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External support and rebellion in ethnopolitics

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Introduction

Why do some ethnic conflicts attract external support from states for one or both adversaries, even on multiple occasions, while others do not? Does rebellion trigger external support or does the causal mechanism run in the other direction? How does external support affect, and in turn complicate, the state’s assurance-deterrence dilemma? The issues of internal ethnic war and state intervention are becoming increasingly salient as we move from a system of inviolable boundaries and multilateral involvement to one of failed states and regional interventions. The roles played by the behavior of host states and minorities, separatist movements, ethnic affinity, and cleavage come to the fore in considering cause and effect as related to rebellion and foreign assistance. Analysis of external involvement into ethnic conflicts can be divided broadly into two categories: studies that focus either on (1) the characteristics of the intervener; or (2) the attributes of host state and minority.¹

Studies in the first group focus on motivations and attributes of the intervening state. Collectively speaking, this literature implies that, before intervening, a government will weigh all possible considerations - emotional attachments, benefits, costs, and risks (Regan 2000). In this process, affective and instrumental features both are present. With regard to affect, ethnic ties and affinities play an important role, along with instrumental motives that include strategic, economic, and political calculations (Carmen et al. 2006).

Characteristics of minorities and state behavior toward them are subjects of the second group of studies. Our work follows this tradition. We try to understand the role of fear and insecurity triggered by state discrimination in eliciting external support, which also entails, as it turns out, a foray into the reasons behind rebellion. States set limits on what groups can obtain, with the degree and form of response from the disadvantaged depending upon the openness of the political system (Gurr 2000: 81). Gurr (2000: 105) asserts that discrimination against certain groups provides them with incentives for ethnopolitical action because of resulting poverty,
powerlessness, and resentment. What makes discrimination a critical concept is the insecurity and fear it spreads for minorities. It also can be seen as a mechanism for group mobilization by elites.

Emphasis on ethnic identities through discrimination creates a security dilemma between and among groups (Posen 1993). There is more to the matter, however, than just an application of an analogy from International Relations. As noted in Chapter 1, the state plays a critical role in mediating or controlling ethnic group security (Saideman 1998). The balance between assurance of security for each group and deterrence of one or more groups disposed toward violence or even rebellion is a delicate balancing act that is in play even before realization of open ethnic conflict (Saideman and Zahar, see Chapter 1). In an ideal situation of trust, the state monopolizes the means of violence and minorities do not compete for security. However, if the state does not protect groups sufficiently, they might compete with each other in the quest for security, with rebellion as one possible result.

Attributes of the host state, most notably, security dilemmas created through levels of economic, political and religious discrimination and their effects on international support for a minority group, are of great interest. We seek to extend Posen’s concept of an ethnic security dilemma and combine it with elements of the Minorities at Risk (MAR) model, which includes discrimination as one of the factors that determine the emergence of protest and rebellion by ethnic groups. We add a step to the MAR model that ties discrimination to internationalization of ethnic conflict—i.e. external support. In the MAR-based literature, the road to rebellion starts with discrimination against ethnic groups, which eventually leads to grievances, mobilization and protest.

This chapter’s underlying mission is to convey and test an analytical framework that includes meaningful connections between and among state discrimination, the security dilemma, ethnic rebellion, and external support. Thus it addresses one of the fundamental questions motivating this volume: “How do external processes and third party involvement affect the deterrence-assurance dynamics within states?” (Saideman and Zahar, see Chapter 1). In particular, does external support facilitate or dampen rebellion? External support, of course, is not exogenous. Thus, the impact of rebellion on external support also must be brought into the model created in this chapter.

Taken together, the analysis includes two interdependent stages. The framework seeks to explain external support and rebellion, respectively. External support is explained by a combination of (1) behavior by the state and minority group; (2) the degree to which a separatist element is entailed by the conflict; and (3) ethnic affinity and cleavage. The same network of variables is used to explain rebellion, with the latter and external support also playing causal roles in relation to each other.

This chapter proceeds in four additional parts. The first is a theoretic-
ally oriented discussion of the main concepts from the preceding paragraph. The second part is the research design, which includes hypotheses and measurement of variables. For this study, the MAR (Gurr 2002) and external support data sets (Saideman 2002) are used for the time interval from 1990 to 1998. Data analysis appears third. Fourth, and finally, conclusions and directions for future research are offered.

Discrimination, rebellion, and external support: the security dilemma in action

Posen (1993) applies a concept from International Relations, the security dilemma, to ethnic conflict. Realism, as an international relations theory, explains that international anarchy leads to security concerns for states. Collapse of an imperial power might create similar fear for different groups in a domestic power vacuum, as observed in the breakup of Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union (Posen 1993). If groups with different ethnic, religious, or cultural identities suddenly are forced to protect themselves due to disintegration of the state apparatus, their threat perception can shift dramatically. Under these circumstances, a neighboring group can be perceived as a threat, which increases the chance of conflict. Each ethnic group tries to increase its own security which, in turn, creates an unsettled and potentially threatening environment for the others (Posen 1993: 104).

Saideman expands the security dilemma concept by applying it not only to collapsed states, but also existing states with ethnic security problems: "If the state cannot protect the interests of all ethnic groups, then each group will seek to control the state or secede so that they can control their own state, decreasing other groups' security and decreasing the state's ability to provide security for any group" (Saideman 1998: 135). Although Saideman argues that ethnic groups might feel insecure about many different things, his definition of security includes three aspects: physical, economic, and political. Groups cannot rely on the impartiality of the state and efforts to provide their own security in each aspect become more likely (Saideman 1998).

