Social Identity, Natural Resources, & Peacebuilding

Arthur Green
McGill University
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Siem Reap, Cambodia

2002: Valley of the Apurimac and Ene rivers (VRAE). Cocaleros marched against a "zero-coca" livelihoods program pushed CARE program out of region. Argued that coca was part of Inca heritage. (Yezer 2011)

www.onepennysheet.com

www.daylife.com

Arguments

(1) That while identity groups and local "communities" are often mentioned as important stakeholders in post-conflict settings and in NRM strategies, there is very little understanding of how social identities interact with natural resources in post-conflict settings.

(2) That PCNRM policy often emphasizes management of the economics of resources (maximizing, stopping, or distributing resource rents) and assumes that social identity grievances are caused by and capable of resolution through economic redistribution. Where such approaches do not work, some negotiable conflicts come to be considered "intractable".

Arguments

(3) That a failure to consider the ways that social identities are linked to NR and how these links impacts PCNRM strategies may jeopardize both sustainable NRM and peacebuilding processes.

(4) That a framework that recognizes how social identities are linked natural resources in post-conflict settings can be developed and can provide policy guidance for PCNRM.

Outline of Presentation

- Introduction
- Questions and Context
- Theoretical Framework Linking Social Identity to PCNRM
- Three case studies: Theoretical Framework -> Action Framework (Policy Design and Responses)
- Conclusion

Three Main Questions

- What are the links between social identity and natural resources in violent conflicts and post-war scenarios?

- How might these linkages impact natural resource management and peacebuilding processes?

- What are current and possible policy responses?

6

Context

Land issues (property rights) in three cases.

- Chiapas, Mexico (national law and San Andreas Accords) (national/regional)

- Abyei, Sudan (PCA) (international/national/regional)

- Aceh, Indonesia (RALAS) (program/community/household)

- State vs. non-state groups (consolidating nations).

- Multiple-scale nature of PCNRM approaches (not just projects).

- Three different geographic regions.

- Examine approaches during and after (what works and what does not work).

Theoretical Framework I: Social Identity?

•Social identity theories… there are several that range from the psychological/individual to the collective.
•Ethnic conflict literature does not directly address social psychology understandings of identity.

• Broad division: constructivist and primordialist.
• Primordialist: fixed identities and antagonisms, clash of civilizations. Sees conflicts of value as insurmountable.
• Constructivist: multi-faceted and that primacy of identity is often context dependent (Gardner 2003).

•Relational (kinships, friendships, etc.) or Categorical.
•Internal (self-identification) or External (colonial state).

Theoretical Framework II: Social Identity?

• "Social identity theory"—a constructivist approach that emphasizes ways that both structural factors, group characteristics, and individual actor decisions play a role in framing and choosing identities (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995; Stets and Burke 2000; Ashmore, Jussim, and Wilder 2001).

• Emphasizes how "frames" are constructed through intergroup actions/practices/events (not emphasizing intragroup roles).

Theoretical Framework III: Five Links

(1) Resources at the center of conflicts between groups mobilized according to historic identity frames OR where group affiliations have become defined in reference to the resource conflict. Conflicts of interest rather than fundamental political or cultural value. Example, diamonds in Liberia and Sierra Leone (tends towards Collier-Hoeffler school and policy responses to rebel financing).

Theoretical Framework IV: Five Links

(2) Social identities (or interest groups that become identity groups) may be the main way in which localities organize resources in the absence of a centralized, territorial authority (Unruh 2006, legal pluralism) (Fitzpatrick on East Timor).

(3) Resources might have symbolic cultural or political meaning to identity groups and thus be indivisible (a conflict of value). Land, settler dilemmas in Gaza and other places… "non-negotiable issues" "intractable conflicts"(Kedar 2003) (Elite manipulation - Preah Vihear).

Theoretical Framework V: Five Links

(4) The outcome of winning or losing ownership and access rights takes on a symbolic significance for identity groups even where the resources themselves may be of marginal economic or symbolic importance (conflict of value). Abyei region of Sudan where redrawing of borders by Hague gave little economically significant resources, but a symbolic victory (Otterman 2009).

