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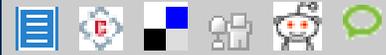
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The Construction of Grievance

Natural Resources and Identity in a Separatist Conflict

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This article makes a case for extending social constructivist approaches to the study of grievance in natural resource conflicts. It does this by analyzing the separatist conflict in Aceh, Indonesia, which is often portrayed as a paradigmatic resource conflict due to the importance of the natural gas industry there. It is argued here, however, that natural resource exploitation promoted conflict in Aceh only because it became entangled in wider processes of identity construction and was reinterpreted back to the population by ethnic political entrepreneurs in a way that legitimated violence. Rather than any intrinsic qualities of natural resource extraction, the key factor was the presence of an appropriate identity-based collective action frame. The argument is strengthened by comparison with two other resource-rich Indonesian provinces where resource extraction patterns were similar to Aceh but where no protracted violence occurred because similar identity resources were not available to local actors.

Keywords: *civil war; resource extraction; constructivism; separatism; Aceh*

W hen and under what circumstances does natural resource extraction give rise to violent conflict? In recent years, there has been a burst of scholarly interest in this topic, such that one observer has written of a new "resource and war paradigm" (Ron 2005, 445). Much of the interest has been stimulated by the work of Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, who argue that internal conflicts should not be understood, as has conventionally been the case, in terms of grievance, but rather through the prism of "greed." Their greed approach suggests that the relationship between natural resources and conflict is best viewed in terms of the benefits that resources provide to rebel fighters. In some early versions, "greed" is meant literally and refers to rapacity, profiteering, and self-enrichment on the part of rebel

groups (Collier 2000). Here the argument resonates with those of other observers of post–cold war conflicts in which warlords and criminal gangs are seen as doing battle for private gain (e.g., Mueller 2000). The later and more influential version of the greed argument is that what counts is not rebel motivations (grievance) but "feasibility" (Collier and Hoeffler 2005, 629) or "opportunity" (Collier, Hoeffler, and Sambanis 2005, 3), insofar that insurgent movements can only emerge and be sustained when resources are available to finance them.

The greed thesis has prompted much new research and has been criticized, elaborated, and revised by other scholars. Some have questioned the robustness of the underlying relationship between natural resources and civil war (e.g., Fearon 2005) or sharpened the analysis by highlighting the varying effects of different kinds of natural resources (e.g., lootable versus nonlootable resources: Ross 2003). Others have pointed to different mechanisms linking resources to conflict, with much recent literature involving a "political turn" (Ron 2005, 445) and renewed emphasis on the effects on states rather than rebel movements. For example, Englebert and Ron (2004), in their study of Congo-Brazzaville, emphasize the importance of instability and uncertainty in the wider political context in triggering resource wars, and the capacity of inclusive neopatrimonial regimes to co-opt potential and former warlords. Snyder (2006), in comparing Burma and Sierra Leone, focuses on the "regimes of extraction" built by states, arguing that states are more likely to prevent conflict when they can gain control of resource revenues or, failing that, share them with private actors. Snynder and Bhavnani (2005) emphasize, among other things, whether states spend the revenues they raise from primary commodities in ways that enhance state strength.

The argument made in this article is part of this political turn, but it is one that returns the focus to rebel movements and emphasizes social construction of identity rather than regime type or state capacity. Briefly put, the argument is that resource extraction will trigger conflict only if an appropriate collective action frame exists in the cultural toolkit of the group in question. Natural resource exploitation gives rise to conflict when it becomes entangled in wider processes of identity construction and is reinterpreted back to the population by political entrepreneurs in ways that legitimate violence.[1] The particular mechanisms giving rise to an identity and collective action frame conducive to violence will vary widely from case to case. In the example studied in this article, three factors were key: the legacy of past conflict, state institutionalization of ethnic identity, and the agency of a counterelite that extended the official discourse on ethnicity to justify revolt.

The case used in this article to develop this argument is the recent separatist conflict in Aceh, a province of about 4 million people in Indonesia. From the mid-1970s, a bitter war raged on and off in the territory until it was brought to an end by a peace deal in 2005. Aceh is a useful case study for elucidating the interplay between natural resources and identity in civil war, because there *is* plenty of evidence that resource disputes were important there. The foundation of the main

guerilla group, the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or GAM) in the mid-1970s coincided with the development of Aceh's Arun natural gas fields, which for a time were the world's most productive. GAM leaders and other Acehnese dissidents emphasized their exploitation, and exploitation of other natural resources, in their condemnations of the Indonesian government. Many scholars have been inclined to follow their lead and depict the conflict as being primarily about resources. As one analyst (a respected anthropologist widely admired for his research on Islam in the highlands of Central Aceh) put it,

> An on-again, off-again rebellion where I work, on the northern tip of Sumatra, has been about the control over the region's vast oil and gas resources (although the Western press continues to stereotype it as ''ethnic conflict''). (Bowen 2002, 340)

In this article, I present an alternative reading of the conflict that views natural resources as only one field among many through which the conflict was expressed and legitimated.

In the first section of the article, I review the literature and evidence concerning the role of natural resource exploitation in Aceh. In the next section, I present my alternative explanation, one that centers on the historical construction of Acehnese identity. A starting point for the analysis is the previous history of violent conflict in the territory, dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. In part, this was important because it provided a bank of cultural references and historical memories with which to legitimate insurgency. More important, the legacy of these earlier conflicts (especially an Islamic rebellion in the 1950s) came to be embodied in a set of institutions and discourses that ultimately proved to be conducive to conflict. The Indonesian state declared Aceh to be a ''Special Region'' and gave an Acehnese technocratic elite a prominence in local administration shared by few other local elites in Indonesia. In so doing, the state normalized and celebrated Acehnese ethnic identity and embedded within it a notion that the Acehnese were deserving of special status and treatment. Acehnese ethnic identity was territorialized and a sense of Acehnese entitlement developed. This sense of entitlement was almost inevitably inflamed by the increasingly authoritarian political conditions then prevailing in Indonesia. In this context, a counterelite eventually developed, in the form of the ethnic political entrepreneurs of GAM, who extended and inverted the official discourse to stress Acehnese victimhood and exploitation by Indonesia.

