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Overlooking the Obvious: Bringing International Politics Back into Ethnic Conflict Management

Stephen M. Saideman

Scholars generally have ignored the difficulty of motivating states to cooperate when advocating particular methods to address ethnic conflicts. I consider the importance of international support to prevent conflict and the use of force, security guarantees, and partition, which reveal the need for future work to consider why states behave toward ethnic conflicts as they do. I then address three sets of explanations of the international relations of ethnic conflict: the possible impact of norms, realist explanations, and arguments focused on domestic politics (either ethnic ties or sensitivity to casualties). I conclude by considering strategies to manage ethnic conflict that take into account the difficulties of cooperation: minilateralism, subcontracting, and the strategic manipulation of identity.

While responding to ethnic conflicts in the early 1990s, scholars advocated various policies to prevent, manage, and resolve these disputes. These studies provide many insights into the advantages and disadvantages of different responses to ethnic conflict. Yet the general tendency has been to avoid domestic and international politics. Scholars have overlooked the basic realities that both actors inside the particular country and beyond may strongly disagree about how they should handle the conflict.[1] This is problematic because most if not all proposed solutions require international cooperation to succeed. The purpose is not to suggest that we need to scrap existing work,[2] but that scholars

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[1] It is difficult to get the combatants within the conflict to agree to a particular solution. I focus on the international side because many of the solutions focus on using external strategies (threatening or using force, security guarantees, etc.) to move the domestic actors to cooperate.

[2] Some scholars argue that outsiders should not meddle too much, as it might be better to let conflicts continue or "burn themselves out." Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78, No. 4 (1999), argues that relief provided to refugees by international organizations can be more destructive to long-term peace than other forms of intervention.

interested in addressing ethnic conflicts need to consider the politics of the solutions they advocate.[3] They will need to assess the probabilities that enough international support will be received for their proposed policies to be success-ful and to develop strategies so that states support their preferred management technique, whether it is conflict prevention,[4] the use of force,[5] security guar-antees,[6] or partition.[7]

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[3] I ignore here the difficulties of measuring the effectiveness of intervention. For such issues, see Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman, "Evaluating Interventions in History: The Case of International Conflict Resolution," *International Studies Review* 2, No. 1 (2000), pp. 33–64.

[4] The most prominent efforts focused on conflict prevention have been those sup-ported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York: Michael E. Brown and Richard N. Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict: Prevention and Cure in the Global Arena* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999); Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Car-negie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997); and John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr, *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessments and Crisis Early Warn-ing Systems* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998). See also Bruce Jentleson, "Preventive Diplomacy and Ethnic Conflict: Possible, Difficult, Necessary," in David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, Escalation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 293–316. Stephen John Stedman is less sanguine about preventing conflicts: "Alchemy for a New World Order: Overselling 'Preventive Diplomacy,' " *Foreign Affairs* 74, No. 3 (1995), pp. 14–20.

[5] Frank Harvey presents the case for the use of force most clearly: "Deterrence and Ethnic Conflict: Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1993–94," *Security Studies* 6, No. 2 (1997), pp. 180–210. See also Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, No. 2 (1997), pp. 5–53, and Barry Posen, "Military Responses to Refugee Disasters," *International Security* 21, No. 1 (1996), pp. 72–111.

[6] See Saadia Touval, *The Peace Brokers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982); Barbara F. Walter: "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization* 51, No. 3 (1997), pp. 335–364, and "Designing Transitions from Civil War," *International Security* 24, No. 1 (1999), pp. 127–155. Also see Roy Licklider, ed., *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).

[7] Partition has provoked the most extended discussions in favor and against in aca-demic and policy circles. Chaim Kaufmann has been the most active advocate for partition in the academic debate: "Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars," *Security Studies* 6, No. 1 (1996), pp. 62–104; "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 20, No. 4 (1996), pp. 136–175; "When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century," *Inter-national Security* 23, No. 2 (1998), pp. 120–156. John Mearsheimer and his collabo-rators have been the leading promoters of partition in policy-oriented outlets: John J. Mearsheimer and Robert A. Pape, "The Answer: A Partition Plan for Bosnia," *New Republic*, June 14, 1993, pp. 22–28; John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen Van Evera,

Why might states disagree about what to do?[8] There are many potential explanations, but some seem more likely.[9] One country may view a combatant in an internal conflict as a valuable ally, while another state considers that side of the conflict to be a threatening adversary, so the outside actors will take opposing sides of the conflict.[10] A second approach is to argue that states disagree about which norms matter most, so they will take opposing sides when competing norms (for instance, self-determination versus territorial integrity) imply conflicting ideas of appropriate behavior.[11] A third approach is to focus

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"When Peace Means War," *New Republic*, December 18, 1995, pp. 16–21. For other supporters of partition, see Daniel L. Byman, "Rethinking Partition: Lessons from Iraq and Lebanon," *Security Studies* 7, No. 1 (1997), pp. 1–32; Robert Pape, "Partition: An Exit Strategy for Bosnia," *Survival* 39, No. 4 (1997–98), pp. 25–28; and Michael O'Hanlon, "Turning the Ceasefire into Peace," *Brookings Review* 16, No. 1 (1998), pp. 41–44. Critics of partition include Radha Kumar, "The Troubled History of Partition," *Foreign Affairs* 76, No. 1 (1997), pp. 22–34; and Nicholas Sambanis, "Partition as a Solution to Ethnic War: An Empirical Critique of the Theoretical Literature," *World Politics* 52, No. 4 (2000), pp. 437–483.

[8] The focus here is on states, not international organizations, as states determine what such institutions can and will do. For an evaluation of U.N. conflict management, see David Carment and Patrick James, "The United Nations at 50: Managing Ethnic Crises—Past and Present," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, No. 1 (1998), pp. 61–82.

[9] Economic interests may also provide leverage over this question—countries may intervene to access economic resources or to protect the investments of their more important constituents. David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[10] As I discuss below, realists have focused more on the domestic politics of ethnic conflicts than on the international dynamics, except for Alexis Heraclides. Alexis Heraclides, *The Self-Determination of Minorities in International Politics* (London: Frank Cass, 1991). As a result, I extend balance of power and balance of threat logic to suggest how realists might explain why states take sides. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), and Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987).

