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INTRASTATE ETHNIC CONFLICTS AND EXTERNAL STATE SUPPORT OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN EAST ASIA: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Most states in East Asia (Northeast and Southeast Asia) are ethnically diverse and have experienced or are currently experiencing ethnic conflict. Although, intrastate ethnic conflicts are in the domain of domestic politics, they often become "internationalized", when an external state becomes involved. How can the difference in the behaviour of East Asian states regarding intrastate ethnic conflicts in other states of the region be explained? Scholars of international relations (IR) have come up with a variety of explanatory factors for a state's decision whether to intervene. This paper presents an overview of the major theories and evaluates their explanatory power for IR in East Asia after the end of Cold War. The results presented in this paper lay the groundwork for the future qualitative empirical research.

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Introduction

Intrastate ethnic conflicts present one of the major challenges to the contemporary world's peace and security. Although intrastate ethnic conflicts are in the domain of domestic politics, they usually affect not just single states, but entire regions and sometimes even the whole international system via refugee flows and the disruption of the regional and world economy. Moreover, these initially domestic issues often become "internationalized" when an external state becomes involved. Apart from the obvious danger of the conflict's expansion, the involvement on the side of the minority questions the popular notion of state sovereignty and the norms of international law, which the modern system of international relations (IR) is based on.

Most states in East Asia (Northeast and Southeast Asia) are ethnically diverse and have faced or are currently facing ethnic conflict. According to the Minorities at Risk database there are 30 ethnic groups in the region (see Table 1 for details), which either collectively experience "systematic discriminatory treatment or are politically mobilized in defence or promotion of their self-defined interests" and therefore are considered politically relevant.

Table 1. Politically active ethnic groups in East Asia

N	Group	Country
1	Vietnamese	Cambodia
2	Hui Muslims	China
3	Tibetans	China
4	Turkmen	China
5	Acehnese	Indonesia
6	Chinese	Indonesia
7	Papuans	Indonesia
8	Hmong	Laos
9	Chinese	Malaysia
10	Dayaks	Malaysia
11	East Indians	Malaysia
12	Kadazans	Malaysia
13	Kachins	Myanmar
14	Karens	Myanmar
15	Mons	Myanmar
16	Rohingya (Arakanese)	Myanmar
17	Shans	Myanmar
18	Zomis (Chins)	Myanmar
20	Igorots	Philippines

21	Moros	Philippines
22	Malays	Singapore
23	Aboriginal Taiwanese	Taiwan
24	Mainland Chinese	Taiwan
25	Taiwanese	Taiwan
26	Chinese	Thailand
27	Malay-Muslims	Thailand
28	Northern Hill Tribes	Thailand
29	Chinese	Vietnam
30	Montagnards	Vietnam

Notes:

Information in the table is based on the Minorities at Rick (MAR) dataset. The latest version of the MAR dataset covers the period up to 2006.

Despite the existence of on-going violent intrastate ethnic conflicts after the end of the Cold War the reaction of East Asian states has been quite restrained; there have been no cases of military involvement or direct economic pressure on conflict states (such as economic sanctions or embargo). The involvement of external states has included diplomatic support of ethnic minorities, indirect tangible support (such as offering assistance via NGOs, accepting refugees from conflict areas, not interfering in arms transactions, permitting rebels to operate on their territory, providing safe havens, offering small scale military assistance) and proactive mediation (such as initiating peace talks). Even such type of support has an impact on the development of the conflict, bilateral relations between the conflict state and the external state, and regional stability. What factors are decisive in a state's choice to become involved? How can the differences in the behaviour of East Asian states regarding intrastate ethnic conflicts in other states of the region be explained?

This paper presents an overview of the major theories that explain external state support of conflicting ethnic minorities and gives a preliminary evaluation of their explanatory power for the study of international relations in East Asia after the end of the Cold War. Macro theories of IR such as neorealism, liberalism, neoliberalism; specific theories of external state involvement; and sociological theories of social network are all discussed in the paper. The results set the framework for further detailed empirical investigation of external state involvement in intrastate ethnic conflicts in this region.