In a third section, I return to the issue of natural resources and explain that claims about their unjust exploitation resonated so powerfully in the Aceh conflict precisely because they reinforced the ''discourse of deprivation'' that already infused Acehnese identity by the 1970s. Finally, in the fourth section, the argument is elaborated by way of a comparison with two other resource-rich provinces of Indonesia, Riau and East Kalimantan, which experienced virtually identical processes of natural resource exploitation as did Aceh, but where a similar context of

historical violence and institutionalization of ethnicity were missing. These provinces thus did not become sites of intense separatist or ethnic violence.

It will be immediately obvious from the above summary that the approach here views the role of natural resources in the Aceh conflict more in terms of grievance than of greed. However, in seeking to return to a grievance-based approach, the analysis also implies that we need to view grievances in natural resource conflicts not as readily observable and measurable facts, as is sometimes implied in recent literature.[2] It is inadvisable to isolate grievances about natural resources from the wider systems of socially constructed meaning through which the use of those resources is understood. Doing so neglects insights from earlier generations of scholarship on rebellion that emphasize not only the social and political conditions under which people rebel but also the ideological and cultural frames that must be present to legitimate rebellion. It has long been observed that economic deprivation or inequality that at some times and places would trigger rebellion is in other societies viewed as legitimate and normal (e.g., Tarrow 1998, 71). Much the same can be said about natural resource exploitation: what determines rebellion is not the presence of a natural resource industry and its material effects, but rather how it is interpreted by local actors. This simple observation is central to the argument advanced in this article: it is important to think of grievance, not as an objective measure, but rather as a socially constructed value (like identity, ethnicity, or indeed, greed) that arises and may be understood only within a particular historical, cultural, political context. In some circumstances, the context may give rise to ways of thinking about group identity and entitlement that prompt interpretations of natural resource industries in grievance terms, linked to condemnation of the wider political system or of ethnic adversaries. In such cases, violence is more likely than when such an identity-based interpretive framework does not exist, even if patterns of natural resource use are similar.

Aceh as a Resource Conflict?

The article concentrates on the most recent period of conflict in Aceh, which began with the formation of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in 1976. This conflict itself is conventionally divided into three periods: 1976 to about 1979, when GAM had only around one hundred members and was quickly repressed by Indonesian security forces; 1989 to 1998, when GAM resurrected itself and launched a guerilla campaign, prompting massive army retribution; and 1998 to 2005, when, after the collapse of the Suharto regime, the movement resurged and temporarily controlled 70 percent of Aceh's countryside. The conflict persisted until a peace deal was brokered in August 2005. Surprising most observers, the peace has held since that time. According to a government agency in charge of providing compensation to conflict victims, thirty-three thousand people lost their lives violently during the twenty-nine years of the conflict.[3]

Barron and Clark (2006, 5) note that most scholarly analyses see the Aceh conflict in a center-periphery framework: "The common narrative explains the rise of GAM and the conflict as a result of an imbalance between Jakarta and Aceh." They identify three strands in this literature: one emphasizes natural resource industries and their impact, a second focuses on human rights abuses by the Indonesian state, and a third stresses the historical development of Acehnese identity. This article presents a critique of the first approach and contributes to the third strand of analysis but will largely set the second strand to one side.[4] It should be acknowledged, however, that analysis of military violence is indeed important for understanding the insurgency. Several studies stress the gross violence perpetrated between 1989 and 1998 when the Indonesian military hunted down and killed GAM sympathizers and many ordinary villagers. This violence generated support for the insurgency, especially during its third phase from late 1998 to 2005 (Robinson 1998; Sukma 2004; Aspinall 2006). However, military violence comes into play only once the insurgency is already established. It helps to explain how the conflict expanded and became intractable, not how it began.

This contrasts with several accounts that suggest that development of the natural gas industry gave rise, or at least significantly contributed, to the emergence of the GAM rebellion in the mid-1970s (e.g., Kell 1995, 13-28; Robinson 1998, 135-39). This industry loomed massively in Aceh's economy. Major reserves of liquified natural gas (LNG) were discovered in the Arun fields of North Aceh by Mobil Oil Indonesia in 1971. A refinery started production in 1977, with most exports going to Japan and South Korea (Kell 1995, 13). By the late 1980s, 30 percent of Indonesia's oil and gas exports were coming from Aceh (Kell 1995, 14). An industrial zone was established in the surrounding area, including two fertilizer factories. Gas production peaked in 1995, and reserves are expected to be exhausted in 2018.[5]

When they analyze the impact of natural resources on the conflict, most writers adopt a grievance approach, focusing on two causes of discontent. The first concerns what happened to the profits generated by the LNG industry. In a study on Aceh's economic development, Dawood and Sjafrizal (1989, 115) find that "virtually the entire oil and gas revenue from Aceh accrues to the central government." Yet the "central government expenditure in the province has not been markedly above average." Distribution of resource revenues has figured prominently in Acehnese discontent. GAM pamphlets in the 1970s focused on the resource issue, stressing how Aceh's natural riches were being sucked away by "Java" (Morris 1983, 300). The movement's "declaration of independence" of December 1976 claims that "Acheh, Sumatra has been producing a revenue of over 15 billion US dollars yearly for the Javanese neocolonialists, which they used totally for the benefit of Java and the Javanese" (Tiro 1984, 16).[6] A leaflet distributed to foreign workers at the gas fields warned them "for your own safety, to pack and leave this country immediately," because, "Your employers, MOBIL and BECHTEL, have made themselves coconspirators with Javanese colonialist thieves

in robbing our unrenewable gas resources for their mutual advantage'' (Tiro 1984, 106). The movement launched armed attacks at work sites connected with the gas industry, killing two foreign workers in 1977.

The perception that Aceh's resources were being drained to benefit others remained central to Acehnese discontent over succeeding years. After the fall of Suharto, even a casual visitor to Aceh would be regaled with stories about how "Java," "Jakarta," or "the center" sucked the territory's natural wealth away from it; as one of the young leaders of a massive 1999 campaign in favor of an independence referendum put it to a national newspaper, "You can imagine: of the trillions of rupiah produced by Aceh's wealth each year, Aceh only received less than one percent" (*Kompas*, December 2, 1999). There was a common belief that the exploitation had been so great that if Aceh became independent, its residents would be as wealthy as those of Brunei Darussalam, the oil-rich microstate on the nearby island of Borneo.[7]

The second set of grievances concerns the impacts of the industry on surrounding communities. Especially early on, as the gas fields were opened and associated industries were constructed, many villagers were relocated, prompting long-running disputes about compensation.[8] There was also serious industrial pollution and chemical leaks, which poisoned local water supplies, disrupted fishing and agriculture, and damaged people's health (Kell 1995, 17-18). Moreover, relatively few locals were employed directly in the LNG and associated industries, especially in managerial and technical positions.[9] Instead, the industrial enclave formed one half of a "dual economy," almost entirely cut off from the relatively stagnant agricultural society surrounding it. As Kell (1995, 22) explained, "The Acehnese economy has not experienced the rapid structural changes that have occurred elsewhere in Indonesia, despite the LNG boom and the attendant growth of large-scale processing industries." Foreign experts and technical staff from other parts of Indonesia were brought in to service the enclave, bringing an urban lifestyle that offended local moral sensibilities.