[11] Scholars have generally argued that states support the territorial integrity of others; these include I. William Zartman, *International Relations in the New Africa* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966); Saadia Touval, *The Boundary Politics of Independent Africa* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972); Jeffrey Herbst, "The Creation and Maintenance of National Boundaries in Africa," *International Organization* 43, No. 4 (1989), pp. 673–692; Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," *World Politics* 35, No. 1 (1982), pp. 1–24; and Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1990). For arguments suggesting that this norm and related ones are frequently violated, see Onyeonoro S. Kamanu, "Secession and the Right of Self-Determination: An OAU Dilemma," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 12, No. 3

on the domestic political imperatives of outside actors. Politicians will take the side favored by their domestic audiences due to ethnic ties,[12] or avoid intervening due to fears about casualties.[13] Understanding why countries react as they do to other states' ethnic conflicts is a necessary step for those who want to manage these problems.

I argue that scholars have done policymakers a disservice by ignoring the crucial role of international political dynamics in managing ethnic conflict. I also pose a few explanations of the international politics of ethnic conflict, suggesting potential avenues of research, and I consider some possible strat-

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(1974), pp. 355–376; Astri Suhrke and Lela Garner Noble, eds., *Ethnic Conflict in International Relations* (New York: Praeger, 1977); and Stephen D. Krasner, *Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[12] David Carment and Patrick James, David Davis and Will Moore, V. P. Gagnon, and Stephen Saideman have focused on ethnic politics. See David Carment and Patrick James, "Internal Constraints and Interstate Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Crisis-Based Assessment of Irredentism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39, No. 1 (1995), pp. 82–109; David Carment, Patrick James, and Dane Rowlands, "Ethnic Conflict and Third Party Intervention: Riskiness, Rationality and Commitment," in Gerald Schneider and Patricia A. Weitsman, eds., *Enforcing Cooperation: Risky States and Intergovernmental Management of Conflict* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 104–131; David R. Davis and Will H. Moore, "Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Behavior," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, No. 1 (1997), pp. 171–184; V. P. Gagnon, Jr., "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security* 19, No. 3 (1994/95), pp. 135–137; Stephen M. Saideman: "Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Conflicts: Vulnerability vs. Ethnic Ties," *International Organization* 51, No. 4 (1997), pp. 721–753, and *The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy, and International Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

[13] For the classic statement of public opinion, casualties, and war, see John E. Mueller, *Wars, Presidents and Public Opinion* (New York: Wiley, 1973), and for Mueller's most recent take on these issues, see "Public Opinion as a Constraint on U.S. Foreign Policy: Assessing the Perceived Value of American and Foreign Lives," paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Los Angeles, March 2000. Edward N. Luttwak has been perhaps most outspoken in arguing that the publics of the most likely states to intervene are increasingly intolerant of casualties: "Where Are the Great Powers?" *Foreign Affairs* 73, No. 4 (1994), pp. 23–28, and "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 74, No. 3 (1995), pp. 109–122. For counterarguments, see James Burk, "Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia: Assessing the Casualties Hypothesis," *Political Science Quarterly* 114, No. 1 (1999), pp. 53–78; Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, "How Many Deaths Are Acceptable? A Surprising Answer," *Washington Post*, November 7, 1999, p. B3; Eric Victor Larson, "Ends and Means in the Democratic Conversation: Understanding the Role of Casualties in Support of U.S. Military Operations" (Ph.D. dissertation, RAND Graduate School, 1996); and Benjamin C. Schwarz, *Casualties, Public Opinion and U.S. Military Intervention: Implications for U.S. Regional Deterrence Strategies* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1994).

egies for addressing the difficulties I raise. First, I briefly discuss the importance of ethnic conflict management for today's international relations. I then review some of the solutions offered by scholars to reveal the blind spots, highlighting the difficulties of getting states to agree to support a particular solution. In particular, I focus on debates about conflict prevention, the use of force, security guarantees, and partition. I then discuss the most likely impediments to international cooperation as states respond to ethnic conflicts. Finally, I conclude with implications for both future research and policy.

THE NEED FOR ETHNIC CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Are the scholars who study ethnic conflict management misguided? Certainly not, for the 1990s clearly demonstrated that ethnic strife has presented grave threats to individual states and to the stability of regions, in addition to the humanitarian disasters that have taken place.[14]

The wars of Yugoslavia's disintegration provided the international community with a dramatic example of how ethnic conflict can promote regional instability. While the Croatian and Bosnian conflicts remained within the boundaries of "Yugoslavia," the war in Kosovo threatened (and continues to endanger) the stability of Macedonia, as well as temporarily increasing the likelihood of war among Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Turkey. Separatist conflicts have spawned other wars, including those between Ethiopia and Somalia and between India and Pakistan.

Ethnic conflicts may also spread, causing tensions to rise within other states, as the events in Macedonia demonstrate.[15] This can happen through a variety of mechanisms. The conflict may spill over as combatants cross state boundaries, as in Africa's Great Lakes region—Burundi, Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda. This was also the case in Macedonia, where many of the combatants were from

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[14] For a clearer idea of how prevalent these conflicts are, see R. William Ayres, "A World Flying Apart? Violent Nationalist Conflict and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Peace Research* 37, No. 1 (2000), and Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, "Armed Conflict, 1989–98," *Journal of Peace Research* 36, No. 5 (1999).

[15] John A. Vasquez, "Factors Related to the Contagion and Diffusion of International Violence," in Manus Midlarsky, ed., *The Internationalization of Communal Strife* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 149–172; Ted Robert Gurr: *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1993), and *Peoples versus States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and Accommodation at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2000). For a debate about whether ethnic strife is contagious, see Lake and Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*. For a test of contagion, see R. William Ayres and Stephen M. Saideman, "Is Separatism as Contagious as the Common Cold or as Cancer? Testing the International and Domestic Determinants of Secessionism," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 6, No. 3 (2000), pp. 92–114.

Kosovo or fought in the Kosovo conflict. Refugees caused by one ethnic con-
flict can increase tensions upon arriving in a new state. This is particularly
troublesome since the poorest countries tend to bear the most severe burdens,
as the plight of Albania and Macedonia illustrates.[16] To end the flow and return
the refugees, the conflict spawning them has to end. Further, scholars have
argued that one ethnic conflict may encourage others because of the demon-
stration effects of the first one.[17] Again, the case of Macedonia is instructive, as
Macedonia's Albanians may have "learned" that using force is successful because
Kosovo's Albanians have been fairly successful in achieving their goals.

These and other consequences lead analysts to assume that the priority of
outsiders is to end such conflicts and to prevent a crisis from becoming an
ethnic war.[18] Thus, they have proposed various ways for states to handle these
disputes.