The regional focus of the research is based on the Regional Security Complex Theory of Buzan and Waever (2003), according to which Southeast and Northeast Asia form together one security complex—a mini-system of IR. Buzan and Waever explain the emergence of an East Asian security complex by three parallel developments: "a shared concern about the implications

of growing Chinese power"; "the creation of institutional security connections linking Northeast and Southeast Asian states"; "the build-up of an East Asian regional economy, which is widely thought within the region to have strong links to politico-military stability" (Buzan & Wæver, 2003:164). There are many cultural links between Northeast and Southeast Asian societies, which set the region apart from other regions of the world. The notion of "the moral basis of the social order" derived from Confucianism are still invoked directly and indirectly in many Northeast and Southeast Asian societies (Keyes et al., 1994:2).

External intervention from the perspective of macro theories of IR

One of the most influential IR theories—neorealism—assumes that states are unitary actors whose behaviour in the international arena is shaped solely by systemic constraints. In the anarchic international system, foreign policy actions are aimed at maximizing state security and power. In order to increase or 'balance' power, states form alliances with the enemies of their enemies. Conflicting ethnic groups are rivals of their state's government. The neorealist argument can be extended to say that states form alliances not only with other states, but also with conflicting ethnic minorities within their rival states (Saideman 2002:28). External intervention in domestic ethnic conflicts reflects state competition in international systems. The major difference between forming an alliance with a state and with an ethnic minority is that the latter is against the non-intervention norm of international law and is very likely to have an immediate negative impact on bilateral relations between the conflict state and the external state. A more recent development of neorealist scholarship has expanded the concept of balancing, splitting it into two levels of intensity: low level vs. high level, or soft balancing vs. hard balancing. Low level balancing is the situation when "the balancing state attempts to maintain a constructive relationship with the targeted state" (Roy, 2005). Forming alliances with ethnic minorities is an example of high intensity balancing, when "the relationship between the balancing state and the targeted state is more openly adversarial" (Roy, 2005:306).

Another important explanatory factor of foreign policy behaviour for neorealism is a state's capabilities. The theory holds that great powers are more likely to "become involved in other states' conflicts militarily because they have enough capabilities and power projection to do so, and because of the breadth of their foreign policy interests" (Corbetta 2014:3).

East Asian states have many conflicting issues among them, such as territorial disputes or historical antagonisms, but they are also highly interdependent and have developed cooperation in a variety of fields. The period of hard-balancing and alliances is over; the neorealist category of enemies or rivals applies only to relations between South Korea and the Democratic Peoples'

Republic of Korea (DPRK) in post-Cold War East Asia. While neorealism might explain relatively low levels of support enjoyed by ethnic minorities from external East Asian states in comparison with the Cold War period, it can hardly explains the inter-regional variation in support of ethnic minorities in contemporary East Asia. Following the capabilities and great power argument, China should be involved in domestic ethnic conflicts more than any other regional state. However, at least when it comes to military involvement or economic pressure China does not stand out.

For neoliberal institutionalism, common membership in international governmental organizations (IGOs) is an "indicator of shared visions of collective management of international politics" (Maoz, Kuperman, Terris & Talmud 2006). One would expect members of the same IGOs to have similar positions regarding involvement in intrastate ethnic conflicts, and the likelihood of intervention to decrease. Regime theory holds that relations between an external state and a state experiencing domestic ethnic conflict are guided by international normative regimes. States behave according to the international norms, which they have been socialized into. For external involvement in intrastate ethnic conflicts, such norms are non-intervention, the responsibility to protect, and the right of nations for self-determination. The non-intervention norm promotes state sovereignty and forbids intervention in other state's domestic affairs. However, if a state manifestly fails to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, external intervention with the use of military force is justified by the responsibility to protect norm (Albright & Williamson 2013). The right of nations for self-determination stipulates that "only peoples under colonial rule have the right to declare their independence by claiming self-determination" and "states must conform to the norm of diplomatic recognition: only self-determined entities (i.e. evolving under colonial rules) can be supported and recognized as sovereign states" (Paquin & Saideman 2010).