Such localized impacts never featured so prominently in separatist literature, but there is evidence that they generated local resistance. For example, in November 1974, a telegram sent by the U.S. consulate in Medan reported that Mobil Oil had encountered "some local Acehnese opposition" and that, according to a leak from a disgruntled Mobil staff member, a "soil testing team requested and received emergency evacuation by helicopter from work site after unruly crowds blocked all five roads from work site."[10] Some of the loudest complaints by local people stressed that their ancestral lands were being taken from them. When a cement factory was built at Lhok Nga, local residents wrote graffiti resisting expropriation of "hereditary lands which they have had passed down from generation to generation" (*Atjeh Post*, May 9, 1980). Communities around the Arun site were particularly concerned about demolition of graveyards (*Waspada*, May 6, 1975).

Several authors point to indirect evidence that such localized impacts contributed to the GAM insurgency. McCarthy (2007) argues that one source of friction was that

these projects violated a local ''moral economy'' in which communities were expected to share the benefits from land use, and that their disruption laid the ground for revolt. In several accounts, it is noted that from at least the late 1980s, popular support for the insurgency was especially great in areas of the East Coast where the impact of the new modern industry was most severe (e.g., Ross 2005, 49). From 1999, when GAM spread, it was certainly the case that the district of North Aceh, where the industry was centered, was a base of the insurgency. Around fifty hijackings of company vehicles, as well as attacks on company airlines and buses and extortion attempts, prompted Exxon Mobil Oil Indonesia to close production at Arun for four months in 2001 (Arnold 2001; Schulze 2004, 37-38).

There have been fewer attempts to argue for a ''greed'' analysis of the Aceh conflict, especially whereby natural resources are seen as providing start-up funds for insurgency. There is evidence that GAM tried to extort money from gas producers and associated industries early on. Pane (2001, 235) refers to a note sent by a local GAM commander to the contractor Bechtel in 1977 demanding payment of $U.S.150,000. But there is little evidence that early GAM extortion efforts succeeded.[11] Instead, GAM in its early incarnation was small, underfunded, and poorly armed. In a contribution to a recent World Bank volume in which case study writers test the applicability of the Collier-Hoeffler model, Michael Ross (2005) concludes that natural resource industries were not significant for GAM's funding, at least initially. Instead, he sees resources through the grievance lens: ''The rise in grievances lowered the costs of recruitment for GAM, and made it easier for GAM to gain local support and financing'' (p. 52).

However, some authors do make observations that accord with the greed thesis. For instance, it is sometimes suggested that prior to the foundation of GAM in the 1970s, Hasan Tiro lobbied the governor for construction contracts in the gas industry but was rebuffed, providing him with a personal motive to begin his rebellion (Sulaiman 2000, 19; Pane 2001, 235). Some authors also contend that natural resource industries, including those in and around the gas fields, provided significant financing for the movement once it was established. Kirsten Schulze (2004, 26), for example, suggests that ''the hardest-hit area'' in terms of GAM extortion after 1999 was the industrial complex around Arun (see also Ross 2005, 53). The large Iskandar Muda Fertilizer factory reportedly paid 10 billion rupiah (about 1 million U.S. dollars) to GAM in 2000 alone (Pane 2001, 114). Echoing observations made about predatory rebel movements elsewhere, Schulze (2004, 28) notes the entry of ''economically driven recruits'' into GAM after it expanded from 1999 and an attendant process of ''criminalization'' in its ranks. Importantly, however, none of these authors focuses exclusively on the natural gas industry as a source of rebel funds. On the contrary, GAM raised its ''taxes'' in virtually every sector of the local economy and from all social groups, including villagers, civil servants, and businesspeople.

Another strand of analysis concentrates on the opportunities for resource rents on the part of state officials. As Robinson (1998, 139) puts it, the political

quiescence of Aceh in the 1960s and early 1970s was because "in those years Aceh was of no great interest economically, and so was largely left alone by the center. With the start of LNG production in the mid-1970s, however, Aceh became a magnet for the greedy and the powerful, and therefore a site of economic and political contention." Most authors writing in this vein concentrate on predatory fund-raising by the Indonesian military. Thus, Lesley McCulloch (2005), in a piece on greed as "the silent force of the conflict in Aceh," considers the Collier-Hoeffler model but points the finger at the Indonesian military rather than the rebels: "The 'military in business' operates in the province by monopolising local production, extraction, transport and processing of some natural resources; price controlling; appropriating land for themselves and on behalf of other parties; and many other commercial activities. It is virtually impossible to do business in Aceh without dealing with the military" (p. 216). In such analyses, the military had an interest in prolonging the Aceh conflict for the revenue-raising opportunities it provided.

Identity and Grievance Construction in Aceh

No scholar cited above argues that natural resource grievances were the only cause of the Aceh conflict. Instead, most view them as one of several triggers of violence within a conflict-prone context generated by political centralization and authoritarianism. Geoffrey Robinson (1998, 139), for example, is both careful and explicit in arguing that GAM did not "emerge directly in response to the LNG boom in the 1970s, but rather . . . the changes set in motion by the state-capital link, and the extreme centralization of economic decision-making, stimulated a consciousness of shared fate that reinforced existing ideas of Acehnese identity and increased the credibility of Aceh Merdeka [GAM] in the area." The argument advanced in this article is subtly different: rather than seeing natural resource grievances as a source of conflict, or as a catalyst or accelerant for the crystallization of identity, I emphasize that it was the evolving framework of Acehnese identity that provided a prism through which natural resource exploitation was interpreted in grievance terms. Put more bluntly, one might say that without the identity framework there would have been no grievances, at least no politically salient ones. Instead, natural resource exploitation in Aceh may have been viewed as unfair and irritating, but also as banal and unavoidable, as it arguably was in other provinces. In this view, grievances should not be seen as trigger factors, antecedent to the discourses that motivate violence. Grievances are instead integral to the ideological frameworks though which the social world, including notions like "justice" and "fairness," are constructed and understood.