(5) Identity conflicts and mistrust may influence resource management not directly related to conflict dynamics (Aceh) (Green 2011).

Methods

Aceh, Indonesia: Dissertation fieldwork, interviews (experts and locals), and survey data.

Abyei, Sudan: Desk review and interviews with experts.

Chiapas, Mexico: Desk review and interviews with experts.

Case Study I: Aceh, Indonesia

- War 1976-2005 (Indian Ocean Tsunami 2004).

- RALAS (Reconstruction of Aceh Land Administration System) = USD 28.5 million.

- Rebuild statutory land administration system, Torrens title.

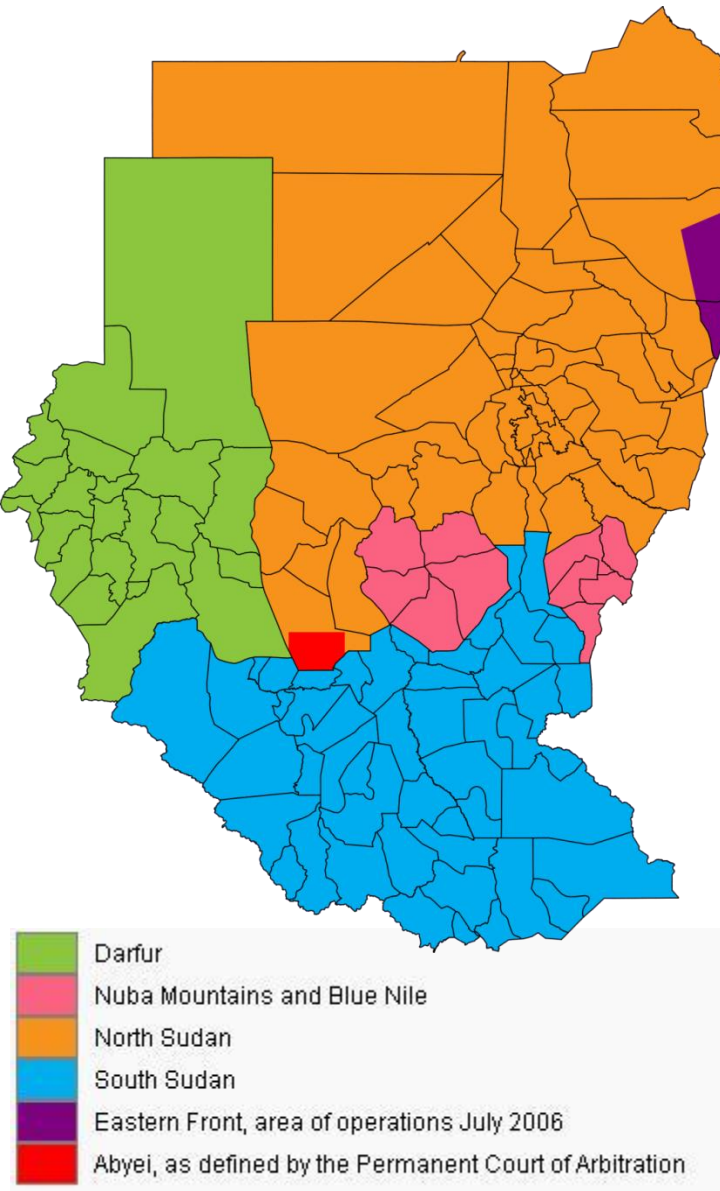- Formalization of title for gender equity, inheritance, and mortgages (direct from De Soto).

14

Case Study I: Aceh, Indonesia

• Issued less than 30% of its targeted 600,000 titles (mostly urban).
• Few plan to continue to register transactions (Why Torrens title? Why not deeds?).

- Lack of sufficient attention to:
    - (1) a clear statutory legal framework for recognizing property rights and alternative tenure systems
    - (2) local incentives and disincentives to title land with the state
    - (3) lingering identity conflict (i.e. separatist sentiment in areas of Aceh)
- Links: #2 (lack of state control), #3 (cultural and political value), #5 (spillover)

15

Case study II: Abyei, Sudan

Darfur
Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile
North Sudan
South Sudan
Eastern Front, area of operations July 2006
Abyei, as defined by the Permanent Court of Arbitration

- Rich oil fields.