Wendt's social constructivism, which is more of a philosophy of science rather than IR theory, links foreign policy choices to state identity. The decision to support an ethnic minority is determined by the state's interests, which are not a product of rational calculation, but are socially constructed. Again, international organizations are central to the formation of inter-subjective and institutionalized ideas, because they provide a forum for state interaction and the discussion of ideas. Constructivism has not been widely applied in the studies of third power intervention in internal ethnic conflicts, but might be helpful in explaining changes in relations between states over time when material (both domestic and international) factors stay the same.

How is regional cooperation organized in East Asia? According to Buzan (2012:6), an "inclusive core IGO for East Asia is missing". Instead, there is a variety of "partial and overlapping IGOs" (such as ASEAN and ASEAN+3, APEC, the East Asian Summit, SAARC),

which either include groups of East Asian states or link regional states "to different parts of a much wider neighbourhood" (Buzan, 2012:6). As IGOs are overlapping, there are not two or more camps of IGOs, which could reflect ideological or normative divisions within the region. Following the regime theory argument, the inclusion of the majority of regional states (the most obvious exclusion being DPRK) in more or less same group of IGOs reflects the existence of shared visions of collective management of international politics. Although institutionalism and regime theory can be applied to compare the behaviour of states from different regions (when different regions have separate systems of interstate organizations) or the same group of states but across time, its explanatory power for intraregional variation between East Asian states is limited. As East Asian states are involved in similar groups of IGOs, the process of their socialization and interest formation, as described by social constructivism, is also quite similar.

Contrary to neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism, liberal theories of IR argue that political outcomes in international politics are shaped by domestic context: actors, structures and processes. States are not assumed to be unitary structures interested only in survival. State preferences are not 'given', but endogenous, derived from social preferences and specific for every state. The following domestic factors are usually employed to explain state policy choices regarding domestic ethnic conflict in other states: political constraints and regime types, vulnerability (ethnic composition), ethnic affinity and importance of ethnicity for domestic power structures (the latter two will be discussed in a separate section).

Carment and James (1996), for example, claim that a state's decision to intervene depends on the interaction between two domestic variables—vulnerability arising from ethnic composition and political constraints. A state's vulnerability refers to the ethnic polarization within the state and the threat of internal ethnic conflict (Heraclides 1990). The assumption holds that the success of rebellious ethnic groups in other states, neighbouring states in particular, might stimulate ethnic groups to challenge their government and start a violent conflict (Forsberg, 2008: 283). Although, conventional wisdom suggests that vulnerable states would not support ethnic minorities in other countries, this argument has been questioned many times (Koinova 2008, Saideman 1997, Moore 2002). In the case of East Asia, only Japan, South Korea and North Korea are relatively homogenous, while other states are ethnically diverse (see Table 2 for reference). This means that the majority of states are 'vulnerable' and unlikely to get involved in the internal affairs of other states. Therefore, vulnerability cannot explain intraregional variation either, unless we develop degrees or scale of vulnerability (more or less vulnerable). This can be done by evaluating not only a state's ethnic diversity, but also the intensity of on-going ethnic conflicts within the state, using for example, the Conflict Barometer developed by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research.