Our approach to the security dilemma as related to external support focuses on two aspects: economic and political insecurity caused by discriminatory actions by the state. Discrimination is as an important source of ethnic conflict, but is not prominent in studies focusing on minority fear and insecurity. Although the security dilemma as elaborated by Saideman (1998) explicitly refers to a discriminatory state, it is not linked directly to the concept of discrimination. If groups are insecure because of the vicious cycle created by the security dilemma, they will have a tendency to act in one of three different ways: seek to control the state, create a state they can control (secession) or join a state where their ethnic group is more secure (irredentism) (Ayres and Saideman 2000: 1130). In this process, ethnic groups facing discrimination and a security dilemma can choose to
ask for outside help—third-party intervention—and internationalize the conflict in order to realize their ultimate goals. Ethnic groups weakened by intentional and purposeful state discrimination will have a hard time fighting for their cause, whether it involves secessionism or irredentism. Therefore, to reduce the capability asymmetry between themselves and the state, they need the support of outsiders. This process, of course, could produce a causal mechanism in which ensuing external support triggers rebellion of the now more capable ethnic group.

What, then, does discrimination mean in the context of behavior that creates insecurity and fear? Group discrimination is defined by MAR as a deliberate act of maintaining inequalities for members of an ethnic group in terms of material well-being, political access or cultural status in comparison to others (Gurr 2000: 106). Politically active ethnic groups targeted for discrimination are of “greatest concern in international politics” (Gurr and Harff 1994: 5). In 1990, around 80 percent of the politicized ethnic groups suffered from either contemporary or historical economic and/or political discrimination (Gurr and Harff 1994). Violence and even full-scale rebellion become salient alternatives in the thinking of such groups when their plight continues for an extended period.

Gurr’s (2000: 106-107) authoritative treatment emphasizes several aspects in conveying how the MAR Project comes to grips with the substantive meaning of discrimination. First of all, discrimination is not a universal act but rather is applied to certain groups selectively. Second, group discrimination is accepted as a matter of social practice and/or the result of public policy. Third, it may affect the collective gains of the group more than the well-being of individual members. Fourth, discrimination is usually rooted in the past. Fifth, and finally, MAR includes both advantaged and disadvantaged minorities (Gurr 2000: 106-107). MAR’s conception of discrimination points the way toward the security dilemma. Discrimination is intentional, which means it is addressed selectively to a certain group; this causes fear and collective-based responses can be expected. Group-based coping then threatens the security of other groups and provides an easy path to violence.

While discrimination might be manifested along many dimensions of public policy, the two categories emphasized by MAR will be the focus of this study: political and economic. This choice of priorities is consistent with Saideman’s (1998) assessment of economic and political insecurity. Political discrimination refers to limitations imposed on people exercising their political rights or diminished access to political positions as compared to others (Gurr 2000). In 1994-95, approximately one-third of 275 minorities experienced political discrimination (Gurr 2000: 114). Examples include Albanians in Yugoslavia, Hungarians in Slovakia, Tibetans in China, Turks in Bulgaria, Palestinians in Jordan and immigrant workers in Switzerland.

Economic discrimination refers to whether members of a group are, or have had, better economic opportunities or are more successful in their professions.
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have been, intentionally limited in their access to the conditions of material well-being in comparison with other groups that have unlimited access in their own society (Gurr 1993b). Gurr (2000: 110) reports that, for the period of 1994-95, 177 groups out of 275 faced some kind of economic discrimination. For instance, Arab citizens of Israel are subject to more economic discrimination than even other groups with reduced status, such as immigrant Jews (Gurr 1993a). Although these Arab citizens have more political rights as compared to ordinary citizens of Syria, they still are discriminated against by the society in which they live. Another striking example of this kind of discrimination is Copts in Egypt. Despite being more educated (on average) than Muslims, Copts usually experience greater difficulty in finding employment. An indicator of the impact of economic discrimination is that “a number of Coptic university graduates reportedly converted to Islam to for economic reasons” (Gurr 2000: 139).

Discriminatory economic systems, which are based on ethnicity or class, can increase the level of insecurity for a particular group and generate resentment, anger, and disturbance (Brown 2001). A country may have a prosperous and growing economy, but if a particular group is excluded, propensity for conflict may be high. Disadvantaged groups of people can be expected to question the system’s fairness and even its legitimacy. Economic development can enhance stability, but significant inequalities or gaps among groups in a society are capable of producing the opposite effect (Brown 2001).

While the preceding discussion shows that discrimination along several dimensions can have an effect on ethnic conflict, a key gap remains in the research. Specifically, the impact of political and economic discrimination, along with other factors, on external support for ethnic groups is in need of further attention (Regan 1998: 756). Our effort to fill the gap will build on the best available model of ethnic conflict, which is put forward by MAR. The MAR model is the product of research initiated by Gurr that dates back to his classic work, Why Men Rebel (1970). The model explains ethnic conflict through intervening factors that include deprivation and political mobilization. The Project stands out as a foundation for research on stateless nations (Meho and Tibbo 2003).