- Muslim Arab Misseriya (north government) and the largely animist and Christian Ngok Dinka (south)

- "Abyei became a microcosm of the larger issues dividing the north and the south."

- "Who controls Abyei has taken on a symbolic importance beyond the traditional tensions over oil…" –Colin Thomas-Jensen at the Enough Project. (Otterman 2009)

16

Case study II: Abyei, Sudan

Court Redraws Disputed Area in Sudan

People in Abyei, a disputed area in Sudan, celebrated a ruling by a court in The Hague on Wednesday to redraw the borders.

Tim McKulka/United Nations Mission in Sudan, via Associated Press

By SHARON OTTERMAN
Published: July 22, 2009

An international tribunal redefined the borders of a disputed oil-rich region between north and south Sudan on Wednesday. The ruling
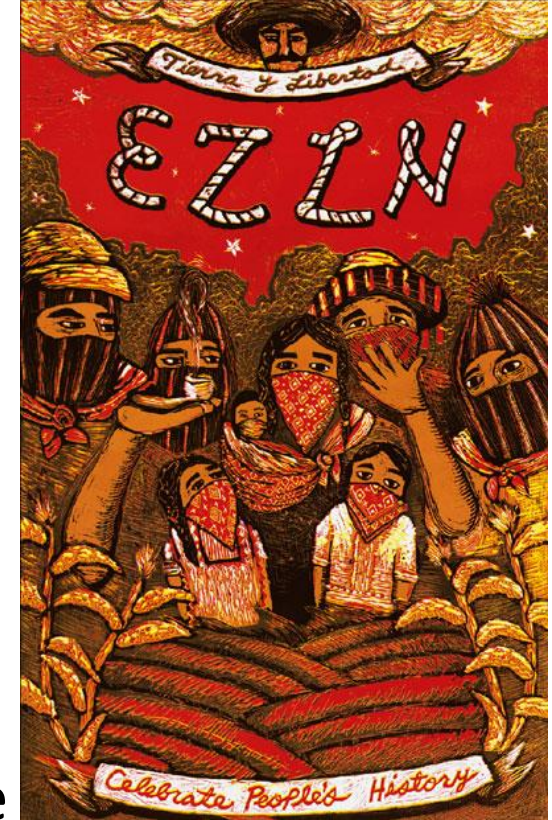
FACEBOOK
TWITTER
RECOMMEND

- 2005 the Abyei Borders Commission = rejected.

- Permanent Court of Arbitration = unequal divide of oil resources in Abyei but left some with Ngok Dinka.

- Links: #1 (groups mobilized according to historical identities) and #4 (victory itself means more than the resource).

17

Case Study III: Chiapas, Mexico

(Kate Luscher)

- Large, poor Mayan community.

- 1917 agrarian reforms meant to destroy the encomienda system (which was a system of feudal tenure labor and land grants inherited from the Spanish colonialists) with the ejido system (legal community trust) – ineffective implementation in this region. Yet, most ejidos in Mexico.

- Communities forced into Lagonda jungle have few formal property rights.

Case Study III: Chiapas, Mexico

Acteal Massacre 1997 (www.libertadlatina.or...

- 1992 reform allows alienation of lands in ejido.

- 1994, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional or EZLN) declared war against the Mexican state. (NAFTA, neoliberalism, minority rights)

- The San Andrés Accords (1996)

- Links: #2 (lack of state control) and #3 (political/cultural value).

19

Conclusion: Possible Policy Responses

Social identity–natural resource link	Possible policy responses
1. Resources are at the center of conflicts between groups that have mobilized according to historic identity frames or defined themselves in reference to the resource conflict.	a) Interrupt high-value resource commodity chains, and provide alternative livelihoods. b) Interrupt relational or categorical modes of identification with narratives from alternative historical periods or interest frames.
2. Social identities are the main way in which people organize resources in the absence of a centralized territorial authority.	a) Seek state recognition of group property rights, which can occur using social tenure domain models or cadastral systems oriented toward communal and individual titles. b) Implement community-based NRM with appropriate legal frameworks. c) Recognize the authority of identity groups or assign authority to them. d) Seek state-led reorganization of property rights, where it is possible to equitably implement such programs in accordance with existing rights and obligations.