Table 2. Ethnic composition of East Asian states

Country	Ethnic groups
Northeast Asia	
People's Republic of China	Han Chinese 91.6%, Zhuang 1.3%, other (includes Hui, Manchu, Uighur, Miao, Yi, Tujia, Tibetan, Mongol, Dong, Buyei, Yao, Bai, Korean, Hani, Li, Kazakh, Dai and other nationalities) 7.1%
Japan	Japanese 98.5%, Koreans 0.5%, Chinese 0.4%, other 0.6%
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Homogeneous
Republic of Korea	Homogeneous
Southeast Asia	
Brunei	Malay 65.7%, Chinese 10.3%, other indigenous 3.4%, other 20.6% (2011 est.)
Cambodia	Khmer 90%, Vietnamese 5%, Chinese 1%, other 4%
Indonesia	Javanese 40.1%, Sundanese 15.5%, Malay 3.7%, Batak 3.6%, Madurese 3%, Betawi 2.9%, Minangkabau 2.7%, Buginese 2.7%, Bantenese 2%, Banjarese 1.7%, Balinese 1.7%, Acehnese 1.4%, Dayak 1.4%, Sasak 1.3%, Chinese 1.2%, other 15% (2010 est.)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Lao 54.6%, Khmou 10.9%, Hmong 8%, Tai 3.8%, Phuthai 3.3%, Leu 2.2%, Katang 2.1%, Makong 2.1%, Akha 1.6%, other 10.4%, unspecified 1% (2005 est.)
Malaysia	Malay 50.1%, Chinese 22.6%, indigenous 11.8%, Indian 6.7%, other 0.7%, non-citizens 8.2% (2010 est.)
Myanmar (Burma)	Burman 68%, Shan 9%, Karen 7%, Rakhine 4%, Chinese 3%, Indian 2%, Mon 2%, other 5%
Thailand	Thai 95.9%, Burmese 2%, other 1.3%, unspecified 0.9% (2010 est.)
Timor-Lieste	Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian), Papuan, small Chinese minority
Singapore	Chinese 74.2%, Malay 13.3%, Indian 9.2%, other 3.3% (2013 est.)
Philippines	Tagalog 28.1%, Cebuano 13.1%, Ilocano 9%, Bisaya/Binisaya 7.6%, Hiligaynon Ilonggo 7.5%, Bikol 6%, Waray 3.4%, other 25.3% (2000 census)
Vietnam	Kinh (Viet) 85.7%, Tay 1.9%, Thai 1.8%, Muong 1.5%, Khmer 1.5%, Mong 1.2%, Nung 1.1%, others 5.3% (1999 census)

Notes:

1. Based on the information from the World Factbook
2. Population estimated for 2015
3. GDP data in 2014 USD, except for DPRK (data in 2013 USD)

Political constraints are said to be low or high depending on the way elites come to office "by popular vote or seizure of power through force or coercion"(such as military one-party

regimes) (Carment & James, 1996:531). In political regimes where strong institutions are absent, political elites have fewer constraints, do not have to take into consideration the interests of their constituency, and are more likely to engage in aggressive nationalistic foreign policy. For democratic states, which have higher constraints, their involvement in ethnic conflicts in other democratic states is unlikely (Bélanger, Duchesne, & Paquin 2005). Within parliamentary democracies the political orientation of the ruling party or coalition has an impact on the likelihood of militarized involvement: involvement is more probable for right-wing governments than for left (Palmer, London, & Regan 2004:16).

East Asia is home to a variety of regimes and forms of government: authoritarian (China, Vietnam, Laos), democratic (Japan, South Korea, Philippines), hybrid (Singapore), totalitarian (North Korea), constitutional monarchies (Cambodia, Japan, Thailand), single party socialist republics (China, Vietnam, Laos, North Korea) and presidential republics (Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore). The domestic politics, political constraints, power structures, and the importance of ethnicity show significant variation. That is why the hypotheses about the influence of domestic political factors on the likelihood of involvement seems to be suitable for further research.

Other factors influencing the decision to intervene that are discussed in scholarly work are a shared border and the intensity of conflict. For example, Michael Edward Brown stresses the role of neighbouring countries in ethnic wars: "[W]hen minority groups are persecuted, their brethren in neighbouring states might come to their defence[....] In many cases, of course, those who come to the defence of their brethren have ulterior motives in mind—absorption and expansion" (Brown 1993:20). Although, having a shared border makes the external state's involvement more likely, but that does not increase the likelihood of supporting the ethnic minority. The external state's involvement might take the form of supporting the conflict state's government to suppress the ethnic minority. Finally, conflict intensity cannot be treated as an exogenous variable in a state's decision to intervene, because "the host state's choice of how well (or badly) to treat the group already anticipates the likely reaction of a foreign actor" (Ceinyan 2002).