While Gurr's theoretical framework is multifaceted, its key components can be summarized as three basic steps: discrimination, grievance, and mobilization (Fox 2000). In the first step, a minority suffering from political, economic, and cultural discrimination develop fears and insecurity and articulate grievances. The idea behind this step is quite simple, but also profound: people react to acts of discrimination. One of the basic reactions to insecurity is anger, which at this point might take either constructive or destructive forms. Constructive anger produces primarily peaceful actions by minorities. When destructive, anger causes a more direct challenge to sources of discrimination. In both ways, however, consciousness of grievance takes hold among the minority. For instance, contemporary grievances
among members of the Turkish community in Germany, such as threats to their personal safety, originate from discrimination over the long term.

In MAR's second step, grievance stemming from discrimination is the main element that triggers mobilization of a minority. Overt discriminatory policies give people powerful incentives for action; targeted groups can be expected to try to improve their condition. Discrimination will amplify already existing ethnic identification in a way that motivates members to look for collective solutions. Depending on the strength of group identity, degree of ethnic group cohesion, type of political environment, severity of government violence, extent of external support, and international status of the regime, a minority can be expected to develop strategies for political action (Harff and Gurr 2004). This is called mobilization and more than 200 of 233 groups experiencing discrimination became organized politically between 1945 and 1989 to pursue their collective interests (Gurr and Harff 1994: 6; see also Gurr 1994). In MAR's third and final step, politically mobilized minorities are ready to take on political actions, like protest and rebellion.

External support is anticipated to reduce the asymmetry between the state and rebels and to facilitate mobilization, along with protest and rebellion, by increasing the level of group cohesion and identity of the aggrieved groups (Gurr 2000; Fox 2001). External support is defined as "verbal encouragement, financial support, weaponry, military personnel, and other forms of active or passive support the ethnic group receives from outside the state" (Harff and Gurr 2004: 105). Third parties to ethnic conflict can sponsor negotiations, impose sanctions on one side or the other, or even intervene militarily. External material, political and moral support contributes to group cohesion and political mobilization. Thus, it is expected that a high level of external support will not only increase the likelihood of violent minority mobilization by amplifying group capacities and opportunities for action up to the level of rebellion (Harff and Gurr 2004; Gurr 2000) but also complicate the assurance-deterrence dilemma of the state.

What, then, is the overall role of external support in the MAR model and security dilemma mentioned above? External support can be crucial to minority success and is the main source of internationalization for ethnic conflict (Saideman 2001a, 2001b). However, few studies have enquired into why some minorities receive support while others do not. Could the type and level/extent of discrimination, degree of fear, and insecurity provide some of these reasons? Human rights abuses and refugee flows would appear to be salient reasons to intervene. A tendency among discriminated groups to internationalize their conflict in the hope of obtaining support is another one. Compared to the generally better-equipped and organized armies of states, ethnic groups have little military power. Thus a quest for third-party support naturally emerges.

Hypotheses
This research aims to study external support and its impact on minorities.

Three hypotheses are tested:

H1: The higher the level of fear within the minority, the higher the level of external support.
H2: The higher the level of action within the minority, the higher the level of external support.
H3: The higher the level of action within the minority, the lower the level of fear.

The first hypothesis suggests that fear might raise the level of acts of discrimination against the minority, leading to an increase in one for the other. The second hypothesis states that fear and action have a direct impact on the level of external support. The third hypothesis suggests that fear might decrease the level of external support. Therefore, a high level of external support might decrease the level of fear, leading to an increase in the level of action within the minority.
The research design will test two sets of hypotheses, about external support and rebellion, respectively. The first set of hypotheses focuses on external support.

Three hypotheses pertain to some form of behavior by the host state and minority groups as the independent variable:

1. The likelihood of external support increases to a limited degree as the host state increases political discrimination against minorities within its borders.
2. The likelihood of external support increases to a limited degree as the host state increases economic discrimination against minorities within its borders.
3. The likelihood of external support first increases and then decreases as the level of violence increases between the host state and minority groups.

The first two of these hypotheses are based on intuition about who might take an interest in discrimination. External support may ensue as acts of discrimination are witnessed by outside supporters of the ethnic group, leading to calls for assistance or even spontaneous, unsolicited help in one form or another. H1 and H2 refer to a limited relationship because, however repugnant, discrimination is not anticipated to have the same impact on outside observers as mass killing or even more restricted levels of overt violence. While either the elite or general public in another state might sympathize with a minority experiencing discrimination, the likelihood of active support would not increase dramatically in the same way anticipated as a result of media coverage, for instance, of more violent suffering. Both of the hypotheses put forward a positive relationship between external support and economic and political discrimination. A follow up question is “Are economic and political discrimination equally powerful in their ability to mobilize masses?” Studies that have looked at the factors of economic and political discrimination suggests that theoretically both are equally powerful in mobilizing groups. For instance, Brown et al. (2001) regards discriminatory economic systems and discriminatory political institutions as underlying causes of internal conflict. Gurri’s (2000: 169) analysis of mobilization of ethnic groups includes both economic and political discrimination, although the number of groups facing economic (p. 179) and political (p. 211) discrimination in 1990 and 1991 is slightly different. Mean scores for the same period are 1.73 for economic discrimination and 2.26 for political discrimination.

The third hypothesis puts forward a curvilinear connection as a result of conflicting ideas found in the literature, each of which seems theoretically defensible and supported by evidence. Consistent with the discussion a
moment ago, Saideman (2002) argues that violent conflict will make identities more salient and increase the likelihood that the mass public of another state, notably one in which the minority at risk also exists, will get involved by offering support. Regan (1998), by contrast, argues that external intervention becomes less likely because extremely violent conflict greatly reduces the prospects of success. Risk aversion takes precedence and elites are less likely to offer support. Putting together the arguments from Regan and Saideman thus produces a curvilinear expectation: higher (lower) likelihood of external support at lower (higher) levels of violence between the host state and its minorities.