In tracing changing Acehnese perceptions of grievance and identity, I am following the lead of other analysts of Aceh as well as broader literature about ethnic and nationalist consciousness. In particular, I stress three factors. The first is the

legacy of previous histories of violence. Numerous studies stress the importance of past violent episodes in producing shared cultural memories that can help to legitimate future violence (e.g., see Wickham-Crowley [1992, 130-53] on "rebellious cultures" in Latin America). The second factor is the institutional and political relations between the Acehnese population and the Indonesian state, which was the context for the emergence of an Acehnese identity defined by resistance to, and victimization by, Indonesia. Here I draw on political science and sociological literature that emphasizes the role of states in institutionalizing ethnic and national identities (e.g., Brubaker 1996; Bunce 1999) and how different institutional forms (federalism, autonomy, consociationalism, etc.) may not only manage ethnic conflict, but sometimes exacerbate it (e.g., Horowitz 2000; Ghai 2000). The third factor is the role of political entrepreneurs, especially a marginalized ethno-nationalist leadership, in changing Acehnese perceptions of identity. In highlighting this third issue, I draw on literature that takes a constructivist approach to ethnic and national identity, viewing such identities not as arising naturally from underlying social formations but instead as being created by social actors, yet with the result that "the perception by those involved that they *are* real should be understood as a form of ideological consciousness which filters reality, rather than reflects it" (Brown 2000, 20).

Conflict in Aceh began long before the rise of a modern hydrocarbon industry in the territory. In the late nineteenth century, the Dutch invaded Aceh as part of their effort to consolidate their Southeast Asian empire, prompting a long and bitter war of resistance led by the *ulama*, or religious scholars. Social memory of this earlier fight survived in Aceh in the early twentieth century and motivated continuing resistance to the Dutch (Reid 1979). In the 1930s and the 1940s, however, many Acehnese began to frame this resistance in terms of an overarching Indonesian identity, which was only then becoming influential throughout the Netherlands East Indies. As Anthony Reid (1979, 16-21) has argued, many Acehnese viewed unity as a potent ideal and favored cooperating with their coreligionists elsewhere in the Indies against their common colonial enemy. This logic peaked in the 1945 to 1949 Indonesian independence revolution, when the Acehnese proclaimed support for the Indonesian nationalist cause and its leaders in Java. Aceh became a redoubt of the Indonesian independence struggle: so fierce was the resistance that it was the only major territory that the Dutch dared not reconquer.

In the 1950s, immediately after Indonesia won its independence, there was a major rebellion among the Acehnese against the new republic. A range of mundane considerations contributed to the revolt, including the abolition of Aceh's status as a separate province in 1950 and the consequent marginalization of local leaders (Sjamsuddin 1985; Sulaiman 1997). However, as many authors have explained, the primary ideational basis of this revolt was religious (Morris 1983; Sjamsuddin 1985; Sulaiman 1997). During the Indonesian revolution, Acehnese leaders had seen no contradiction in holding both Acehnese and Indonesian identities, because

they thought both would be constituted on an Islamic basis. When secular leaders in Jakarta rejected Islamic law, Acehnese religious scholars declared Aceh would join a Darul Islam (Abode of Islam) revolt proclaimed earlier by an Islamic leader in West Java. They did not aim for an independent Aceh but for autonomy in an Islamic Indonesia. Darul Islam leaders emphasized religious doctrine, denouncing their enemies as unbelievers and apostates. They paid little attention to the qualities of the Acehnese as an ethnic group (Aspinall 2006).

There is an element of direct continuity between this history of violent conflict and the later GAM rebellion. Many of the founders of GAM had participated in Darul Islam, or were children of participants. GAM propaganda also made much of the alleged traditional fighting spirit of the Acehnese. However, observers who emphasize natural resources and state violence in their analyses tend to be skeptical that GAM can be "understood solely as the continuation of a tradition" (Robinson 1998, 133). They are right, insofar that violence during the GAM period was not merely a revival of earlier conflicts. Instead, there was stark ideological discontinuity. By the late 1990s, following the collapse of the Suharto regime, there had been a shift in the basis of Acehnese resistance, with government opponents emphasizing ethnicity more than Islam. Separatist guerilla leaders and student activists campaigning for a referendum stressed that the Acehnese represented a nation distinct from and incompatible with Indonesia. A new ethno-history stressed the allegedly "illegal" nature of Aceh's incorporation into Indonesia and denied the enthusiastic support Acehnese had given Indonesia in the 1940s. Critics now denounced the government in largely ethnic terms, as a vehicle for "Javanese" interests (the Javanese being Indonesia's largest ethnic group).

The shift from Islam to ethnicity arose from two processes: one concerns institutional context, the second political agency.[12] First, it resulted from the contradiction between the political settlement promised to Aceh after Darul Islam (in essence, a form of regional autonomy) and the reality of political centralization. This settlement designated Aceh a "special territory," conferring on the territory rights to regulate its own affairs in custom, religion, and education, an outcome that was justified in terms of the contribution the Acehnese had made to Indonesian independence. The formulation was vague, but it helped to localize the aspirations of Aceh's Islamic leaders. As Bertrand (2004, 168) puts it, "The settlement had institutionalized the Acehnese distinct identity by extending provincial status, the designation of 'special region,' and an informal recognition of Islamic law in Aceh." Put another way, the legacy of past violence was important primarily because it was institutionalized in a way that created a novel territorialization and ethnicization of identity.

One immediate consequence of special status was the political prominence of a new breed of local technocrats. Unlike in some Indonesian provinces where outsiders headed local administrations, in Aceh the top posts were reserved for Acehnese, especially secular-educated intellectuals who viewed their chief task as

being to modernize Aceh's moribund society and economy, thus achieving fuller integration into the Indonesian nation-state (Morris 1983, 244-68; Kell 1995, 29-30). Special status also produced an energetic project of identity construction, with this technocratic elite expending much energy on celebrating a sense of Acehnese "specialness" (*keistimewaan*), precisely in order to legitimate the arrangement that justified their relative privilege. From the late 1950s onward, there was lively official and semiofficial cultural production, in the form of government-sponsored seminars and cultural festivals, research projects, books, and the like, that cumulatively stressed the special nature of Aceh in the Indonesian nation, Aceh's status as fulcrum of Islam in the archipelago, and especially, the unwavering contribution the Acehnese had made to Indonesian independence. This was a form of "soft" identity construction because it stressed the compatibility of Acehnese identity with a greater Indonesian one.