Overall, the liberal theory of IR and its emphasis on domestic affairs seems to be the most plausible in explaining the variation in external state support of conflicting ethnic minorities in East Asia. It does not mean that other theories are wrong, but that some theories and factors appear to be more relevant for explaining international relations in certain regions during certain periods.

A Big Debate: Motivations of External States

Liberal scholars of ethnic conflicts and third party interventions have tried to conceptualize the reasons, which guide a state's decision to intervene. Apart from domestic and international factors, another popular classification divides states' motivations into instrumental and affective (Suhrke and Noble, Davis and Moore, Heraclides, Carment).

"Instrumental motivations may relate to larger systemic, regional considerations and domestic interests, while affective motivations relate to a particular set of issues within a conflict" (Carment 1994:565). Instrumental motivations are a broad notion and include the explanatory factors mentioned earlier, such as international political interests (alliance, balancing rivals, increasing security), international economic interests (securing natural resources, expanding markets) and domestic political considerations. Affective motivations also include humanitarian considerations, ideological, ethnic (and religious) affinity. While the idea of instrumental motivations is accepted by the majority of scholars, affective motivations have caused more debate.

Due to colonization, migration, refugee flows and other types of movements of people, transnational ethnic affinity is a wide-spread phenomenon. Although ethnic affinity is widely used in the literature on third party interventions in domestic ethnic conflicts, its definition is usually absent from such studies. States hardly ever identify what ethnic groups abroad they consider to be their ethnic kin. The problem with defining transnational ethnic affinity is also connected to the fact that there are several ways to define ethnicity. For example, the Transborder Ethnic Kin dataset (EPR-TEK 2014) created at the University of Zurich identifies transborder ethnic kin relations through nominal matching, e.g. Kurds living in Turkey, Iran and Iraq. However, if we accept the idea that ethnic identities are multiple and overlapping, we will see that transnational ethnic affinity is also more complex: some groups might share a greater number of affinities (e.g., linguistic, race, religion) and some only one (e.g. religion). Although perceptions of affinity are based on historical and anthropological accounts, they are also changeable (King & Melvin 1999/2000:131).

Davis and Moore (1997:12) argue that transnational ethnic alliances influence foreign policy behaviour, and that minorities with ethnic ties in another state get more support. Ethnicity is thought to carry a highly affective and emotional component, which may prevail in the decision-making process (Shain & Aharon 2003:453; Carment et al. 2009:75). One explanation for ethnic affinity holds that the support of conflicting ethnic brethren is among a constituency's preferences and therefore should be reflected in foreign policy. In order for this causal mechanism to work, a constituency should see the conflicting ethnic group as its brethren and

have an opportunity to pressure its government. It can be argued that this is particularly true in competitive highly institutionalized political systems. However, authoritarian regimes cannot turn a blind eye to repression of their ethnic kin either.

The role of ethnic affinity in foreign relations can also be explained by the role of ethnicity and ethnic politics inside that state. There are two ideal types of states in relation to ethnicity: autonomous states and non-autonomous states. The former has ethnically impartial policies, promotes the depoliticizing of ethnicity and "colour-blind national values" (Brown 2003:2). The latter creates policies taking ethnic divisions in consideration. "Policies in such a state would revolve around assertions of, and questions of access to, the benefits of membership of the various ethnic communities" (Brown 2003:2). When nationalism lies at the centre of the regime and its legitimacy, the protection of its ethnic kin becomes one of its duties. Relations with ethnic kin abroad are rarely the "subject of universal agreement among political actors" (King & Melvin 1999/2000:131) and often reflect the results of power struggles inside the state.

