

Ethnic Homogeneity and Interstate Conflict

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I. Research Question

Why do some nations engage in interstate conflict more frequently than others?

II. Literature Review

A. Intrastate Causes

1. Minority Causes

Most conflicts begin with intrastate discrimination. Interstate conflicts begin as outside nations come to the aid of the repressed minorities.

War, Peace, and the State of the State. Holsti, K. J. *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 16, No. 4, Dangers of Our Time. Les dangers de notre temps (Oct., 1995), pp. 319-339.

2. Majority Causes

The larger the majority, the firmer grip it has on the ruling regime. The ruling regime can more effectively control flow of information to galvanize support for its foreign policy, including conflict.

A Theory of Ethnic Collective Action. Hechter, Michael, Debra Friedman, and Malka Appelbaum. *International Migration Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (Summer, 1982), pp. 412-434.

B. Interstate Causes

1. Ethnic Superiority

Nations that are more ethnically homogeneous generally have an increased feeling of ethnic superiority which manifests towards intrastate minorities and other nations.

Ethnic Discrimination and Interstate Violence: Testing the International Impact of Domestic Behavior. Caprioli, Mary and Peter F. Trumbore. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Jan., 2003), pp. 5-23.

2. Homogeneity and Interstate Conflict

“From a cultural perspective, the most dangerous dyads are religiously dissimilar, territorially contiguous, and ethnically similar pairs of states.”

Culture or Contiguity: Ethnic Conflict, the Similarity of States, and the Onset of War, 1820-1989. Henderson, Errol A. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 5 (Oct., 1997), pp. 649-668.

III. Theory

A. Resource Allocation

The ruling ethnic majority will be less threatened by possible insurgencies by the minorities and so will be able to allocate more resources on and focus more upon international policies (including conflict) rather than on repressing the minorities.

B. Minority International Support

Because minorities will not be able to defend themselves against discrimination, they will have to look to outside sources for relief. The minorities will be likely to look to the international community for succor. Further, the larger the majority, the more likely more severe discrimination will be; in the increased global community, the international community will be more likely to intervene in defense of discriminated minorities.

C. Majority Intranational Support

With a larger the majority ethnicity, there will be a greater likelihood of political cohesion. This will allow politicians to galvanize the population behind hawkish international policy. Also, the larger the majority, the more homogeneous the ruling coalition will be. This allows the ruling coalition to control and manipulate information to use as propaganda for its policies.

IV. Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1. Nations that have a more *ethnically homogeneous population* are more likely to be engaged in more *interstate conflict*.