This formal celebration of Acehnese uniqueness was also a kind of involution that reflected the technocrats' political powerlessness. In theory, special territory status envisaged considerable devolution of authority to local officials. However, from the late 1950s Indonesia was experiencing growing authoritarianism and centralization, culminating with the formation of Suharto's military-backed "New Order" regime (1966-1998). Restrictive political conditions meant that the Acehnese elite could not deviate from central government directions. Moves by the provincial legislature in the late 1960s to formalize the place of Islamic law in the territory and to demand a greater share of natural resource revenues were given short shrift by Jakarta (Morris 1983, 273-82). As Kell (1995, 52) put it, "The province still formally retains . . . autonomy, yet in reality it is subject to the extreme centralization of state power that has characterized the New Order regime."

Power-sharing arrangements such as regional autonomy or federalism rarely succeed in blunting ethnic or regionalist dissatisfaction in nondemocratic regimes. In such conditions, negotiations between the subnational unit and national government cannot be undertaken in a climate of open "give and take" (Swamy and Gershman 1998, 522; Ghai 2000, 16). In Aceh under Suharto, special status laid the ground for conflict because it reinforced and celebrated Acehnese identity while preventing the realization of regional political demands, thus deepening rather than ameliorating disillusionment.

Eventually, this contradiction was expressed in what one observer (Birchok 2004) has called the narrative of the "broken promise." An emphasis on betrayal was already there during Darul Islam, but it became all-pervasive after the collapse of the Suharto regime and the decades of soft-identity formation that had accompanied it. Many Acehnese now said that the promises of "specialness" had been betrayed. Stories that had been part of the official mythology justifying special status were now used to legitimate ethno-nationalist mobilization. For instance, it had been part of the official narrative that the Acehnese during the independence struggle had voluntarily donated large quantities of gold to the government, allowing it to purchase two Dakota airplanes that became the nucleus of its air force. One of

the airplanes was displayed in the provincial capital, Banda Aceh, as a symbol of Aceh's nationalist loyalty. After Suharto fell, this act of generosity was typically remembered as the starting point of Indonesian perfidy and betrayal. As Cut Nur Asyikin, a female orator prominent in proindependence campaigning in 1999 to 2003, put it in one speech, "During the struggle to achieve independence, the people of Aceh donated two airplanes to the central government. But now the government is donating bullets with which to massacre the very people who had once done it such great service" (*Waspada*, August 30, 1999).

The second factor accounting for the shift from Islamic to ethnic themes in Acehnese resistance was purposeful manipulation by nationalist entrepreneurs seeking new ways to confront the state. Paul Brass (1991, 244) writes that "policies of state centralization which at the same time select regional collaborators in their policies from among particular ethnic group elites will ultimately produce counterelites within the regions to challenge their regional rivals and the centralizing state allied with them. Under some circumstances, such countermovements may turn secessionist." This is precisely what happened in Aceh. The chief actors were a small group of former supporters of Darul Islam and their sons who formed the nucleus of GAM. This group embarked upon a process of "rediscovery" of Acehnese history and culture parallel to that of the provincial political elite. In the context of what they saw as the failure of both Darul Islam and of the Special Territory compromise, they concluded that it was necessary for Aceh to become completely independent. This was a process of "hard" identity formation that shadowed the soft version discussed above.

In Hasan Tiro, an Acehnese businessman and political adventurer who had been in exile in the United States since the 1950s, this group found their leader. He returned to Aceh in 1976 and formed GAM, striving to achieve "national liberation" through "the recovery of their historic personality by the people of Acheh" (Tiro 1984, 158). In his view, the Acehnese were an ancient and noble people, who had been degraded by "Javanese masquerading as 'Indonesians' " (Tiro 1984, 11).[13] Although Hasan Tiro and his followers depicted GAM as a return to the past, in fact their message was both novel and highly consequential. Without their deliberate action to create a new nationalist vision, Aceh's politics may have taken a very different course. Yet they did not create a new insurgent identity in a vacuum but in a context in which the promise and celebration of "specialness" was undermined in countless mundane ways by everyday experiences of authoritarianism and centralization.

In subsequent years, conflict between GAM and the state provided the framework within which Acehnese identity and grievance were constructed. As already noted, a key factor after 1990 was the army's brutal counterinsurgency campaign, which deepened hostility toward the government. In the late 1990s, as Indonesia entered a crisis precipitated by the 1998 collapse of the Suharto government, the ideas first propagated by Hasan Tiro and his followers gained a wide public airing. In sermons at village mosques and rallies in town squares, in academic seminars

and even in the pages of the local press, there was vigorous discussion of the distinct identity of the Acehnese and their need to break with Indonesia. A period of intensified insurgency began, which ended only in 2005.

As already alluded to, integral to the late-twentieth-century development of a distinct Acehnese identity was what might be termed a ''discourse of deprivation.'' Studies of ethno-nationalist movements often emphasize the inventive side of identity construction: creation of ethno-histories, folk-loric celebration of cultural ''traditions,'' literary ''revivals'' in vernacular languages, and so on. There was plenty of all this in Aceh. But more important was a narrative of suffering: a story not of what the Acehnese were, but of what they had suffered and what had been taken from them. By the 1990s, it had become central to public discourse that the Acehnese had continually been exploited and abused by Indonesia. This image first emerged in the 1950s, although then the chief complaints centered on the place of Islam and only secondarily on mistreatment of the Acehnese per se. In the 1970s, ''neocolonial'' exploitation of Aceh's natural resources was added to the mix. In the 1990s, the theme par excellence was human rights abuses. Each layer of grievance built on top of that which preceded it, such that Acehnese identity became one founded in suffering at Indonesian hands. It was an identity of victimhood, albeit not a silently reproachful and helpless victimhood, but one that stressed Acehnese resistance and heroism.