Although, the majority of research considers ethnic and religious ties an important factor in the variations in external state support, the role of affective motivations has been debated. For example, Woodwell (2004) holds that in some cases feelings of ethnic affinity might be used to manipulate the public and to mobilize population to support aggressive foreign policy behaviour that actually serves other needs.

In the previous section, we have already dismissed international political factors (balancing rivals, alliances, membership in IGOs) as irrelevant for the analysis of intraregional variation in ethnic minority support in East Asia. The idea of domestic political and economic motivations corresponds to arguments from liberal IR theories. Therefore, transnational ethnic affinity and its perception in external states, the role of ethnicity in a political system and the power structure should be added to the above-mentioned explanatory factors, which exist on the domestic/state level.

The imperial expansion of China, migration and colonialism, which divided traditional communities with borders and forced migration, resulted in the multi-ethnicity of East Asian states. Transnational ethnic and religious affinity is a widespread phenomenon in East Asia, e.g. Chinese not only live in China, but also form significant proportion of population in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, etc. Therefore, East Asia presents a great sample of states with ethnic affinity links, where the interaction of instrumental and affective motivations and the role of ethnic affinity for different regime types and power structures can be examined.

The identity of ethnic groups and the likelihood of outside state support

In the literature on external state interventions, ethnic minorities are often "seen as the objects of intervention with most of the causal weight placed on either international factors or the domestic politics of the intervening country" (Paquin & Saideman 2010). However, the difference in the support that different ethnic minority groups get from external states can be also explained by the group's appeal manifested in its own strategy and actions, which can both encourage or discourage external involvement.

Carment (2003:30) argues that "ethnic minority groups recognize that internationalization of their demands can both simultaneously encourage internal mobilization and weaken saliency and effectiveness of the state by creating international forums for sub-state grievances". Therefore, ethnic groups launch international publicity campaigns in order to increase visibility abroad. Clifford (2005) in his book "The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism" studies the difference in the levels of international support, which insurgent groups get focusing on support from NGOs. He writes that "conflicts and the insurgent groups involved in them face a Darwinian struggle for scarce media attention, NGO activism, and international concern. In this competition, the lion's share of resources go to the savviest, not the neediest" (Clifford 2005). Media attention and publicity are another possible explanatory factor for the divergence levels of support for ethnic minority from external states.

The identities of conflicting ethnic groups have an impact on outside states' decisions to support them. One explanation can be found in the affective motivations of the state, another in instrumental or strategic calculations of the outside state as described in the previous section. Saideman (2005) argues that the proclaimed identity of an ethnic group signals to the outside state whether they share common values and whether they are rivals or partners. The smart "selection and advertisement of group identities" can help ethnic minorities to maximize international support (Saideman et al. 2005).

Regarding secessionist conflicts, Saideman (2005) gives three main identity categories that ethnic groups have: territorial, communal, and ideological. Territorial identity is particularly important for secessionist and irredentist groups. Ideology was a decisive factor for attracting the assistance of the great powers during the Cold War, but since then has lost much of its explanatory power. "Communal identities are 'tribal' allegiances that determine membership in a politically active social unit—be it racial, religious, linguistic, regional, or cultural" (Saideman et al. 2005). As communal identities are multidimensional, some traits such as race and religion (especially Islam), are believed to be intrinsically more important for outside states (Akbaba et al. 2008:169). "Islam considers all Muslim brethren, linked by bonds that transcend man-made

distinctions. Nationalism, moreover, is regarded as sectarianism, contaminated by Western secularism and involving loyalties superseding loyalty to God" (Rabasa 2003:8).

As mentioned, transnational ethnic affinity is a common phenomenon in East Asia. Although an affinity exists, it might not be stressed in the self-identification of a conflicting group and therefore not increase the likelihood of support. That is why, the self-identification of the minority group and how it is perceived be by an external state should be checked in order to make conclusions about ethnic affinity.