20

Social identity–natural resource link	Possible policy responses
3. Resources have symbolic cultural or political meaning and may be indivisible.	a) Disaggregate the demands of groups to see if separate rights, timing, locations, or other variables can be negotiated according to identity group. This approach may reveal that there is no real conflict of value, or at least clarify what the conflict of value is about. b) Reframe identity beyond categorical modes of identification using references to alternative historical periods or interest frames.
4. Winning or losing takes on a symbolic significance even if the resources themselves are of marginal importance.	a) Disaggregate the demands of groups… See #1 above. b) Reframe identity… See #2 above. c) Seek agreement on procedural justice standards—for example, referral to the International Court of Justice or Permanent Court of Arbitration.
5. Spillover into non-conflict related resources.	a) Awareness of possible linkages.

Conclusion: Future Research

1. Apply framework to a number of case studies (especially so-called "intractable conflicts").

2. Encourage alternative definitions of social identity.

3. Focus on more diverse actors:

    a) Violent conflicts not involving state actor (not just separatist regions).

    b) Move away from ethnicity as the only identity frame: class, INGO, NGO, religion, etc.

4. Link framework more to collective action (already focused on intergroup).

Thank You!

Arthur (Gill) Green
arthur.green@mcgill.ca

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25

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Extra Slides

Policy responses

(1) Foremost, recognize and factor in the ways in which social identities impact PW-NRM.

(2) Some authors promote CBNRM as a way to factor in social identity demands to resource conflicts (Chénier, Sherwood, and Robertso 1999).

(3) Drawing from literature on resolving normative order conflicts: focusn procedural justice over substantive justice, introduce informal mechanisms that avoid formally constrained negotiations, allow some dissension when it doesn't undermine the peace process (Berman 2007).

Policy responses

(1) Foremost, recognize and factor in the ways in which social identities impact PW-NRM. Are conflicts involving resources *conflicts of interest or conflicts of value*? How can they be addressed? Cutting rebel financing can be dramatically different from engendering legitimacy in a new government.

(2) Incorporating local procedures and decision makers into formal negotiations or localizing decisions. CBNRM as a way to factor in community demands(Chénier, Sherwood, and Robertso 1999). Often no specific methods and doesn't address larger legal frameworks.

Policy responses

(3) Drawing from literature on resolving normative order conflicts: focus on procedural justice over substantive justice, introduce informal mechanisms that avoid formally constrained negotiations, allow some dissension when it doesn't undermine the peace process (Berman 2007).

(4) Focus on institutionalization before liberalization (market dynamics are often not equitable, especially where institutions are unequally developed) (Paris 2004).

Policy responses

(5) General negotiation and conflict transformation (Lederach) techniques into NRM development models . Attempt to redefine mutual interests and interest groups (Urry and Fisher): (1) separate the people from the problem; (2) focus on interests rather than positions; (3) generate a variety of options before settling on an agreement; and (4) insist that the agreement be based on objective criteria.

Violent Conflict, SI, and NR

Ways in which nexus is currently addressed:

(1) identity leads to violent conflict through claims of ownership or privileged access to resources (both symbolic and material aspects);

(2) identity influences claims of inequitable distribution of resource rents and leads to grievances and violent conflict (Aceh; Southern Kordorfan, Baggara and Nuba (Sulliman 1990, Assal 2006));

Violent Conflict, SI, and NR

(3) identities (constructed grievances) are used by elites or individuals to frame conflicts and mobilize collective action in resource conflicts (greed, Collier-Hoeffler), economic incentives affect group cohesion (Weinstein), value of resource and geographic location may influence type of rebellion and group identity mobilization (Le Billon);

(4) appropriate identity frames must be present (predate) for violent conflict over natural resources (Aspinall).