province: Muammer Güler (AKP 2003-2010); Hüseyin Avni Mutlu (AKP 2010-present); Mayor of Istanbul: Kadir Topbaş (AKP 2004-2009, re-elected 2009-2014)

| El Salvador | President: Antonio Saca (ARENA 2004-2009); Mauricio Funes (FMLN 2009-2013) | Izalco, Sonsonate | Mayors of Izalco: Roberto Alvarado (FMLN 2009-2012); José Alfonso Guevara (ARENA 2012-2016) |
| | | Morazán | Governor of Morazán: Alejandro Amaya; Miguel Angel Ventura (FMLN 2009-2014) |

Appendix A.4. Human development indicators at national level

While there is some discrepancy in wealth and human security issues facing each country, they are similar enough in terms of health, education, and inequality indicators to allow for straightforward comparison on national level indicators. The figure below shows a sample of national level information and human development indicators to give an idea of comparative economic challenges.

	Total Population (July 2011 Estimate)[160]	Life Expectancy at Birth	Mean Years of Schooling of Adults	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) 2010 (using 2008 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), in $US	Income Gini coefficient adjusted for inequality (0 = absolute equality, 100 = absolute inequality)	Unemployment rate (total % of labor force)	Number of refugees (thousands)
Mexico	113,724,226	76.7	8.7	14,192	48.1 (2006)	4.0	6.2
Turkey	78,785,548	72.2	6.5	13,359	41.2 (2006)	9.4	214.4
El Salvador	6,071,774	72.0	7.7	6,660	46.9 (2007)	6.6	5.2

*All data except total population is taken directly from the Human Development Index 2010 report (except where others years are noted due to information availability). Sources: for Mexico (United Nations Development Programme 2010a), Turkey (United Nations Development Programme 2010b), and El Salvador (United Nations Development Programme 2011).

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[160] Population estimates from CIA World Factbook: For Mexico (CIA 2011b), Turkey (CIA 2011c), El Salvador (CIA 2011a).

Appendix A.5. Tzotzil case timeline, Acteal, Chiapas, Mexico

1940s: Assimilationist boarding schools opened for indigenous children.

1948: National Indigenist Institute, (INI) opens.

1950's-1980s: Successive Mexican governments practice policies of assimilation, partly through overt racism that fostered internalized oppression, but also through populist tactics such as representing campesino interests in state-controlled unions that did not acknowledge unique needs of indigenous citizens. Ongoing erosion of indigenous land rights push people into conflicts with land owners and developers to maintain livelihoods.

1992: Formation of Las Abejas in Acteal, as a response to a community conflict over women's right to inherit property. Group begins with 200 members in eight Chenalhó communities.

10,000 indigenous Chiapans, including Tzotzils from Chenalhó, marched in San Cristobal de las Casas, protesting generations of ethnically-based exploitation.

Mexican political constitution reformed to define the country as multicultural

1 January 1994: Zapatista uprising. After 12 days of armed clashes with state security forces during their occupation of many municipal government offices, EZLN agreed to a ceasefire. There has been no armed strike by the EZLN since.

NAFTA goes into effect.

8 January 1994: EZLN Revolutionary Laws made public, including Women's Revolutionary Law, which listed principles of equality for women. Las Abejas draw on this law in their own advocacy, though they are not all EZLN-aligned.

16 February 1996: San Andrés Accords signed between EZLN and President Ernesto Zedillo in San Andrés Larráinzar, Chiapas, granting autonomy, recognition, and rights to indigenous Mexicans.

November 1997: More than 4,500 indigenous people, mainly "Las Abejas" and Zapatista sympathizers or members, fled paramilitary and state violence in Chenalhó, with several hundred coming to the refugee camp in Acteal.

22 December 1997: Massacre of 45 people in Acteal while they attended a prayer meeting in the Roman Catholic church. Victims included members of Las Abejas, the radical pacifist group that has led the Acteal mobilizations.