Proposed Ethnic Conflict Management Techniques

There may be more proposed solutions to ethnic conflict than the current num-
ber of ethnic wars. I address only four sets of techniques here: conflict preven-
tion, the use of force, security guarantees, and partition. Clearly, most scholars
and policy analysts offer a mix of solutions, and none of the techniques dis-
cussed below is completely distinct from the others. I have chosen these four
because they seem to be the most prominent in the scholarly literature, in the
advice offered to policymakers, and in policy debates. Further, elements of
these four are often necessary for other potential responses to ethnic conflict
such as occupation. These other projected answers to ethnic conflict include
influencing the kind of information that is presented in divided societies,[19]

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[16] Alan Dowty and Gil Loescher, "Refugee Flows as Grounds for International
Action," *International Security* 21, No. 1 (1996), pp. 43–71.

[17] For two examples, see Timur Kuran, "Ethnic Dissimilation and Its International
Relations," and Stuart Hill, Donald Rothchild, and Colin Cameron, "Tactical Informa-
tion and the Diffusion of Peaceful Protests," both in Lake and Rothchild, eds., *The
International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*, pp. 35–60 and 61–88.

[18] Patrick Regan is explicit in his emphasis on ending conflicts and on the role of
scholars in discovering which methods are best at ending intrastate conflicts. See *Civil
Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (Ann Arbor:
University of Michigan Press, 2000).

[19] Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War," *International
Security* 15, No. 3 (1990/91), pp. 7–57; Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, "Nation-
alism and the Marketplace of Ideas," *International Security* 21, No. 2 (1996), pp. 5–40.

peace building,[20] and developing confidence-building measures,[21] and also assume international cooperation.[22] Only scholars considering economic sanctions have seriously addressed the problem of getting states to cooperate.[23] Otherwise, in discussing ethnic conflict management, analysts generally assume that states will cooperate. I briefly consider below the advantages offered by proponents of the four potential solutions, the criticisms levied against them by detractors, and the assumed role of cooperation in each solution.

Conflict Prevention

It makes sense to consider first policies aimed at preventing conflicts before they start or intervening before they escalate. The Carnegie Corporation of New York has sponsored an extensive project, the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflicts, to "determine the functional requirements of an effective system for preventing mass violence and to identify ways in which such a system could be implemented."[24] The project clearly argues that prevention costs less than ending a conflict and dedicates a book to prove this relatively uncontroversial proposition.[25] Acting early is less costly and more effective than acting later, after hostilities have mobilized populations, deepened hatreds, and generated refugees. Preventive measures include fact-finding missions, mediation, confidence-building measures, peacekeeping, arms embargoes and economic sanctions, and the threat or use of force.[26] These efforts usually require some level of coordination among outside actors because, with

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[20] Roland Paris, "Broadening the Study of Peace Operations," *International Studies Review* 2, No. 3 (2000), pp. 27–44.

[21] David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* 21, No. 2 (1996), pp. 41–75.

[22] The scholarly literature recommending particular domestic institutions (federalism, electoral systems, etc.) is vast, but these solutions do not require international cooperation—just changes in constitutions.

[23] Elizabeth S. Rogers, "Using Economic Sanctions to Control Regional Conflicts," *Security Studies* 5, No. 4 (1996), pp. 43–72. Rogers admits that sanctions will work only if countries, including the United States, "fully commit to any sanctions effort" (p. 45). Of course, this begs the question of when that is likely to happen. Lisa Martin addresses directly the problem of getting states to cooperate in levying economic sanctions: *Coercive Cooperation: Explaining Multilateral Economic Sanctions* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[24] "About the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict," ⟨http://www.ccpdc.org/frabout.htm⟩, accessed May 9, 2000.

[25] Brown and Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict*.

[26] Michael E. Brown and Richard N. Rosecrance, "Comparing the Costs of Prevention and Costs of Conflict: Toward a New Methodology," in Brown and Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict*, p. 10.

the exception of the first two forms, these efforts incur some costs that states seek to share. Further, arms embargoes and economic sanctions require cooperation to have a significant impact.

How do advocates of conflict prevention deal with the problem of international cooperation? Bruce Jentleson considers several obstacles to successful conflict prevention, including the necessity of developing "a fair-but-firm strategy" and getting countries to act.[27] He argues that intervening actors must follow through on their promises and their threats. The problem is that states may not want to hurt the side that they prefer but punish the side they dislike. For instance, the United States advocated harsher measures against the Serbs in Bosnia and in Kosovo than against the Bosnian Muslims or the Albanians. Jentleson criticizes the failure of the United States, other powerful countries, and international institutions to act early and decisively.[28] He does not say why the will is lacking, outside of a divided government in the United States. His discussion largely overlooks the possibility that outsiders may disagree with each other due to conflicting preferences.

Similarly, Michael Brown and Richard Rosecrance focus on the need to encourage states to act, not on getting them to cooperate. They consider the excuses states often use: the conflict is far away, states do not know where conflicts will occur, or states cannot address more than a few conflicts. Their study suggests that these three reasons are misguided at best because even distant conflicts generate costs for many states. States also have known that particular conflicts (Bosnia, Rwanda, etc.) were likely to occur, and it is still less costly to prevent several conflicts than intervene late in a few.[29] Brown and Rosecrance also address what leaders fear: an absence of domestic support, the economic costs involved, casualties, open-ended commitments (no more Vietnams), and failure. Their views on prompting external actors to act and cooperate are shaped by their assumptions about state interests. "If the costs of preventive actions are less than the military, economic, and political costs that have to be borne by outside powers when conflicts unfold, then the case for conflict prevention on national interests grounds becomes very strong."[30]

Brown and Rosecrance assume that states worry solely or primarily about the costs, but this assumption ignores the possibility that outside actors may pre-

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[27] Jentelson, "Preventive Diplomacy and Ethnic Conflict," p. 303.

[28] Much of the work on Yugoslavia's disintegration is highly critical of the response of the West and of international organizations. For example, see James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

[29] Michael E. Brown and Richard N. Rosecrance, "The Case for Conflict Prevention," in Brown and Rosecrance, eds., *The Costs of Conflict*, pp. 226–227.

[30] Brown and Rosecrance, "Comparing the Costs of Prevention," p. 2.

fer a particular group or its host state to win.[31] If a country cares more about the outcome—who wins and who loses—rather than the absence or minimization of conflict, then it may disagree with other states about which, if any, preventive measures should be used. Which policies it advocates will depend upon how particular options affect its favored party. If a state prefers for the host state to defeat the ethnic group, then a variety of preventive measures become undesirable, while arms embargoes, which favor the host, are very appealing.

Yet preventive action does not require unbiased or impartial outside actors since mediation does not require neutral actors, and arms embargoes and economic sanctions may be facilitated by animus toward one side. Taking into account countries' biases may actually facilitate preventive action.