Three hypotheses focus on attributes of the host state and derive from an argument concerning vulnerability:

H4: Separatist minority groups are less likely to receive external support than other groups.
H5: Minorities that reside in states with a high number of other separatist groups are less likely to receive external support than other minorities.
H6: Separatist groups in neighboring countries decrease the likelihood of external support to minorities in host states.

The presence of separatist groups, as opposed to those who might have more limited goals, is taken as a sign of particular vulnerability for a state. Moreover, there are neighborhood effects to consider. States in a subregion where separatism is common are more likely, according to the "vulnerability" argument as described by Saideman (2002: 30), to show restraint toward ethnic conflicts in their vicinity in the hope of reciprocity. Case studies suggest that states generally are unwilling to support separatism, even when matters become violent (Carmen and Rowlands 2004). Saideman's (2002: 42) data analysis, however, produces results that are either non-existent or opposite to those expected, which would tend to support a more realist-oriented view of the dynamics of mutual vulnerability. Instead of cooperation through observance of norms, as might be expected by a liberal perspective, the result is something more like the Tragedy of the Commons, where meddling out of self-interest becomes the modal result among the mutually vulnerable states. H4 through H6 are worded as would be anticipated by the conventional wisdom on the subject, but more nuanced results, possibly once again supporting a realist point of view, would not be considered anomalous if they occur.

Three hypotheses focus on ethnic affinity and cleavage, factors that have demonstrated some importance in explaining third-party intervention in a series of case studies (Carmen et al. 2006):

H7: The likelihood of external support increases when ethnic kin of the minority group dominate an adjoining state.
H8: The likelihood of external support increases when religious differences distinguish the ethnic minority group from the majority.

H9: The likelihood of external support increases when racial differences distinguish the ethnic minority group from the majority.

H10 is based on the idea that ethnic affinity will raise the probability of external support. An example of how this might work in practice is the case of Sri Lanka and its Tamil minority, which traditionally looks across the Balf Strait for both moral and even more tangible support from ethnic brethren in India. As ethnic tensions rose within Sri Lanka during the mid-1980s, both politicians and the general public in Tamil Nadu pressured the Indian government to recognize the grievances of ethnic kin in Sri Lanka and offer support. India eventually did intervene, with mixed results, in 1987 (Carment et al. 2006).

Religious and racial differences variables are incorporated in H8 and H9 in recognition of the potential effects of group-based cleavages. To begin, salience of ethnic identity appears as an important catalyzing factor in models from Gurr’s MAR Project. Gurr (2000) argues that greater salience of ethnocultural identity facilitates mobilization for collective action. Although he accepts that communal identities are multidimensional, he distinguishes some traits such as race and religion from others since they are intrinsically more important. Aside from secular societies, religion is perceived as a strong source of group cohesion in many instances. When incompatibility of two religions is underlined due to any reason, salience of ethnic identity is assumed to increase suddenly for ethnic groups. Fox (2001), for example, finds symmetry in external support from states vis-à-vis the religion of those being assisted. Islamic and Christian states tend to help their own religious brethren elsewhere, although this effect is more pronounced among the former than the latter.

Racial differences between people are rivaled perhaps only by gender in immediate visibility, so the grounds for inclusion of this variable in the framework are even more obvious here.

Two variables have the status of controls. Africa also is singled out because of the preceding arguments back and forth, from liberal and realist points of view, about mutual vulnerability causing restraint, or, perhaps instead, encouraging external support in the attempt to achieve relative gains. The regime type of the host state also is included due to its strong presence in the literature on conflict processes over the last 15 years (Russett and Oneal 2001; Choi and James 2005). Authoritarian regimes, which are not constrained by institutions or public opinion, can act more easily in ways that cause grievances for minority groups—for example, by simply ignoring their interests or suppressing them. This also can happen with a democratic government, but is regarded as less likely due to existing rules, institutions, and norms. Thus, regime type emerges as something important to recognize in assessing the relationship between discrimina-
tion, violence, separatism, and external support. Moreover, existing data analysis from MAR links regime type to respective patterns of ethnic conflict: "[Ethnopolitical groups in democratic societies are more likely to use strategies of protest than rebellion]" (Gurr 2000: 154). In particular, compared to autocratic regimes, democracies have a smaller number of ethnic wars and rebellions (Gurr 2000).

For the second set of hypotheses, which focuses on rebellion, a more detailed explanation will be in order because the effects mostly follow from the connections described for the first set of hypotheses. H1 and H2 are straightforward derivatives from the MAR model presented earlier. Acts of discrimination by the state are anticipated to stimulate mobilization, which makes rebellion more likely to occur. H3 is based on a reciprocal effect. Just as rebellion is expected to encourage external support, the latter is anticipated to stimulate the former.

