

**The Co-Evolution of States and Nations:  
Modeling Nationalist Conflict as a Side-Effect of Macro-Historical Change**

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In contrast to most conventional explanations of nationalist conflict, this study adopts a macro-historical perspective. Rather than constituting a merely behavioral phenomenon among fixed actors, this type of violence could also be seen as a side-effect of a coevolutionary process involving both state-formation and nation-building. It can be hypothesized that wherever states manage to assimilate their peripheries prior to nationalism, nationalist transformations proceed comparatively peacefully. In cases where the cultural penetration is weak, however, the political and cultural maps clash thus producing tensions that drive national secession, unification, and irredentism. To trace these processes, I propose an agent-based model that embeds nationalist mobilization in a dynamic state system. My preliminary findings confirm the main hypothesis: conflict was found to vary negatively with state-framed cultural centralization. Yet, some of the high-assimilation cases feature extreme levels of conflict due to nationalist unification's undermining effect on the balance of power.