The Use of Force

A prominent instrument in the 1990s has been the threat or use of force to cause one side to compromise or surrender. Not only has this response to ethnic conflict been hotly debated, particularly in "lift and strike" operations during the Bosnian conflict, but the use of force also seems to have been successful in ending the war in Bosnia and causing Serbia to withdraw its armed forces from Kosovo.[32] Arguments focusing on threats or use of force in internal conflicts rely on the same cost-benefit logic as conventional deterrence theory.[33] The general idea is to persuade one side that either continued conflict (compellence) or new aggression (deterrence) would result in some sort of punishment.[34] Thus, the costs of conflict would become too high, causing one side either not to attack or to cease its aggression.

Stephen Stedman presents perhaps the most nuanced discussion of how outsiders should respond to the domestic dynamics of internal conflicts.[35] He identifies specific kinds of opponents to peace processes—"spoilers"—and also recommends specific strategies to deal with each type. He suggests coercion for more difficult or total spoilers. Of all the conflict-management advocates, Stedman takes most seriously the problem of persuading potential managers to act and to cooperate. Specifically, "a common denominator among the successful

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[31] Brown and Rosecrance also tend to assume that costs are felt equally throughout time, although politicians and publics care much more about the present than about the future.

[32] For an evaluation of the use of force in Kosovo, see Daniel A. Byman and Matthew C. Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate," *International Security* 24, No. 4 (2000), pp. 5–38.

[33] Harvey, "Deterrence and Ethnic Conflict."

[34] For the classic discussion of these concepts, see Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966).

[35] Stedman, "Spoiler Problems."

cases of spoiler management is unity and coordination among external par-
ties."[36] Yet he does not address how this cooperation might be attained.

Frank Harvey shows that threats and the use of force worked in Bosnia
when NATO fulfilled the requirements of deterrence theory: it clearly defined
the undesired action; it clearly communicated the threat; the threat was poten-
tially costly to the Serbs, and the coalition was resolute.[37] He examines a series
of threats made by the United States and its allies and finds that when the
requirements were met, the threat or use of force worked to deter or compel the
Serbs. Further, despite complaints about how long it took Serbia to withdraw
from Kosovo, the use of force by the United States and its allies caused Serbia
to give in to NATO demands.

These examples of successful uses of force are also illustrations of the dif-
ficulties of using force. In both conflicts, countries disagreed about whether to
use force and, if force was to be used, how? Throughout the Bosnian conflict,
debate continued among the major actors, with the United States disagreeing
not only with Russia, but also frequently with Great Britain and France.[38] The
bombing campaign in August and September of 1995 was only possible once
the use of force became a NATO, and not a U.N., affair. Russia certainly would
have vetoed the extensive bombing in 1995, which is why the United States
made sure to avoid the U.N., and, consequently, a Russian veto in 1999. Even
among NATO members, there was significant disagreement about how force
should be used and for what goals.

International cooperation is necessary for the successful use of force even if
only one country is using force. If a country acts unilaterally, using force in a
civil conflict successfully usually requires two things. First, other outsider actors
must not support the side that another actor is attacking. While State A can still
reach its goals by using force against a particular group in another state, if
State B intervenes on behalf of that group, the costs of intervention increase
and the chances for success decrease. If Russia had given Serbia arms during
the Kosovo conflict or had used its own armed forces to supplement Serbia's,
the conflict would have become significantly more complex, and Serbia prob-
ably would not have given up so soon.[39]

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[36] Ibid., p. 51.

[37] Harvey, "Deterrence and Ethnic Conflict," p. 204. Barry Posen argues that inter-
vention will fail if the intervenors lack either the military capabilities or the political
will to use them. See "Military Responses to Refugee Disasters."

[38] Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew J. Enterline find that outside intervention can
prolong a conflict, particularly when the intervenors take different sides: "Killing Time:
The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992," *International Studies Quar-
terly* 44, No. 4 (2000), pp. 615–642.

[39] Byman and Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate."

Second, unless the intervening state neighbors the conflict, the intervenor is likely to either need logistical assistance or lack logistical impediments to use force successfully. The United States is capable of using planes based at home and on aircraft carriers to intervene around the globe.[40] Few, if any, other countries have this capability. Further, relying on such capabilities stretches the United States and limits its effectiveness. Longer operations are impossible, even for the United States, without bases closer to the conflict. Moreover, the United States generally prefers to involve other states, not only to share costs and to gain support domestically, but also to diminish the appearance of American dominance.

Security Guarantees

The next response to ethnic conflict focuses on how outsiders can help manage or resolve conflicts by guaranteeing the security of the combatants.[41] One strand of research on ethnic conflict focuses on the ethnic security dilemma. Dynamics akin to international relations break out either when the state collapses or when the government takes sides in internal conflicts.[42] In such situations, it is difficult to motivate groups, including the host state, to commit credibly, even to agreements that all parties prefer over continued conflict.[43] All sides are vulnerable, so the potential of being victimized by a group that reneges "post-treaty exploitation" is enough to cause the conflict to continue.[44] As a result, outsiders may be required to guarantee the participants' commitments.

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[40] Even with these capabilities, the United States generally desires and even needs permission from other countries for flying in their airspace.

[41] Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson start with "the usefulness of third parties" in their list of lessons from past ethnic conflicts. They admit some of the limitations of both the United Nations and the United States, but overlook the problem of getting states to cooperate. See "Making Peace Settlements Work," *Foreign Policy* 104 (1996), pp. 54–71.

[42] Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35, No. 1 (1993), pp. 27–47; Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis, "Civil War and the Security Dilemma," in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 15–37; William Rose, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Security Studies* 9, No. 4 (2000), pp. 1–51.

[43] James D. Fearon: "Rationalist Explanations of War," *International Organization* 49, No. 3 (1995), pp. 379–414, and "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict," in Lake and Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*, pp. 107–126.

[44] Walter, "Designing Transitions," p. 134.

Barbara Walter provides both case studies and quantitative analyses to argue that outside security guarantees facilitate successful settlements of civil wars.[45] She finds that nearly all settlements that were successful between 1940 and 1990 occurred with a third party guaranteeing the peace.[46] Most important, she asserts, "Strict neutrality by the third party also does not appear necessary."[47] Effectiveness of guarantees apparently did not vary with the biases of the third party. She argues that a third party's bias may make a weaker group feel more secure.[48] In addition, the order and stability imposed by the outside power may compensate for its bias.[49]

Recent work has supported Walter's claims. Carline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild find that security assurances are one factor associated with more durable peace settlements.[50] Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis find that efforts to foster peace are more likely to be successful if the United Nations is involved in peacekeeping.[51]

We are left with at least two questions. First, if a biased third party makes the weaker group more secure, what does it do to the stronger group? If a third party is biased, the security dilemma may be ameliorated for one side but not for the other. The disfavored party may feel less secure and refuse to disarm. In Kosovo, the Serbs have viewed the Americans as siding with the ethnic Albanians, while the Albanians have viewed the French and the Russians as allies of the Serbs. Perhaps these suspicions are good for guaranteeing security as they offset each other, but given the continuing violence, this remains to be seen.