1998-2000: Low intensity warfare by state and paramilitary groups against Acteal residents through harassment at checkpoints, raids, assault, and rape.

2001: Though national regulations for intercultural bilingual education (IBE) begins in 1997, it is only in 2001 that IBE is institutionalized though the national government IBE coordination office, Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (CGEIB). CGEIB designs national strategies on interculturalism and plans to overcome notion that only indigenous students need to become intercultural.

EZLN march to Mexico City to present demands to government

Congress adopts weak indigenous rights law that does not meet San Andrés Accord requirements and violates ILO 169 provisions.

2003: INI closed by President Fox.

New law for linguistic rights of indigenous peoples passed, National Institute of Indigenous Languages created.

February 2012: Mexican Supreme Court releases remaining suspects in Acteal massacre and drops charges against those not in custody. Frayba, the human rights organization in Chiapas that has been advocating their case, issues a condemnation of the impunity and pushes the case forward at the InterAmerican Court of Justice, where it remains under ongoing investigation.

Appendix A.6. Triqui case timeline, San Juan Copala, Oaxaca, Mexico

1948: Copala loses its standing as a municipality during political gerrymandering to bring Copala Triquis under the control of mestizo town Juxtlahuaca.

1940-1965: Periods of guerilla war erupted among Triqui factions for political and economic reasons. This period has been pointed to during the contemporary conflict in Copala in attempt to frame it as simply an intraethic conflict.

Late 1970s: "El Club" forms the Movement for the Unification and Struggle of the Triqui (MULT), initially as a leftist organization to counter PRI control of the area

1977-1983: More than 500 Copaltecos assassinated.

1986: Oaxaca's Constitution amended to reflect Oaxaca's multiethnic composition.

1990s: The Unifying Movement of the Independent Triqui Struggle (MULTI), formed as a response to internal conflict within MULT, with MULT ultimately leaning towards the PRI and MULTI faction seeking political autonomy.

1994: Unity for the Social Wellbeing of the Triqui Struggle (UBISORT), PRI-aligned paramilitary group formed.

1995: Oaxaca State Constitutional reforms bring state's electoral law into accord with Articles 16 and 25 of the state constitution. Article 16 recognizes the pluriethnic nature of the state's population; Article 25 protects indigenous traditions and practices regarding the selection of local government

1998: Oaxaca passes Law on the Rights of Pueblos and Indigenous Communities, creating institutional way for communities to gain political autonomy through usos y costumbres.

2006: Massive protests engulf Oaxaca City against PRI Governor Ruiz and entrenched inequalities. Many organizations are born during this social and political upheaval, and communities like San Juan Copala become more empowered to organize for their rights.

1994-2007: MULT and UBISORT antagonize each other.

10 August 2006: two MULTI members and child traveling with them were killed by paramilitaries on their way to a community organizing meeting.

20 January 2007: MULTI portion of Copala residents declare the town the Autonomous Municipality of San Juan Copala (MASJC).

2007-2010: MULT and UBISORT join efforts to disband MASJC.

7 April 2008: Teresa Bautista Merino and Felicitas Martínez Sánchez, both community radio broadcasters at "La Voz que rompe el Silencio," a station committed to the project of autonomy, assassinated in an ambush by MULT. Their deaths became prominent in memories of violence used in the 2010-2012 mobilizations.

1 Nov 2008: Valerio Celestino Pérez paid by UBISORT to kill Héctor Antonio Ramírez Paz, a community leader, during an autonomous municipality meeting.

27 April 2010: Human rights caravan from Oaxaca City attacked by UBISORT paramilitaries en route to Copala. Finnish human rights observer Jyri Jaakkola and Alberta Cariño Trujillo, Director of the Center for Community Support Working Together (CACTUS) assassinated. Their deaths become central to memories of violence in subsequent rights mobilizations.