Where Natural Resources Fit

In now returning to the role played by natural resources in the conflict, I make two observations. The first, more of a caveat, is that one should not exaggerate that role. The second is that, to the extent that natural resource grievances were important, this was largely because they resonated with the discourse of deprivation and associated perceptions of identity already developing in Aceh.

There is a beguiling quality to the ''resource wars'' theme. Economists, business consultants, environmental NGOs, and antiglobalization activists all have their own reasons for assuming that large-scale mining ventures are at the center of armed conflicts wherever they are present. Rebel movements often know that framing their conflict as one about resources, in which local people resist harm by exploitative multinational companies, will help to win an appreciative international audience (Bob 2005). Emphasis on the gas industry and ExxonMobil's alleged support for the Indonesian military has been prominent in international campaigning by Acehnese nationalists.

However, the analysis presented so far in this article suggests that the conflict in Aceh arose largely according to a logic that was divorced from the natural resource industry. It is thus possible to point to nonresource factors that explain how and why resistance under the New Order began where and when it did. GAM's geographical spread in its early years was not in fact perfectly matched with the location

of the gas industry and therefore cannot have drawn its primary sustenance from localized conflicts over land and pollution. Rather, it replicated almost exactly the chief base areas of the old Darul Islam revolt.[14] This is what we would expect if one impulse driving GAM was a hardening of attitudes among some former participants in the earlier movement. The chief center of the revolt in the 1970s and 1980s was the district of Pidie. Pidie is about one hundred kilometers from the new gas fields, and retained a primarily rural economy little affected by the gas boom. The heart of the insurgency was in the remote, backward, and mountainous interior, rather than in areas most seriously disrupted by economic modernization.[15] Pidie was important largely because of the personal influence of two men: the former Darul Islam leader, Daud Berueueh, who lived in Beureunuen; and his one-time protégé Hasan Tiro, who mobilized his family connections and local ties. So Pidie-centered was GAM in its early years that army and government officials derided it as a form of localism *within* Aceh.

Even so, it would be wrong to deny that the natural resource issue played a role in Aceh. Clearly, it *was* significant, as even a cursory review of separatist propaganda would attest. However, the relationship between natural resource grievances and violent ideologies is not simple. Eric Morris (1983), in a dissertation written during the early phase of GAM activity, hinted at the complexity when he suggested that GAM's emphasis on resource exploitation in the 1970s was linked to the wider political context. As he put it,

> Pamphlets issued by the Aceh Merdeka movement [GAM] made a straightforward ethnic appeal to rise up against Javanese colonialism. Attention was focused on Aceh's natural wealth. Islamic appeals were noticeable by their absence. In this sense, the Aceh Merdeka movement was a logical extension of the assumptions underlying the technocrats' marginalist ideology. (p. 300)

The technocrats, dominant in local government during the Suharto years, had promoted a ''marginalist ideology'' that argued that rather than concentrating on politics or religion, Aceh should primarily be conceived as a backward region within a rapidly developing Indonesia, and that the government should concentrate on enabling it to catch up with the rest of the country. They stressed economic modernization and political stability. GAM extended the technocrats' arguments about backwardness by locating a precise cause for Acehnese impoverishment (''Java'') and by putting forward a simple solution (independence). The rebel movement's emphasis on resources was thus a counter to a set of ideas then dominating Aceh's political landscape. When GAM attacked the government for its alleged drain of Aceh's natural riches, this was a way for it to respond to and denigrate dominant official discourse and to mark the movement off from its local adversaries. To argue that GAM was merely or even mostly a reflection of a living sense of resentment in the population about resource conflict is to mistake the complexity of the dynamic at play. GAM also reflected the state's own obsessions, even as it rejected them.

Complaints about resource exploitation in part resonated powerfully in the 1970s because they could be linked to the "soft" and "hard" versions of Acehnese identity then developing. In the official, soft version, the Acehnese deserved special treatment within the Indonesian nation because of their former service during the revolution. In the ethno-nationalist version, the Acehnese had a magnificent history but could revive it only if they became independent. The resources issue was one means for the ethnic entrepreneurs of GAM to persuade their interlocutors to make the mental jump from the first to the second position: if Aceh was so "special," why were its resources being exploited for the benefit of outsiders? If Aceh was to become independent, would not its natural riches allow it to restore its ancient glory?

There are two way of looking at the mechanisms linking resource grievances and conflict here. The first is familiar to students of social movement theory and concerns the way that movements strive to "fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996, 6). What is important for violent action is thus never merely the raw materials of grievance, but the presence of collective action frames that emphasize the injustice of those conditions and locate them within a broader map pointing the way toward collective remedies. The presence of a collective action frame that allowed for the "scaling up" of inchoate and localized grievances (e.g., about land expropriation) into a vision of national suffering and liberation explains why large-scale hydrocarbon industries prompted armed rebellion in Aceh.

A second way to think about this process is at the deeper level of identity construction. GAM's attempt to fashion a sense of Acehnese identity mandating armed resistance involved stressing not only the positive features of being Acehnese, but also the negative attributes of Indonesian identity: where Aceh was ancient and authentic, Indonesia was novel and artificial; where the Acehnese were noble and brave, Indonesians were perfidious and cruel, and so on. It is a truism that such binary contrasts between a "Self" and "Other" are crucial to identity construction in most if not all contexts. What deserves emphasis here is the central role played by grievance in this process. Elements of the identity of the Indonesian Other stressed by GAM were only those that were harmful to the Acehnese (Indonesian greed, repressiveness, deceitfulness, and so on). It might thus be said that grievance is the bridge that links Self and Other in identity construction, at least in instances where the Other is depicted as both hostile *and* powerful. In this way, grievance should be viewed as integral to identity construction, not as antecedent to or contingent upon it.

Comparative Cases

It is useful to contextualize the conflict by comparing Aceh to two of the three other resource-rich provinces in Indonesia: East Kalimantan and Riau.[16] Both of these provinces had large hydrocarbon industries and the highest GDP per capita

rates in the country. Indeed, according to one observer in 1985 they had the highest per capita GDP of all regions in Southeast Asia, excluding only Brunei and Singapore (Booth 1992, 40). However, the impacts of resource-based industries on local economies and societies in both places were similar to in Aceh, providing similar raw materials for grievance-based armed conflict. Both provinces witnessed the growth of an enclave economy, an influx of skilled outsiders, environmental pollution, land expropriation, and other deleterious impacts on local people. Yet in neither place did an armed separatist movement, or protracted political violence of any sort, emerge.