H4 and H5, which pertain to whether a group is separatist and resident in a state with a high number of other separatist groups, assert a positive connection with rebellion. Separatism is a more "zero sum" type of movement within a state. If a minority is committing to leaving and taking territory with them, the conflict becomes more fundamental and, therefore, more likely to produce rebellion than otherwise. The same is true with a higher number of secessionist groups because the state must deal with so many challenges to its authority that rebellion becomes more likely to emerge in the absence of especially astute conflict management. The effect for H6 is in the direction opposite to the other two variables pertaining to separatism: Neighbors with their own separatist problems, based on the logic of vulnerability, become less likely to offer support to ethnic groups abroad out of presumed mutual restraint. This is another manifestation of the "African factor" as introduced earlier, namely, risk aversion about intervention among weak states.

H7, which concerns ethnic kin in a dominant position in an adjacent state, puts forward a positive connection with the likelihood of rebellion. This is a straightforward reflection of at least perceived greater opportunity for action. Finally, H8 and H9 focus on religious and ethnic differences. In each instance the expected association with rebellion is positive because these variables pertain to the salience of differences between, and among, groups. The more salient the differences, the higher the likelihood of rebellion, all other things being equal, because there is a greater disposition toward mobilization of groups in conflict with each other.

Control variables also operate in much the same way in this second stage of the framework. Once again, a check is made for effects related to Africa. African states, of course, are chronically troubled and thus also more likely to experience rebellion, at least on the basis of intuition. The other control, regime type, associates democracy with peace. Thus democracies are anticipated to settle their internal differences through peaceful means, with rebellion as less likely than in autocracies.
Data, measurement, and method: data sources

Minorities at Risk's data set 2002 and the external support data set compiled by Saideman (2002) are used in this research design. Saideman's external support data is compatible with the basic MAR data, where the units of analysis also are minorities that exist within states.

Two aspects of the data are worth noting in particular: first, MAR is the only large-scale data set that focuses on minorities at risk. MAR's 2002 version includes political and economic discrimination against 285 politically active groups throughout the world from 1980 to 2000. Since our concern is not with states that receive support, but instead ethnic groups, MAR data (Gurr 2002; see also Saideman 2002: 34) becomes the obvious choice. Second, the third-party intervention or external support variable is not available in the final release of MAR (Gurr 2002). Therefore, Saideman's external support data is combined with it. The time interval we can cover is from 1990 to 1998.

Dependent variables

We have two dependent variables, the intensity of external support and rebellion. Intensity of support refers to the highest level of support given by a third-party state to a minority group (Saideman 2002). The coding is as follows: (0 – None): No support received; (1 – Low): Ideological encouragement, diffuse support (relatively weak forms of support), other unspecified support; (2 – Moderate): Non-military financial support, access to external communications, markets, transport, including the hosting of nonviolent exile organizations; (3 – Strong): Funds for military supplies, provision of military equipment and supplies, military training in exile, advisory military personnel, peace-keeping observers; (4 – Intense): Blockades, interdiction against regime, cross-border sanctuaries for armed fighters, rescue missions in country, cross-border raids in support of dissidents, active combat units in country. In our data set this is coded as three biennial (1990–91, 1992–93, 1994–95) and three annual (1996, 1997, 1998) variables (see MAR 2002; Saideman 2002).

Rebellion measures level of conflict between group and host state. The variable measures level of conflict between ethnic group and host state. The categories are as follows: 0 – None; 1 – Political banditry, sporadic terrorism; 2 – Campaigns of terrorism; 3 – Local rebellions: Armed attempts to seize power in a locale; 4 – Small-scale guerrilla activity; 5 – Intermediate scale guerrilla activity which has one or two of the defining traits of large-scale activity and one or two of the defining traits of small-scale activity; 6 – Large-scale guerrilla activity; 7 – Protracted civil war that is fought by rebel military units with base areas.
Independent variables

Independent variables included in the analysis are as follows: external support, political and economic discrimination, rebellion (also rebellion squared), separatist groups, other separatist groups in the host state, separatist groups in adjacent state, domination by ethnic kin in adjoining state, religious differences, and racial differences. Rebellion and external support play roles as independent variables in the respective models, but their coding already has been explained above.

Political discrimination accounts for how certain groups are (or have been) limited systematically in exercising their political rights or access to political positions as compared to others in their society. This variable, therefore, represents “macro coding of the role of public policy and social practice in maintaining or redressing political inequalities” (MAR 2002: 59). The categories of government involvement are as follows: (0) no discrimination; (1) historical neglect/remedial policies (i.e. substantial under-representation in political office and/or participation due to historical neglect or restrictions and explicit public policies are designed to protect or improve the group’s political status); (2) neglect/no remedial policies (i.e. substantial under-representation due to historical neglect or restrictions, no social practice of deliberate exclusion, no formal exclusion and no evidence of protective or remedial public policies); (3) social exclusion/neutral policies (i.e. substantial under-representation due to prevailing social practice by dominant groups and formal public policies toward the group are neutral or, if positive, inadequate to offset discriminatory policies); and (4) exclusion/repressive policy (i.e. public policies substantially restrict the group’s political participation by comparison with other groups) (MAR 2002: 59–60).