October 2010: More than 300 Triqui displaced from Copala due to intense paramilitary violence. Many camp out under the arches of the government palace in Oaxaca City for more than 17 months, holding regular marches and rallies in the zocalo. Though they are only a few hundred people are any one time, their indigenous dress in the center of the city's tourism hub makes their cause visible, as does their harsh repression by military and police, covered in the local press.

Mid-2012: Displaced Triquis move out of zocalo, some returning to Copala and others settling into permanent displacement regionally.

Appendix A.7. Kurdish case timeline, Dersim, Turkey

29 October 1923: Founding of Turkish Republic.

1 November 1928: Turkish alphabet switched from Ottoman (Arabic) script to Latin script.

5 December 1934: Women get (on paper) full political rights to vote and be elected.

Spring 1938: Dersim massacre/rebellion, in which 7,000-11,000 Alevi Kurds killed by military during seventeen days, with possibly up to 50,000 killed in 1997-1998 extended period of violence.

1940s-1970s: Successful linguistic integration policies of Turkish state, mainly through schools, making many Kurdish Dersimis monolingual in Turkish.

1970s: Strong Marxist movement in Dersim challenges state politically and provides different mobilization options than just the PKK, which is the only channel for rebellion elsewhere in the southeast.

1980: Military coup d'état, long period of emergency rule follows.

1980s: Intense violence between PKK and military. Fighting, harassment, and murder takes place in and around Dersim as well as through all of southeast Turkey, with more than 30,000 Kurdish people killed.

1985: Government creates local paramilitary groups to repress Kurdish mobilization.

July 1987-November 2002: "Emergency" legislation gives increased state power in southeast.

1991: First limited removal on ban on speaking Kurdish, though it remains illegal to use in any public space connected to the state likeat utility offices, in city halls, or in schools.

1992: Turkey becomes associate member of the Western European Union.

1997: The postmodern coup

1999: Capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan.

Turkey recognized as candidate for full EU membership

2005: Negotiations over Turkey's EU membership application begin.

2010: Kurdî-De begins offering Zazaki classes to community members in Dersim.

January 2011: All signs in Dersim's municipal buildings changed to be bilingual in Zazaki and Turkish, despite government prohibition on Kurdish languages in political communication.

2011-2013: Article 220 of the Turkish penal code, which states that a person can be punished as if he or she is a member of an illegal organization if their actions threaten state security, is widely used to jail and silence hundreds of top Kurdish government officials, journalists, human rights workers, and activists in the southeast. Numerous protests by thousands of Kurds and solidarity members take place despite continued arrests and repression.

24 November 2011: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gave a limited apology for the role of the state in 1938 Dersim violence.

2013: Kurdish remains illegal for any political communication.

Appendix A.8. Armenian case timeline, Istanbul, Turkey

1915-1922: Armenian genocide in Ottoman Empire, in which 600,000-1,500,000 Armenians were killed by Ottoman subjects in deportations and massacres.

1923: Treaty of Lausanne grants protected status to Armenian, Greek, and Jewish minorities in Turkey, including the right to teach their mother tongues in privately funded schools. Turkey refuses Allies wish to extend protections to non-Turkish Muslims, thereby wedding the definition of minority to religion.

2004: During EU membership discussions, French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier stated that Turkey must recognize the systematic massacres of Armenians in 1915 as a genocide. Government of Turkey rejects such a precondition for EU membership and doesn't accept it as a part of the EU membership criteria.

2005: Academic conference on the events 1915 took place in Istanbul

2006: European Parliament voted against a proposal to formally add the genocide as an EU membership criterion for Turkey.

19 January 2007: Assassination of Armenian journalist and public intellectual Hrant Dink

23 January 2007: 100,000 or more people filled the streets of Istanbul for Dink's funeral holding signs that said "we are all Armenians."

2009: "I'm sorry" apology campaign of mainly Turkish intellectuals to Armenians for 1915 "catastrophe."

Appendix A. 9. Nahua case timeline, Izalco, Sonsonate, El Salvador

1929: Global economic recession.

December 1931: Coup ousting democratically elected Arturo Araujo, led by vice president Maximiliano Hernández Martínez.