A second problem with security guarantees is that, at best, it moves the problem of credible commitment from groups within the state to actors outside the state. In addition to fearing that its adversary may not commit, a group also must be concerned about the commitment of outsiders to guarantee its security. Will outsiders be willing to risk casualties to prevent one group from hurting

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[45] Walter, "The Critical Barrier" and "Designing Transitions."

[46] Walter, "The Critical Barrier," p. 349.

[47] Ibid., p. 361.

[48] Ibid., p. 362.

[49] Mark Peceny and William Stanley find that strong security guarantees may actually be associated with less stable resolutions of civil wars: "Liberal Social Reconstruction and the Resolution of Civil Wars in Central America," *International Organization* 55, No. 1 (2001), pp. 149–182.

[50] Carline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild, "Stabilizing the Peace after Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables," *International Organization* 55, No. 1 (2001), pp. 183–208.

[51] Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94, No. 4 (2000), pp. 779–802.

another or to follow through on aspects of the peace accord? Apparently not, as the heavily armed NATO troops have been reluctant to implement aspects of the Dayton Accords. American commanders seem to prefer protecting American soldiers rather than arresting war criminals, preventing or stopping violence between ethnic groups, or even clearing mines.[52]

External security guarantees, as a solution to ethnic conflict, require a better understanding of the conditions that outsiders will provide as credible assurances. If we can understand which countries are willing or not to risk their soldiers and cooperate with other countries to guarantee specific peace accords, then we can recommend security guarantees. Without this knowledge, security guarantees may cause more problems than they solve because either of the groups may trust untrustworthy outsiders, risking their security, or they may not trust guarantees, even when they seem most credible. Knowing what outside actors care about is an important step for designing transitions from civil wars.

Partition

If groups cannot trust either each other or outsiders to enforce a peace agreement, then the logical solution may be to separate the groups so that they cannot pose a mutual threat. Perhaps some conflicts simply cannot be resolved with the combatants living among each other and governed by the same entity.[53] Also, if they govern themselves separately, then there is less reason to fight.

Since this debate has been so lively, most of the advantages and disadvantages of partition are well known. Separating the two (or more) groups would create more viable entities than the cantons and other arrangements advocated throughout the Bosnian conflict.[54] These separate territories would be easier to defend, economically more productive, and governable. Critics argue that the population transfers required by partition would be costly, that it would turn a civil war into an interstate war, and that it would set unfortunate precedents, encouraging groups elsewhere to become separatist and even engage in ethnic cleansing. They point to Cyprus, India, Ireland, and Israel as examples of partition begetting more violence.[55] Partition advocates argue that past partitions have been more violent than they had to be and that partition done right can avoid many previous problems.[56]

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[52] *New York Times*, May 23, 2000.

[53] Kaufmann develops this logic most explicitly in "Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars" and "Possible and Impossible Solutions."

[54] Mearsheimer and Pape, "The Answer," p. 23.

[55] Kumar, "Troubled History."

[56] Kaufmann, "When All Else Fails."

Partition advocates tend to be realists (Mearsheimer, Pape, Van Evera, Kaufmann), so it is ironic that they also tend to be optimistic about the ability of outsiders to cooperate:

> It [humanitarian intervention] should only be undertaken when the major actors of the international community can agree on the rights and wrongs of the case. . . . For the same reason, humanitarian interventions will usually be on behalf of the weaker side. . . . The interveners must also isolate the opposing ethnic group from outside sources of economic and military assistance.[57]

These conditions and requirements ignore the possibility that potential intervenors may prefer the stronger side because of potential alliances down the road and because of the implications of particular norms or as a result of ethnic ties. Kaufmann admits that "intervention will be politically feasible only against a small power without major allies."[58] This suggests that partition can be implemented only rarely because most combatants have ties with outsiders and particularly because one of the main protagonists in most ethnic conflicts is the current government. Either intervention to assist a partition is hardly ever (approaching never) appropriate, or Kaufmann and others are overly optimistic about getting outside actors to agree on a particular division, even if states overcome the problems presented by international norms.

For an example of such optimism, Mearsheimer and Pape spoke only of NATO and "the West" as they argued for intervention to partition Bosnia. They omitted Russia entirely, as well as other relevant actors that might object, while assuming that "the West" could agree on partition.[59] Elsewhere, Mearsheimer focuses strictly on what the United States should do, ignoring the possibility that other actors might have something to say.[60] It is possible for an outsider, the United States or "the West," to encourage the allies of a host state to support partition through linkages to other issues or intimidation, but policymakers must recognize the diplomatic capital that the intervening state may have to expend when supporting partition.

Partition requires both that some states give active support and that other states condone the intervention. Outside actors are likely to be needed to compel the host state to give up a chunk of its territory and population. Also, intervention is necessary to facilitate the safe transfer of populations. Other actors must refrain from interfering and allow the host country to be divided. As a result, we need to understand when states will be willing to impose this solution on a conflict. We also need to assess whether states are really motivated or

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[57] Kaufmann, "Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars," p. 93.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Mearsheimer and Pape, "The Answer," pp. 22–25, 28.

[60] Mearsheimer, "The Only Exit from Bosnia," *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1997, p. 31.

inhibited by international norms of territorial integrity and sovereignty. Partition, by definition, violates the former and, in practice, will violate the latter.

All four of the proposed efforts to address ethnic conflict require outside involvement. Their advocates tend to assume that outsiders will agree on what to do. This discussion suggests that this assumption is problematic. In the next section, I address three approaches to the puzzle of why states act and whose side they might take.

EXPLAINING THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT

If states are not solely motivated by humanitarianism to end ethnic conflicts, what causes them to take particular positions in the internal disputes of other countries? What makes international cooperation to resolve ethnic conflict so difficult? The literature on conflict management cites existing norms of sovereignty and territorial integrity as perhaps the most severe obstacles. States will often side with the existing government of a state because doing otherwise would set unfortunate precedents and might implicate their own conflicts. Sovereignty poses a problem for each of the conflict-management strategies to varying degrees. A second explanation, the realist account, argues that states are motivated to take different sides of an internal dispute to safeguard their security or improve their relative positions. Perhaps one state will see a combatant as a potential ally, and another state will see another group as a possible friend, leading outsiders to take different sides. Also, domestic politics drive two possibilities—ethnic politics and the politics of casualty avoidance. States then take the politically popular side in an ethnic conflict due to ethnic ties; or states may refuse to act or only choose less costly solutions because politicians will suffer if peacekeepers are harmed. Below, I discuss each explanation, suggesting the strengths and limitations of each.