Economic discrimination focuses on how certain groups are (or have been) intentionally limited in their access to the conditions of material well-being in comparison with others in their society (MAR 2002: 75). The economic variable measures the level of discrimination based on government involvement, with categories as follows: (0) no discrimination; (1) historical neglect/remedial policies (i.e. significant poverty and under-representation in desirable occupations due to historical marginality, neglect, or restrictions and public policies which are designed to improve the group’s material well-being); (2) historical neglect/no remedial policies (i.e. significant poverty and under-representation due to historical marginality, neglect, or restrictions and no social practice of deliberate exclusion and few/no public policies aimed at improving the group’s material well-being); (3) social exclusion/neutral policies (i.e. significant poverty and under-representation due to prevailing social practice by dominant groups and formal public policies toward the group are neutral or, if positive, inadequate to offset active and widespread discrimination); and (4) restrictive policies (i.e. public policies – formal exclusion and/or recurring repres-
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external discrimination, separating state, support at then or have access to available social (2002) to the understanding effect of years as a function to an individualistic approach and reflect the MAR's economic and political discrimination variables are coded for most individual years in the 1990s (1990–98) (Gurr 2002). For every case, the maximum level of economic or political discrimination exercised by a particular state against all of the minorities within its boundaries is recorded. In other words, when external support is the dependent variable, a one-year lag is applied to the discrimination variables.

Separatism is included in various ways in this study to capture different dimensions of the “vulnerability” argument as described, but not endorsed, by Saideman (2002). Separatist group is a MAR index that includes both historical and active separatist groups. Saideman (2002) reclassifies MAR's index into a dichotomous variable. If the group is actively separatist it is coded as 1, otherwise 0. The recoded version is used to focus on the impact of groups that are currently engaged in an effort to gain separation. Other separatist groups in the host state indicates the number of other groups in the same state that are actively separatist (Saideman 2002). This variable assesses vulnerability of a state based on the number of MAR that are engaged in efforts to separate. Separatist groups in adjacent state refers to the number of separatist groups in adjacent states, an indicator of possible spillover or neighborhood effects (Gleditsch 2002). The three MAR-based, separatism-related variables incorporate interrelated aspects of the vulnerability approach, which argues that separatist groups are less likely to receive external support.

Ethnic kin dominant in adjoining state is a variable with good intuition and a strong track record behind it (Saideman 2002). This factor, perhaps more than any other, measures the degree of willingness that a state will possess to consider offering support to ethnic brethren. When those of concern are right next door, disposition to act should be much higher than otherwise for any number of reasons. If the group dominates or is in the majority in the state adjacent to the host state it is coded a 1, otherwise 0. Data is taken from Saideman (2002).

Religious and racial differences appear as indicators of ethno-cultural distinctiveness in the MAR dataset. These differences can be taken as an indicator of potential cleavage or disposition to conflict within a society. Religious differences are coded as follows: ethno-religious minorities that
are defined as ethnically and religiously distinct from the rest of a state's population to the extent designated in each category: (0) unknown or none; (1) different sect within same religion as the dominant group; (2) multiple sects, some different from dominant group; (3) different religion than dominant group. For racial differences, MAR refers to the degree to which a minority can be distinguished by physical appearance. Relative physical visibility is the concern here. The coding is as follows: (0) none or unknown; (1) physically distinguishable subtype of same racial stock; (2) different racial stock from the dominant group with substantial intermixture; (3) different racial stock, little or no intermixture.

Control variables

African state is a dummy variable in which states in Sub-Saharan Africa are coded 1 and all others 0. Regime type is taken from Saideman (2002), who used Polity 98 data and subtracted each host country's autocracy score from its democracy score, producing an indicator ranging from -10 (most autocratic) to 10 (most democratic).

Method

Seemingly Unrelated Regression (SUR) is used to analyze the data. This technique is ideal for addressing our "chicken and egg" problem. SUR produces two equations and takes account of interdependencies in the errors between them.

Data analysis

Table 9.1 conveys the SUR results for external support. Overall, the results are encouraging. Hypotheses from each of the three major categories – behavior, separatism, and affinity and cleavage – are supported. Three hypotheses are supported, three rejected, one produces mixed results and two with competing theoretical bases (i.e. realism versus liberalism) are significant but not as phrased above. Given different levels of expected performance for the hypotheses, these results are favorable to further investment in the model.

H1 and H2, which focus on political and economic discrimination, are not supported. Political discrimination is positive and significant for just one of the three years in the table. Expectations had been somewhat low here because political and economic discrimination, while repugnant, do not convey the same intensity as more extreme behavior leading to loss of life and therefore may not stimulate external support to the same degree as other factors. By contrast, quite impressive is the performance of H3. Rebellion is positive and significant for all three years. Interesting also is the negative coefficient for Rebellion squared, although it is significant...
The "chicken or the egg"?

Table 9.1 SUR analysis of external support for minorities at risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political discrimination</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic discrimination</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion²</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.05**</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatist group</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other separatist groups in the host state</td>
<td>-0.17*</td>
<td>-0.08*</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatist groups in adjacent state</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td>0.05**</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does ethnic kin dominate adjoining state?</td>
<td>0.37*</td>
<td>0.59**</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious differences</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial differences</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African state</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
<td>(0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime type</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03**</td>
<td>-0.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.71**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01.

only for 1994-95. This hypothesis is very demanding and its curvilinear form is supported, at least provisionally, by testing. Thus, to return to the earlier discussion, both Saideman and Regan seem to be on the right track, if they are taken to mean that violence can have opposite effects on the likelihood of external support as a function of its level.