January 1932: After fraudulent elections, leaders of different civil society factions, including José Feliciano Ama and Faribundo Martí, organized rebellions in protest.

On 22 January military perpetrated the massacre of between 10,000 and 30,000 people, especially targeting indigenous peasants and leftists in Izalco.

28 January 1932: José Feliciano Ama hanged in the town square of Izalco.

1932–1979: Authoritarian governments led mostly by military officers serving as presidents. Many indigenous people stop wearing indigenous clothing and speaking indigenous languages in this time period due to fear of being targeted for ethnically-motivated violence.

1940: Government removes category of "indigenous" from census

1952: Government made statement to International Labor Organization (ILO) regarding Convention 107 saying government no longer thought indigenous people existed in El Salvador.

1958: Government both negates existence of originarios and affirms International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 107 on indigenous protection.

1960s-1970s: Intense period of originario cultural loss in El Salvador due to pressures of assimilation.

1979-1992: Civil war between FMLN and state.

2001: School Director Juliana Ama de Chile hires teachers to give Nahaut language classes at her Izalco primary school "Mario Calve Marroquín." Classes are funded by the community, without MINED support.

2005: State submitted a report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) stating that the country had no significant indigenous population but simultaneously stated that new attention was being given to protect indigenous communities

12 October 2010: President Funes declared El Salvador a multicultural, pluriethnic country and apologized to originario citizens for what had happened to them in the past.

17 April 2012: Mobilization coordinated by CCNIS in front of the National Assembly building in San Salvador petitioning for Constitutional recognition of pueblos originarios.

April 2012: Municipal Ordinance on the Rights of the Indigenous Community of Izalco signed by municipal Mayor and indigenous people's mayor. Though unenforceable and unlikely to be implemented by new ARENA mayor, the document creates institutional provisions for the municipal government to recognize and protect rights of originario residents.

Appendix A.10. Lenca case timeline, Morazán, El Salvador

15 October 1979: Civil-military coup deposes President/General Carlos Humberto Romero

24 March 1980: Archbishop Romero assassinated while giving mass, the day after he called upon Salvadoran soldiers and security force members to defy state orders to kill fellow citizens.

Throughout 1980, the Salvadoran Army, National Guard, National Police, Treasury Police, and paramilitary groups killed nearly 12,000 people, targeting those working on behalf of the poor.

2 December 1980: Salvadoran National Guard members raped and murdered four American nuns and a laywoman, causing a brief pause in the otherwise abundant US economic aid to state forces.

11 December 1981: Atlacatl Battalion massacres up to 1,000 unarmed civilians in El Mozote.

1982 and 1983: Government forces killed approximately 8,000 civilians a year, particularly targeting Morazán because it was a FMLN stronghold. Indigenous people were automatically persecuted as FMLN members or sympathizers simply for living in the department, though some were coopted into state and paramilitary security forces and issued identity cards that granted them state privilages.

1987: Central American Peace Accords signed but quickly fail. FMLN demands that all death squads be disbanded and members held accountable. Instead, Salvadoran Assembly approves a war crimes amnesty.

16 November 1989: Atlacatl Battalion executes six Jesuit priests and their housekeepers at the University of Central America.

1991-1997:United Nations mission aid El Salvador's post-war transition.

16 January 1992: Chapultepec Peace Accords signed in Chapultepec Castle, regulating Armed Forces, establishing a civilian police force, and transforming FMLN into a political party.

15 March 1993: Commission on the Truth for El Salvador publishes its report, containing more than 22,000 complaints of political violence for period between January 1980 - July 1991, with 85 percent of the violence committed by state forces.

1993: Post-peace accord amnesty law legislated

2012-2013: Indigenous leaders meet with James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, who documents their claims and reports them to the government of El Salvador and to the UN General Assembly. Anaya encourages the Salvadoran government to

ratify the proposed constitutional amendment that would recognize them and to take other measures to prevent cultural loss.