Norms and Precedents

"Those who would band together to deal constructively with internal conflicts always have to contend with the thorny issue of state sovereignty."[61] Unless conflict management has the support of the host state, any effort to address the conflict violates the host's sovereignty. While some conflict-prevention efforts might not be problematic for a host state, most preventive efforts pose challenges. Precautionary techniques lend legitimacy to the grievances of particular groups and to the groups themselves as significant political actors, while many

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[61] Michael E. Brown, "International Conflict and International Action," in Michael E. Brown, ed., *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1996), p. 604.

governments seek to deny their opposition's existence (e.g., Kurds as mountain Turks). Obviously, security guarantees may be even more troublesome for state sovereignty as they limit the ability of states to control or repress domestic opponents. The use of force, unless focused to benefit the host state, is a severe violation of sovereignty. Finally, partition violates not only the sovereignty of an existing state, but also its territorial integrity. That is, a central norm governing ethnic conflict is that boundaries ought not be changed.[62] By creating new boundaries, partition directly challenges the norm of territorial integrity. In principle, conflict management should be opposed by all states respecting these basic norms.[63]

Some states may be bound by competing norms, so states may take different sides of a conflict, depending on to which norms states adhere. Two norms prescribe rather than proscribe intervention into ethnic conflicts—even at the expense of a state's sovereignty: the norm of self-determination and international law governing genocide.[64] The right for people to choose who governs them challenges the right of states to govern themselves without external interference. Even more clearly, the obligation to stop genocide, incorporated in the U.N. Convention on Genocide,[65] challenges states' sovereignty since states largely commit genocide.[66] If norms bind states, we might still find states disagreeing about how to handle conflicts caused by conflicting norms.

The conventional wisdom affirms that the norm of territorial integrity has inhibited states from supporting separatist groups (although this may not restrict

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[62] Herbst, "The Creation and Maintenance of National Boundaries"; Jackson and Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist." Mark Zacher, taking a somewhat different theoretical slant, provides a more recent argument supporting the importance of the territorial integrity norm: "The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force," *International Organization* 55, No. 2 (2001), pp. 215–250.

[63] For a discussion of how norms may shape domestic politics and therefore foreign policy, see Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda," *International Studies Review* 2, No. 1 (2000), pp. 65–90.

[64] For a discussion of the evolution of self-determination, see Chimène I. Keitner, "National Self-Determination in Historical Perspective: The Legacy of the French Revolution for Today's Debates," *International Studies Review* 2, No. 3 (2000), pp. 3–26.

[65] "The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish." U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, U.N. General Assembly Resolution 260A, December 9, 1948.

[66] Matthew Krain, "State-Sponsored Mass Murder: The Onset and Severity of Genocides and Politicides," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, No. 3 (1997), pp 331–360; R. J. Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994); Irving Louis Horowitz, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power*, 4th ed. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1997).

groups with other goals).[67] Because leaders of states, particularly African politicians, feared that the violation of the norms set unfortunate precedents and would cause the existing boundaries to collapse, they were inhibited from supporting any group seeking to revise the boundaries. While the Organization of African Unity passed a resolution recognizing the former colonial boundaries as legitimate, this did not stop states from supporting secessionist movements. Even states that were the most vulnerable to secession, and thus most likely to adhere to the norm, supported separatist movements in other countries.[68]

Norms matter but are not as binding as often feared. The question remains as to how severe an obstacle sovereignty and territorial integrity present to conflict management.[69] Rather than assuming it is a problem, as many scholars apparently do, future research should consider the question seriously.

Realist Imperatives

Perhaps states take different sides of internal conflicts because one outsider may be allied to the host state and another outsider may be opposed to the host state. Surprisingly, despite the amount of attention realists have paid toward ethnic conflict management, particularly partition, they have not extended their theory to explain the international relations of ethnic strife. Maybe they have not bothered since the application is so obvious. If the enemy of my enemy is my friend, then states should support ethnic groups rebelling against their adversaries and oppose movements fighting their friends.

A logical extension of balance of power/threat theory[70] would be to expect states not only to engage in internal balancing (increasing one's level of armament) and external balancing (gaining allies), but also in efforts to weaken adversaries directly.[71] A country putting down a rebellion must focus military, economic, and political resources that it might otherwise use against an external adversary. Further, if the supported group successfully secedes, then the adversary has less territory, less population, and probably diminished economic

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[67] See Zartman, *International Relations in the New Africa*; Herbst, "The Creation and Maintenance of National Boundaries"; Jackson and Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist."

[68] Saideman, *The Ties That Divide*.

[69] For conversation about the changing or unchanging implications of sovereignty, see Krasner, *Organized Hypocrisy*; Rodney Bruce Hall, *National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[70] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Walt, *Origins of Alliances*.

[71] Robert P. Hager, Jr. and David A. Lake, "Balancing Empires: Competitive Decolonization in International Politics," *Security Studies* 9, No. 3 (2000), pp. 108–148.

resources. Thus, supporting an ethnic group might critically weaken an enemy. India's support of the Bengalis when they seceded from Pakistan decreased the threat Pakistan posed, reducing Pakistan's population base and simplifying India's strategic situation in future conflicts.

Clearly, combatants in the Yugoslav conflict had little to add directly to the security or power of the major powers.[72] To argue that Germany had much to gain strategically from dominating the Balkans strains credulity.[73] While Yugoslavia might not buttress arguments about balancing behavior, the potential consequences of the conflicts on existing alliances mattered.

Concerns about the impact of Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia on NATO shaped American and West European reactions to these conflicts. Once the United States committed to using troops to assist a potential withdrawal of British and French troops from Bosnia, it could not back down without harming NATO.[74] American decisionmaking faced a much more limited set of choices in the summer of 1995: use 50,000 American soldiers to evacuate peacekeepers from Bosnia or use troops to enforce a peace?

