

## EXAMINATION – AUTUMN 2009

### HUMR 5501 – Ethnic Challenges to the Nation-State

Choose one -1- of the following three questions:

1

- a) It is frequently argued that ‘ethnic’ or ‘cultural’ grievances is the cause of an increasing share of violent conflicts and wars in the world during the last four decades (1970-present). Is this a reasonable interpretation of contemporary world history? What are the arguments against or in favour of this reading?
- b) Choose two examples of violent conflict and discuss the advantages and limitations of understanding this conflict as ‘ethnic’ as opposed to other interpretations.

2

In many ways ‘federalism’ appears as a reasonable manner of organising a state which contains two or more ethnic groups. Use material from the reading list to discuss the pros and cons of federal arrangements as seen from the perspectives of law, anthropology and political science.

3

- a) Imagine you were to investigate a set of massacres committed during a period of internal unrest—generally thought of in the international community as ‘ethnic’ in nature. The report is to follow the format suggested by international human rights and humanitarian law, i.e. the historical events in question are to be classified the way these pieces of legislation stipulate. What is needed to catalogue the massacres as violations of international law and under what conditions can they be termed ‘ethnic’?
- b) Imagine you were to design a peace plan for ending a war in country A where a province B tries to secede from the state in question. The majority of the population in province B practices a different religion from that of the national majority and now, ten years into the war, increasingly often consider themselves as different also in terms of ethnicity even though they share language with the rest of the country. In view of what you have read through the course, which factors will be considered fundamental for drawing the blueprint for (a) peaceful (new) state(s) in the area, as seen from the perspectives of anthropology, political science and law?