Rebel Motivation: The Role of Internal and International Grievances

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Introduction

• Increased interest in civil wars
  – proportion of ethnic wars increased 15-60%, 1953-2004 (Marshall, 2006)

• Analyzing societies’ dissatisfaction on multidimensional level and civil conflict.

• Group Grievances
  – Political
  – Historic
  – Economic
  • Internal [within-country]
  • International [between-countries]
Existing Literature

• Scholars have generally concluded that civil wars work differently than interstate wars do.

• Greed and grievance
  – Grievance and relative deprivation
    • Davies (1962); Gurr (1970)
  – Greed and opportunity
    • Collier & Hoeffler (2004);Fearon & Laitin (2003)
  – Horizontal inequalities
    • Cederman et al (2011); Stewart (2008); Østby (2008)
Ethnic groups

• Ethnic civil wars are often argued to exhibit unique causes and dynamics.

• Alternative view: ethnic identities merely provide a cover story for underlying economic or private interests and do not affect the conflict dynamics.

• Strong ethnic groups facilitate collective action.

• Ethnic conflicts are harder to contain.
Horizontal Inequalities (HI)

• HIs are inequalities among groups of people that share a common identity.

• It is a combination of cultural differences and political and economic inequalities running along cultural lines.

• It is easier to mobilize groups with high HIs.

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Globalization and Relative Grievances

• Literature on civil conflict only considers the role of relative deprivation within countries.

• Increased globalization facilitates comparison of living standards with populations from similar states.

• We need to analyze grievances born from both internal (within-country) as well as international (bilateral and global) comparisons.
Intra-national Enduring Grievances?

• Azar (1985), Goertz & Diehl (1993)
  – Relatively small number of states account for a disproportionately large amount of interstate wars.
  – Rivals are more likely to fight, and when they do their wars are costly and severe.

• Prior studies of interstate rivalry have focused primarily on their effects on interstate relations.
  – Few recent studies on intrastate rivals, still in infancy (Thies, 2004; Derouen & Bercovitch, 2008; Morey, 2009).
Hypotheses Tested

Hypothesis 1: Relative deprivation (economic and political) increases the probability of civil war.

Hypothesis 2: International relative grievances increase the probability of civil war.

Hypothesis 3: Conflict in the past increases the probability of civil war.
Measures

Dependent variable:
• Civil conflict onset from Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflicts Database (≥ 25 battle deaths)

Independent variables:
• Economic grievances
  – GCP Per Capita –G-Econ (Nordhaus, 2006).
• Political grievances
  – Ethnopolitical Exclusion measure - GeoEPR database (Wucherpfennig et el. 2010)
• Historic grievances
  – Number of past rounds of conflict
Measures, cont. and Methods

**Independent variables, cont.:**
- International grievances
  - Binary measure for countries with greatest relative differences in GDP (PPP) per capita with their neighboring countries

**Control variables:**
- Number of excluded groups (source: Ethnic Power Relations dataset)
- Absolute poverty
  - GDP Per Capita from Penn World Tables and WDI

**Time period:** 1990-2005

**Method:** Rare Events Logit model (Tomz et al, 1999, King & Zeng, 2001)
- Fixed regional and year effects
- Robust standard errors
Table 2: The Effect of internal and international grievances on civil conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable: Civil war onset</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative Economic Grievances</td>
<td>0.318*</td>
<td>0.336**</td>
<td>0.299*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.168)</td>
<td>(0.162)</td>
<td>(0.159)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute Economic Grievances</td>
<td>-0.382***</td>
<td>-0.345***</td>
<td>-0.293**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.127)</td>
<td>(0.119)</td>
<td>(0.128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Political Grievances</td>
<td>1.485***</td>
<td>1.377***</td>
<td>1.373***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.258)</td>
<td>(0.248)</td>
<td>(0.240)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Excluded Groups</td>
<td>-0.029***</td>
<td>-0.028***</td>
<td>-0.034***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Grievances</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.504***</td>
<td>0.562***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.183)</td>
<td>(0.192)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Economic Grievances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.593***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Fixed Effects</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Fixed Effects</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>26,457</td>
<td>26,457</td>
<td>26,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

- Relative grievances (political and economic) increase probability of civil conflict.
- Both within-state and between-state comparisons are important for advancing our theoretical understanding of the complex drivers of domestic uprising.

Limitations/opportunity for future research:
- Imperfect geocoded data.
- Improving the measure of international grievances.
  - For similar states also considering members of the same political union (European Union (EU), African Union (AU), Union of South American Nations, Arab League, etc.)
Kiitos

Thank you!