During the Kosovo conflict, another threat to NATO developed with a potential conflict between Greece and Turkey. The fear (a legitimate one, as recent events suggest) was that the Kosovo conflict might spread to Macedonia and that war in Macedonia would bring in Greece and Turkey on opposite sides. Preventing the Kosovo conflict from spilling over into Macedonia would be in the best interest of American and NATO security. Once the conflict apparently spilled over, NATO became deeply involved on both sides of the border, while trying to keep the conflict from boiling over into a larger war. So security interests may motivate countries to take sides in other countries' ethnic conflicts. One problem for future work is to provide scholars with falsifiable hypotheses so that we can determine under what conditions states will be likely to behave in specific ways.

Domestic Politics: Ethnic Ties and Casualty Aversion

Politicians may not be responding to international imperatives but rather to the pressures of domestic politics, either pushing them to take stands on a conflict or constraining them from taking action. We usually consider ethnic ties to be a force that causes politicians to support one side of somebody else's ethnic con-

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[72] This is largely true for nearly all violent ethnic conflicts in the 1990s, so this might explain why countries do not get involved: there is little to be gained.

[73] Daniele Conversi, "German-Bashing and the Breakup of Yugoslavia," *Donald W. Treadgold Papers in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies*, No. 16. (Seattle, Wash.: Jackson School of International Studies, 1998).

[74] Steven L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 323–325.

flict, and analysts often argue that avoiding casualties is a domestic constraint on policymakers.[75]

Instead of focusing on the international benefits of taking a side, the ethnic ties perspective focuses on either the demands of constituents or the manipulations of leaders.[76] The argument can either be top-down or bottom-up. Regarding the former, politicians may engage their countries in ethnic conflicts elsewhere to highlight certain ethnic identities that may favor their positions at home.[77] Supporting a particular group abroad increases the salience of that identity at home. Gagnon explains Serbia's nationalist foreign policies by considering how Slobodan Milošević diverted attention away from the economy and delegitimated competitors by focusing on Serb nationalism.[78] On the other hand, the demands of the masses may push reluctant politicians into supporting a particular group abroad. For instance, Turkey was a strong supporter of Bosnia's Muslims. Given the desire to maintain a secular regime, we might have expected Turkish elites to avoid affiliation with a largely Muslim group. Yet even the most secular parties realized "that a lack of concern about Bosnia would hasten their political decline."[79] Similarly, Christian groups in the United States are increasingly pressuring the government to fight the persecution of Christians in other countries.[80]

Focusing on ethnic ties has its advantages and its limitations. Ethnic politics may explain why a country might have a consistent foreign policy over time. If a country has ethnic ties to a particular group elsewhere, then it is likely to have supported that group in the past and in the present. With nearly everything else changing, Russia supported Serbia at the beginning and the end of the twentieth century, at least in part because of common religious and ethnic backgrounds.[81] Moreover, ethnic ties help explain why actors far away from the conflict get involved. For instance, Iran gave arms for Bosnia and facilitated recruiting

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[75] In *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers*, Regan starts by assuming that leaders want to be successful, so they desire successful interventions. Yet if populations are casualty averse, then successful intervention must be costless.

[76] See fn. 12 above.

[77] Ethnic identity includes race, language, religion, and kinship.

[78] Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict."

[79] J. F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans," in Graham E. Fuller et al., eds., *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to West China* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1993), p. 153.

[80] William Martin, "The Christian Right and American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy* 114 (1999), pp. 66–80.

[81] Andrei Edemskii, "Russian Perspectives," in Alex Danchev and Thomas Halverson, eds., *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict* (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 29–51.

mercenaries. This approach is also useful for accounting for changes in policies, as political competition will determine which constituents matter and, therefore, which groups elsewhere are important for domestic politics. For example, Somalia's support for Somalis in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti varied over time, as the political relevance of particular clans rose and fell in conjunction with changes in Somalia's domestic politics.[82] Yet ethnic ties cannot account for external support from states having no or weak ethnic ties to the combatants. The United States supported Bosnia's Muslims and the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo although neither group has ties to politically important groups within the United States.[83] We should not expect that the existence of ethnic ties automatically leads to support for kin, as ethnic ties matter most when they are politically salient.[84]

A similar approach focuses on costs as well—the political costs of body bags. Clearly, the ghosts of Somalia hung over decisionmakers as they considered intervening in Rwanda. When soldiers are placed in harm's way, it may temporarily increase a politician's popularity, but the effect does not last, particularly when bodies come home.[85] Therefore, decisionmakers may be reluctant to intervene to partition another country or to use force to compel a particular side to compromise, as this may endanger their soldiers' lives. Both Bosnia and Kosovo provide some evidence to suggest that casualty avoidance is at the top of policymakers' priorities. Once Great Britain and France placed peacekeepers in Bosnia, these two countries focused on what various propos-

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[82] Stephen M. Saideman, "Inconsistent Irredentism? Political Competition, Ethnic Ties, and the Foreign Policies of Somalia and Serbia," *Security Studies* 7, No. 3 (1998), pp. 51–93.

[83] On the other hand, American reticence to assist Macedonia can be explained by considering the power of the Greek-American lobby. David C. Gompert, "The United States and Yugoslavia's Wars," in Richard H. Ullman, ed., *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996), p. 136. Further, several scholars have published work recently focusing on the role of ethnic interest groups in American foreign policy, including Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush, "The Role of Ethnic Interest Groups in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Case of the Cuban American National Foundation," *International Studies Quarterly* 43, No. 2 (1999), pp. 341–362; Yossi Shain, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad: Diasporas in the U.S. and Their Homelands* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[84] Nor should we assume that countries with particular kinds of ethnic differences are inevitably going to conflict more than other combinations of countries; Errol A. Henderson and Richard Tucker, "Clear and Present Strangers: The Clash of Civilizations and International Conflict," *International Studies Quarterly* 45, No. 2 (2001), pp. 317–338.

[85] See fn. 13 above.

als meant for the security of their troops. During the Kosovo conflict, the obsession with preventing allied casualties not only endangered Kosovars, but also the mission itself. The requirement to fly above 15,000 feet was aimed at preventing the loss of American and allied lives, but it significantly reduced the bombing's effectiveness and may have led to ethnic Albanian casualties. Further, the obvious reluctance to engage in a ground campaign weakened NATO's threats.[86]

Obviously, public opinion does not abhor all violence, so we need to develop a better understanding of what risks and costs publics are willing to accept.[87] Americans might be willing to accept casualties if either the stakes are more important or politicians do a better job of making the case. Yet this is not just an American problem, as European leaders also were concerned about losing soldiers in Bosnia, Rwanda, and elsewhere.[88]

There is an increasing sense among analysts that there is more to the question than simply potential or increasing body counts. Burk argues that public opinion affects foreign policy only when elites are divided.[89] Larson focuses on the same correlation, but adds that "Leadership consensus or dissensus regarding U.S. military operations has a profound impact upon the nature of public support."[90] Schwarz argues that casualty aversion among the American public causes it to be wary of interventions, but once casualties mount, the public actually prefers escalation.[91] Obviously, more work is required to determine the relationships involved among the public, decisionmakers, and the risks of intervention.