Riau is a province located halfway along the eastern coast of Sumatra. Despite its great oil wealth, in 1980 the poverty rate in Riau was among the highest in the country, and much greater than in Aceh (Hill and Weidemann 1989, 42). Like Aceh, one observer concluded that Riau had a "dual economy in which, despite very high per capita incomes (with and without oil), ordinary living standards are little better than for Indonesia as a whole" (Rice 1989, 134). Tensions that arose due to migration and land disputes were even more severe than in Aceh, with another observer noting an "influx of migrant workers from Java were preceded by Javanese transmigrants who received tracts of land, especially in mainland Riau" (Wee 2002, 506). The result was that "the indigenous population of Riau has been systematically dispossessed and impoverished to make room for these newcomers" (Wee 2002, 506).

East Kalimantan, located on the island of Borneo, was a site of oil extraction and refining since the colonial period and, like Aceh under the New Order, of associated industries such as fertilizer plants. The pattern of development was also broadly similar. By the mid–New Order period, the province was described as exhibiting "technological dualism," with weak linkages between the capital-intensive modern sector and the traditional sector based in agriculture and petty trade, "even to the point that the modern sector frequently employs labour from outside the province" (Pangestu 1989, 174). Large-scale timber felling and mining (coal) further added to pressures on land and the indigenous population. Although poverty rates were relatively low, and there was a large urban population, the province basically had the profile of "an urban settler society that lacked any connection with its indigenous hinterland" (van Klinken 2002, 20).

What distinguished these places from Aceh was thus not the shape of their natural resource industries or their impacts, but rather their lack of a historical and political context giving rise to strongly territorialized ethnic identity and a collective action frame legitimating violence to defend it. In the first place, unlike Aceh where the majority of the population consisted of a single ethnic group with a strong sense of ownership over the province's territory, both Riau and East Kalimantan were more ethnically heterogeneous. In East Kalimantan, almost half of the population were migrants, and indigenous groups were themselves heterogeneous (Prasetyawan 2005, 161-62). In Riau, the major "indigenous" group, the Malays,

comprised just under 40 percent of the population, and there were large migrant communities (Ford 2003, 136). Importantly, the major indigenous groups (the Malays in Riau and the inland Dayaks in East Kalimantan) were also spread over other Indonesian provinces and international territories and thus lacked the exclusive sense of identification with the provincial territory that provided a foundation for separatist mobilization in Aceh.

In both places, while there had been some violent contestation in the past, this had not been as intensive as Darul Islam in Aceh and had not left such a lasting cultural impact or a pool of disaffected former combatants. More important, it had not led to the sort of institutional arrangements and ethnic discourse that characterized Aceh. In contrast to Aceh, where special region status fostered a significant (though subordinate) local political elite, in Riau and East Kalimantan local elites were marginalized. Most governors in Riau were Javanese; it was not until the Suharto regime broke down in 1998 that the first Riau Malay became governor (Wee 2002, 507). Similarly, in East Kalimantan the political role of local elites declined precipitately from 1978, when a Javanese was appointed as governor (Prasetyawan 2005, 163; Magenda 1991, 91); thereafter, central government appointees from elsewhere in Indonesia and urban migrants were more politically influential. If we expected a direct relationship between grievance and rebellion, this greater marginalization of local actors might be anticipated to prompt greater violence in these two provinces than in Aceh. That this did not occur is at least partly attributable to the fact that the two provinces did not experience the same degree of institutionalization and celebration of local ethnic identity as occurred in Aceh. Neither population had been fed a steady diet of propaganda by local officials stressing that they deserved special status. The resulting ideological climate was less conducive to separatist mobilization.

After the fall of the Suharto regime, amidst the more open political conditions, there was greater political contestation, some violence, and even protonationalist sentiment in both provinces (especially Riau). In both places, local elites tried to wrest control of natural resource industries from Jakarta. The East Kalimantan provincial legislature called for Indonesia to become a federation (*Kompas*, November 11, 1999). Some local elites in Riau formed an "Independent Riau" movement and threatened secession if the province was not given a greater share of resource revenues (Wee 2002; Colombijn 2003). New ethnic organizations arose, new discourses about the defense of indigenous rights gained ground, and there was a jump in protests about land disputes and other natural resource issues. In Riau, for example, protestors demanded that Caltex, the major oil company in the province, employ more locals; looting of the company's equipment was so widespread that it was estimated that it was losing 1.4 million dollars per month (*Media Indonesia*, September 5, 2001).

Overall, however, protest in both places was far more fragmented and issue-based than in Aceh, where diverse grievances were channeled into a largely

cohesive proindependence movement based on a widely shared and well-established sense of Acehnese identity. In Riau and East Kalimantan, alongside the mobilizations there were also profound debates about what categories of people were truly indigenous (Ford 2003; Schiller 2007). In Riau, even those who favored the province's independence were "struggling to find a cultural content for a Riau national identity" (Colombijn 2003, 334). In East Kalimantan, leaders of various Dayak communities disputed how they might be fairly represented in the major Dayak organization, while Dayak political entrepreneurs were in any case only now beginning to "scale up" their identity to the provincial level (Schiller 2007, 80). Given the tentative nature of the mobilization of identity, it is not surprising that political agitation in both provinces rapidly subsided after national decentralization and financial devolution laws were enacted by the government in Jakarta. Local elites were largely satisfied by the transfer of greater control over natural resources and a bigger share of the revenues they generated, as well as by other political concessions. In Aceh, by contrast, the concessions were initially read as a sign of weakness by separatist leaders and stimulated further mobilization.

The comparison of these two cases with Aceh suggests that whether resource extraction leads to protracted violent conflict is primarily dependent on the surrounding political context, especially the identity and ideological resources available to potential conflict actors. The severity, distributional consequences, or other intrinsic qualities of the resource exploitation itself are less important. Both Riau and East Kalimantan shared the same patterns of primary commodity exploitation as Aceh, but they lacked the institutional history and narratives about identity that were conducive to violence there.