H4, on whether a group is separatist, is not supported; all coefficients are close to 0. This result is consistent with the data analysis from Belanger et al. (2005: 454), which focuses on secessionist conflicts from 1990-92 and finds that secessionist movements receive very little external support. Surprising to the liberal argument is the negative coefficient for H5, which also is significant for 1992-93 and 1994-95. The number of separatist groups in a state, a measure of its vulnerability, is associated with a higher likelihood of external support. This result would seem to encourage a realist interpretation, with perceptions of a state's weakness tending to
attract interference from outside, setting aside any normative judgments about when external support for ethnic groups might be justified on humanitarian grounds. It is interesting to note that H6, which focuses on whether separatist groups exist in a neighboring state, is significant but positive. Once again, this result favors a realist over a liberal interpretation. The argument that mutual vulnerability will create a neighborhood effect inducing restraint vis-à-vis external support is not consistent with this data. The pursuit of relative gains through exploitation of vulnerability instead seems more in line with the present results. Indeed, the findings for all three of the hypotheses about separatism would tend to support Saideman in his criticism of the vulnerability thesis.

H7, on whether ethnic kin are dominant in an adjacent state, is supported strongly by the data, with a positive and significant result for all three years. This result undoubtedly reflects greater willingness to act when ethnic brethren are right next door and exist as a minority. While the state-of-the-art study on intervention by Bélanger et al. (2005: 448) does not find that ethnic ties help to explain external support, there is a sound explanation for this discrepancy. The present study differs from theirs in that it focuses more specifically on whether ethnic kin are dominant in the neighboring state. Thus the positive finding here in all likelihood is as a product of the interaction between physical and ethnic proximity.

H8, on religious differences, is not supported. It is very interesting to discover that religious differences do not affect the likelihood of external support. Finally, H9, which pertains to racial differences, does somewhat better. The sign is in the right direction for all three years and significant in 1994–95. Taken together, H8 and H9 suggest that, to the extent that differences matter in stimulating external support, religion takes a back seat to ethnicity.

Results are mixed for the first of the two control variables, which pertains to African states. The coefficient is around 0, negative, and positive for the three years respectively, so the straightforward interpretation is that no consistent connection is present. By contrast, regime type performs as expected and with a significant connection in 1994–95 and 1998. Democracies are less likely than autocracies to have external support come in for minorities. This result rings true because, all other things being equal, other states are less likely to intervene in a democracy out of belief that it is more probable that such regimes ultimately will be able to manage their ethnic conflicts with some degree of legitimacy. In their parallel study, Bélanger et al. (2005: 448) find that intervention is less likely for democratic dyads. The result concerning democratic disposition away from external support might be regarded as a monadic analogue to the finding just described, suggesting that a more general connection may exist between regime type and ethnic interventionism.

Table 9.2 displays the results for the hypotheses about rebellion. Once again, the results are encouraging, if not overwhelming. Four out of nine
hypotheses are supported from two out of the three clusters, referring to behavior and separatism, respectively.

Results are mixed for H1 and H2, which focus on political and economic discrimination, respectively. All of the coefficients are in the right direction, with political discrimination significant for two out of the three years, so H1 is regarded as supported by the data. This is consistent with, but not as strong as, the results obtained by Steinberg and Saideman (forthcoming) for government intervention in the economy. This result is particularly interesting because it suggests that the sheer amount of government manipulation of the economy is a better predictor of ethnic rebellion than direct measures of discrimination, economic or otherwise. Perhaps this is because discriminatory acts are further back along the causal chain and escalating government manipulation of the economy is closer to the stage of rebellion itself. If so, this would complement the MAR model quite nicely as a further insight about how rebellion occurs. The idea is a candidate for more intensive process tracing that focuses on a
smaller number of cases in greater depth. In other words, is there a causal chain from discrimination through government economic manipulation to ethnic rebellion?

H3, on external support, fares extremely well. Strongly positive coefficients appear for each of the three years. External support increases the opportunity for rebellion both in theory and practice. The support rebels receive from an outside state provides additional capabilities, facilitates the mobilization process, and that, in turn, can increase likelihood of further discrimination. The important impact of external support on rebellion of groups might be related to the balance of forces that has changed due to the international support. Intervention in ethnic conflict puts the strife in a broader context of power relations. For instance, Indian involvement in Sri Lanka changed the domestic power structure and put the issue on the agenda of the region. Similarly, Iranian support to Kurds in Turkey in the 1990s shifted the balance of forces between Kurdish rebels and the Turkish state that increased the intensity of conflict.

Hypotheses about separatism do well in an overall sense, with further suspicions arising about vulnerability-based arguments. H4, which pertains to whether a group is separatist, does reasonably well, with coefficients in the right direction for all three years and strong significance for 1992 and 1994. This is consistent with the logic of purely redistributive or zero-sum conflict. The goals of a separatist group are not even consistent with the continuing territorial integrity of the state in question, so ethnic rebellion becomes more likely than otherwise. This line of argument is reinforced by the equally solid performance of H5; when there are other separatist groups in the host state, the same pattern of results holds true. Support for H4 and H5 from the data suggests that as the state’s ability to deter some groups declines, other groups mobilize and seek to engage in violence as well. The third hypothesis on separatism, H6, focuses on whether secessionist groups are in an adjacent state, with the expectation based on the vulnerability argument – that their presence would inhibit external support. There is no support for this hypothesis, once again raising questions about the overall utility of the vulnerability argument.

Hypotheses about ethnic affinity and cleavage, surprisingly, produce no significant coefficients. H7, whether ethnic kin are dominant in an adjacent state, along with H8 and H9, which focus on religious and racial discrimination, respectively, receive no support from the data. These non-results are interesting to ponder in contrast to the better performance in the external support model. In speculating on cause and effect, perhaps affinity and cleavage are more important in stimulating external support and their causal effects vis-à-vis rebellion are, therefore, indirect and accounted for already through the strongly positive coefficient for H1. To see whether that might be the case, it makes sense to engage in process tracing and examine causal processes more directly through more in-depth case work.