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[86] National Security Adviser Samuel Berger asserted that pilots flew below 15,000 feet once Serbia's air defenses were "neutralized." Press conference at the Council on Foreign Relations, July 26, 1999, ⟨https://wwwc.cc.columbia.edu/sec.dlc/ciao/conf/bes01/bes01.html⟩. Even if military requirements for particular weapons systems meant flying high, we still are left wondering why systems that function well close to the ground (and are therefore more able to distinguish targets), such as helicopters, were not used.

[87] John Mueller, "Public Opinion as a Constraint." He cites surveys showing that less than one-third of the Americans surveyed would have favored sending troops to Bosnia if twenty-five soldiers were killed, down from 67 percent if no soldiers were killed. He also contends that Americans are insensitive to the costs paid by non-Americans in these conflicts. Feaver and Gelpi, "How Many Deaths Are Acceptable?," suggest that the American public is less casualty averse than the American military or officials.

[88] Luttwak argues in "Give War a Chance" that the general desire to avoid casualties to peacekeepers is an important reason to stay out of internal conflicts.

[89] Burk, "Public Support for Peacekeeping."

[90] Larson, *Ends and Means*, p. xviii.

[91] Schwarz, *Casualties*.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Given the difficulty of getting states to cooperate, what advice can we offer policymakers? How should they handle the challenge of getting states with different and frequently opposing preferences to support a common policy to specific ethnic conflicts?

First, if cooperation is difficult, do not try. That is, motivated actors should work with the states that have similar preferences or converging goals. They should not try to bring into the intervention states that have opposing interests. Minilateralism traditionally focused on Great Power cooperation to ease collective action problems and other difficulties associated with negotiations involving large numbers of states, but it also makes sense in contexts where some states simply cannot cooperate due to competing interests.[92] Clearly, the United States and its NATO partners learned from Bosnia. The bombing campaign in August and September 1995 was possible only after the United Nations, and therefore Russia and China, were taken out of the decision-making process. As a result, the Kosovo operation was purely a NATO effort, reducing the ability of Russia and China to block the intervention.

Of course, this raises a crucial problem with minilateralism: angering those who are left out. Because states have preferences over who wins and loses in these internal conflicts, leaving out those who would disagree may allow for a successful intervention but result in significant diplomatic costs. U.S. relations with both China and Russia suffered because of the Kosovo conflict. Thus, an additional implication of this article is that we need to appreciate the trade-offs between intervention and good relations with countries who support a different side of an internal conflict.

Second, if many or most countries are unwilling to do what is necessary because they do not want to suffer the costs, then subcontract, as Jarat Chopra and Thomas G. Weiss suggest, to those countries that are motivated.[93] Nigeria must endure the consequences of ongoing conflict in Sierra Leone, so it may have a greater willingness and ability to make tough decisions and shed blood than the United States or Great Britain. Of course, subcontracting raises some severe problems—particularly, how does the international community hold the intervening country or countries accountable? Eager states may not be the best agents for the international community. An additional problem is whether the international community is likely to subsidize or assist the contractor, since outside actors will have a temptation to free-ride on the efforts of the contractor.

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[92] Miles Kahler, "Multilateralism with Small and Large Numbers," in John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 295–237.

[93] Jarat Chopra and Thomas G. Weiss, "Prospects for Containing Conflict in the Former Second World," *Security Studies* 4, No. 3 (1995), pp. 552–583.

Third, if ethnic politics push states to take a side in another country's conflict, then strategic manipulation of the identities in play might lead to favorable outcomes. Particular definitions of a conflict might produce more consensus among outsiders, leading to greater support for a particular intervention. Certainly, leaders of individual countries have a limited ability to define conflicts elsewhere because the history of the conflict and the actions of the participants (as well as the agenda setting of other outsiders) shape how the conflict is perceived. Still, policymakers should keep in mind the identities in play, both to highlight those that might lead to favorable outcomes and to predict what other states are likely to do.

Obviously, there are affinities among particular instruments and the strategies I have just discussed. Subcontracting and minilateralism can be useful strategies for implementing any of the four categories of ethnic conflict-management instruments. Reducing the number of players facilitates each response to ethnic conflict, although it increases the burden each intervenor must bear. Strategic identification, while perhaps the hardest to do successfully, may pay off when trying to use force if one can define the targets in ways that make them very unpopular.

Moreover, it is clear that certain explanations of the international relations of ethnic conflict suggest particular solutions as the most likely to work. If realist approaches are on target, outsiders should use minilateralism or subcontracting to facilitate ethnic conflict management. Since cooperation is very difficult in this view, it makes sense to leave out those states that disagree. Of course, realists are also sensitive to the larger political game, so they might be willing to accept less effective conflict management if it pays off in other, more important, realms. The focus on ethnic ties recommends, obviously, strategic identification of the conflict. If ethnic ties motivate states, then this strategy might work. Further, this approach also recommends minilateralism or subcontracting, as it suggests that conflicts among potential intervenors are likely to be common.

Finally, perhaps the most widely cited obstacle to conflict management is sovereignty. A single country cannot change the meaning of sovereignty by itself.[94] If respect for sovereignty is to be conditional, based on responsible treatment of citizens, then this must be negotiated among states so that a common understanding develops. A single intervention is not sufficient to change the meaning and impact of sovereignty, but a series of efforts by different groups of countries may eventually produce a new norm: that outsiders can and should help groups at risk. Of course, the new norm would not legitimate all interventions, but only those that satisfy the shared interpretation.

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[94]Elizabeth Kier and Jonathan Mercer, "Setting Precedents in Anarchy: Military Intervention and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *International Security* 20, No. 4 (1996), p. 86.

   This essay does not claim that conflict management is impossible or that any particular technique is superior or inferior to the rest. Instead, there has been an important dimension omitted from the discussion: getting states to do what specific proposed solutions logically require. Many of the solutions require cooperation, and all require at least one outside actor to be motivated enough to bear some costs. As this article suggests, policymakers have learned some ways to handle these problems, including minilateralism, despite the relative lack of attention scholars have paid to these issues. Future research needs to consider why states act and how they have managed to cooperate despite conflicting preferences. This obvious yet overlooked dimension of conflict management needs greater examination if we want to prevent, ameliorate, or resolve ethnic conflicts successfully.