Conclusion

Before returning to the argument presented here regarding the role of grievance in violent conflicts, it is worth briefly considering its implications for the alternative "greed" approach. It will be remembered that the greed hypothesis has two versions: one stresses rapacious and predatory motivations on the part of rebel groups; the other stresses opportunity or feasibility. In the first version, greed is understood as a value held by rebels, and therefore will also be socially constructed, so that much of the critique presented in this article will apply. Indeed, there is a venerable literature on banditry and brigandage that notes the popular moral codes that frequently justify such activities (e.g., Hobsbawm 1969).[17]

The second version of the greed hypothesis is arguably less vulnerable to criticism, because it stresses a variable (availability of funds with which to run an insurgency) that is less dependent on surrounding social codes. However, the observation made earlier that in Aceh the GAM rebels did not fund themselves exclusively from natural resource industries (despite their preponderance in Aceh's economy) but from virtually every facet of the economy is suggestive of a similar

response. Armed rebellions have occurred over the past century in societies with vastly different levels of development and socioeconomic structures, suggesting that determined rebels or potential rebels will fund themselves in almost any context, provided the social environment is supportive. More significant than availability of resources are the collective actions frames that validate their use to fund rebellion.

In this article, I have tried to go further than merely reemphasizing the significance of grievances for internal conflict. I have tried to extend the constructivist approach to the understanding of grievance itself, stressing that Acehnese grievances about natural resource exploitation only arose and became politically consequential for violence as part of a wider discourse of deprivation that positioned the Acehnese as victims of the Indonesian state. This discourse arose from an historical process of identity formation in the context of changing cultural and institutional relations between the state and the Acehnese population. Three factors were key: the legacy of previous generations of conflict; the institutionalization, celebration, and territorialization of Acehnese identity via "special region" arrangements; and the emergence of a nationalist counterelite that radically reinterpreted official discourse on identity. These factors provided the context in which primary commodities became consequential for conflict. Even so, it took hard ideological work by nationalist political entrepreneurs to transform unfocused resentments about natural resources into grievances that would mandate violence.

It is not the intention here to make sweeping claims about the utility of the approach advanced in this article. The approach may be most relevant only in explaining ethnic, separatist, and similar conflicts where identity issues are most salient. Even in separatist and ethnic conflicts, there will be much variation in the circumstances giving rise to a collective action frame legitimating violence (state institutionalization of ethnic identity, for example, will not always be crucial). Yet even a cursory glance at the empirical literature suggests that even in cases where natural resource grievances appear to be central to conflict dynamics, the researcher's attention may usefully be focused on the processes by which those grievances arise in tandem with identity construction. To cite just one example, the conflict on the island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea is sometimes considered a classical resource war, given the dominance of the Panguna copper mine for the economy of the island and in the initiation of civil war in the 1980s. One analyst, however, has noted that ethno-nationalist mobilization in Bougainville predated the establishment of the mine, suggesting that "much of the debate about distribution of revenue might in fact have been a way of enhancing the legitimacy of Bougainvillean ethnic separatist demands" (Regan 2003, 158). Such observations, along with the analysis advanced in this article, suggest it is important to think of grievances about natural resource exploitation not so much as pristine starting points of conflict, divorced from the wider systems of meaning in which they are embedded,

but rather as arenas in which wider contestations over identity and belonging are played out.

Notes

1. I am thankful to the two anonymous reviewers for the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* for some of the formulations used in this paragraph.

2. Collier and Hoeffler in their 2001 paper, for instance, seek to identify what they call "objective measures" for "objective grievances" (p. 6).

3. This figure was attained during a field visit to the office of the Badan Reintegrasi Aceh (Aceh Reintegration Agency) in June 2007.

4. In developing an argument based on identity and its institutionalization, I draw on the writings of other scholars on the Aceh conflict, especially Morris (1983) and Bertrand (2004).

5. "Indonesia: Troubles in Indonesia's LNG Industry," U.S. Embassy Jakarta, Economic Section, 2005 (http://www.usembassyjakarta.org/econ/LNG%20Report_2005.pdf).

6. As Ross (2005, 40) notes, this figure greatly overstates Aceh's contribution to Indonesian national revenues.

7. In reality, per capita GDP of an independent Aceh in 1998 would have been less than one-tenth of that in Brunei (Ross 2005, 49).

8. These disputes lasted into the 1980s: see, for example, *Waspada*, September 26, 1983.

9. This was a source of such complaint that Arun refinery managers publicly pledged to employ more locals: see *Waspada*, August 1, 1982; *Waspada*, January 10, 1983.

10. Declassified U.S. Department of State Document, Page 01 MEDAN 00388 210046Z.

11. Private correspondence from Hasan Tiro speaks of the possibility that these industries could reach an "accommodation" with the movement. A press release blamed the subsequent violence on the companies' alleged repudiation of a "conciliatory gesture," when they were invited to meet the movement's representatives. Instead, they "leaked the arrangements to the Javanese colonialist thieves in Lhok Seumawe" and "participated in a vicious plan to capture" members of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka [GAM]). Hoover Institution archives, Edward G. Lansdale Collection, Box 7, File marked "Tiro, Hasan Muhammad." The quotations are from "Press Release National Liberation Front of Acheh Sumatra February 1978."

12. I have discussed this shift in detail in Aspinall (2007).

13. On GAM and its vision, see Aspinall (2002), Schulze (2004), and Nessen (2006).

14. The one exception is the highlands district of Central Aceh, where Darul Islam was strong but GAM was weak. This exception can be explained by the shift from religious to ethnic framing of rebellion, which led to a loss of support among the Gayo minority, who were the largest ethnic group in Central Aceh.

15. Former GAM fighters interviewed by the author repeatedly suggest that they were received more warmly in remote and isolated rural villages than in urban areas or near main roads: interviews with Guree Rahman (June 12, 2004) and Tgk. Ahmad Langat (August 21, 2006).

16. The fourth resource-rich province (out of a total of twenty-seven during the New Order) was Irian Jaya (now known as Papua). This province, like Aceh, has been the site of protracted separatist and state violence. As in Aceh, the origins of separatism predate natural resource extraction: a separatist movement was crystallized by a period of separate Dutch tutelage in the 1950s and 1960s and by the violent Indonesian annexation of the territory in the early 1960s. When natural resource industries later developed in the territory (most notably the massive Freeport gold and copper mine), separatist leaders incorporated a critique of them into their narratives of national oppression and suffering.

17. Kalyvas (2001, 104), reviewing recent literature on African civil wars, notes that "many rank-and-file members of the African rebel movements that have been stigmatized as lacking any ideology appear in fact to have had a sophisticated political understanding of their own participation."

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