African state, the first control, is in the right direction each time and
significant for 1994 and 1998. This positive result is consistent with the intuition about Africa as a region disposed toward rebellion and even disorder in general. Regime type, the other control variable, is around 0 for each year, which is not something the literature would have anticipated. External support for a rebellion is independent of whether the host state is a democracy.

Taken together, several patterns emerge in the findings about external support and rebellion. First, the question of the “chicken or the egg”? vis-a-vis ethnic rebellion and external support is answered as “both.” Rebellion and external support facilitate each other. Second, the results for external support in particular contradict the vulnerability thesis, most notably the positive association with rebellion of the presence of other separatist groups in the host state and in an adjacent state. This offers evidence to realist, rather than liberal, accounts of the dynamics of ethnic strife, at least in this context. Third, ethnic affinity and cleavage, to the extent that they impact upon rebellion, appear to do so indirectly through a positive connection with external support. Fourth, among the variables in the model, the presence of other separatist groups in the state should receive special attention because it is the only one that is significant in accounting for variance in both external support and rebellion. Fifth, neither economic discrimination nor religious differences is significant in either stage of the analysis, so these variables might not be considered in more in-depth extensions of this project. Sixth, each control variable works at one stage of the analysis; democracy has the anticipated dampening effect on external support for an ethnic group and states in Africa are more prone to rebellion.

Conclusions

This chapter started out with a focus on the question of the “chicken or the egg”? in relation to external support and ethnic rebellion. The answer is that each matters to the other. With respect to external support, the results confirm Downes (2004: 277-279) on the range of possible outcomes for external support, depending on its type and circumstances. In the present context, high levels of support, which include funds for military supplies, advisory military personnel and even cross-border raids and active combat units in a country at the upper scale points, are associated with rebellion. External support can alter the power balance between rebels and the state by bringing a new set of opportunities for the group. Therefore, states need to take into account the fact that, if minorities are not satisfied with the status quo (due to discrimination of other reasons), they can attract outsiders to the issue in order to fight for their cause and to facilitate their mobilization attempts. Results from the data analysis show the dual nature of external support in relation to the greater questions of assurance and deterrence raised at the outside of this chapter and
in previous studies. Walter (1997, 1999), for example, finds that termination of ethnic warfare is stabilized by credible guarantees from external states. The present study focuses on an earlier stage of such processes. We find that rebellion elicits external support and is stimulated by it as well. Thus, at one stage, external support could have the effect of escalating strife, while at another guarantees by a third party might keep the peace. The simultaneous presence of such results should encourage further research on process tracing. How and why external support affects ethnic conflict across stages of its development are questions that will continue to preoccupy research for some time.

Some final speculation is in order here. If, indeed, external support feeds rebellion— and rebellion, in turn, triggers support from third-party states—it is essential to verify the conditions under which external support assists the state in developing assurance policies. These conditions are of great interest in the quest to break rather than reinforce the cycle of violence. A “simple” answer probably would stimulate a new look at the initial wave of studies on intervention. For example, consider this argument: External third parties with an ethnic affinity to a minority, when they intervene, always will side with their brethren and they will end up altering the balance of forces. Thus the chapter concludes with multiple and interesting ideas for further research.

Notes


2 The role of physical security, a double-edged sword that can be a concern either for an ethnic minority or the state center, is recognized later through incorporation of rebellion into the framework.

3 Gurr (2000: 107) is careful to note that inequalities among groups do not necessarily result from discrimination.

4 Groups are included in the MAR data set if the country in which they reside has a population exceeding 500,000 and the group itself has a population larger than 100,000 or 1 percent of the country. Minorities not at risk are not represented in this data set (MAR 2002).

5 MAR does not include the transnational support variable (except for 1999 and 2000) in its current version because the project is in the process of recoding.

6 Some nuances in the coding should be clarified here. For the coding of local rebellion: “If they prove to be the opening round in what becomes a protracted guerrilla or civil war during the year being coded, code the latter rather than local rebellion. Code declarations of independence by a minority-controlled government here” (MAR 2002: 90). For small-scale guerrilla activity, “All of the following must exist: 1) fewer than 1,000 armed fighters; 2) sporadic armed attacks (less than six reported per year); and 3) attacks in a small part of the area occupied by the group, or in one or two other locales” (MAR 2002: 90). Finally, for large-scale guerrilla activity, “All of the following must exist: 1) more than 1,000 armed fighters; 2) frequent armed attacks (more than six per
The “chicken or the egg”? 181

... and 3) attacks affecting a large part of the area occupied by the group” (KAM! 90-91).

A model may contain several linear equations. It would be unrealistic to expect that the equation errors would be uncorrelated with each other. We have two equations in which the dependent variable of the first appears as a predictor in the second and vice versa. Fitting two separate regression equations independent from each other would be an error here, since we would not be counting for the cross-equation error correlation. A set of equations that has contemporaneous cross-equation error correlation is called a SUR system. At first glance, the equations seem unrelated, but they really are connected through correlation in the errors (Zellner 1962; Srivastava and Giles 1987).

However, these tests only address whether a group is different from the majority, not whether potential supporters have ethnic ties to one side or the other.