The population of East Asia is not religiously homogeneous across states or within them; Buddhism is the religion of the majority in Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand; Islam in Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia; Catholicism in the Philippines. Shinto, Taoism, Confucianism and folk religions also play an important role in the belief systems of East Asians. Most states have significant religious minorities. Adherents of the same religion are often a majority in one country and minority in another (Clarke, 2001). In the Philippines there is, for example, the Moro Muslim group, and in Malaysia and Indonesia Buddhist or Confucian Chinese. Therefore, East Asia is also a case study to explore the impact of religious affinity.

Sociological theory and triadic relations

Corbetta and Grant (2012) critisize the emphasize on dyadic relationships in the studies of third party interventions in internal conflicts, which creates limitations in the understading of third state behaviour. "A potentially intervening state faces a trade-off between supporting minority ethnic brethren in a neighbouring state and maintaining or developing cooperative relationship with the government of that state" (Carment et al. 2006:11). Corbetta and Grant (2012) suggest that triadic relationships between an outside state and the conflict parties should be studied with the help of social network tools.

According to structural balance theory developed within sociology, triadic relations are more than the simple sum of three dyadic relations. Social actors aim for consistency in their relations, meaning that one state cannot have two close partners (states or minority groups), who are rivals with each other. When triadic relations are unbalanced—the outside state has similar relations with both sides in the conflict—it is more likely to intervene as an intermediary rather than support minority. When a state has balanced relations with two parties in conflict (rival with one, ally of another), partisan interventions are more likely (Corbetta & Grant, 2012).

Overall, researchers emphasize the importance of taking into consideration all three parties and three pairs of relations. In the study of ethnic minority support, this theory generates the hypothesis that the third state would support the ethnic minority if it has a preference for the

minority itself and a dislike for the conflict state's government. However, there are different degrees of intervention: military, economic pressure, indirect tangible support, diplomatic support. While military and economic intervention is unlikely in unbalanced triadic relations, other softer and more indirect types are possible, and even likely, when the external state tries to "eat one's cake and have it too".

Conclusion

There are a variety of theories and approaches to analyse external state intervention in domestic ethnic conflicts on the side of ethnic minority. The explanatory factors can be grouped into 7 overlapping categories (see Table 3 for reference): characteristics of ethnic groups, ethnic conflict, conflict states, and external states, dyadic characteristics or relationships between external state and conflict state, between external state and ethnic group, between external state and ethnic conflict, and finally triadic characteristics or relationship between three parties involved in the conflict.

Table 3. Explanatory factors of external state's support to ethnic minorities

Type of explanatory factors	Explanatory factors	Literature
External state characteristics	Vulnerability	Heraclides, A. (1990); Saideman (2002)
	Political and institutional constraints, transition from totalitarian rule, characterstics of parliamentary coalition	Heraclides, A. (1990); Carment, D., James P. & Taydas Z. (2006); Khosla D. (1999); Palmer G., London T. & Regan P. (2004), King & Melvin (1999/2000)
	Wealth, great power	Davis D. & Moore W. (1997),Palmer G., London T. & Regan P. (2004), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006)
Conflict characterstics	Levels of violence and discriminations, rise in the levels	Akhbaba Y., James P. & Taydas Z. (2006); Saideman S. & Ayres W. (2013), Palmer G., London T. & Regan P. (2004), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Regan P.M. (1998)
	Other interventions	Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006)
	Refugee flows	Palmer G., London T. & Regan P. (2004), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Regan P.M. (1998)
Ethnic minority characteristics	Publicity, media coverage	Clifford B. (2005)
	Type (seccesionist,irrendentist), base of differentation, Indentity of ethnic	Akhbaba Y., James P. & Taydas Z. (2006); Khosla D. (1999), Saideman (2002), Saideman

	group, base of differentiation	S., Doughrty B.K. & Jenne E.K. (2005)
Dyadic characteristics: external state and conflict	Instrumental motivations (economic, domestic political or international political calculations)	Heraclides, A. (1990); Carment, D., James P. & Taydas Z. (2006); Ganguly R. (1997)
Dyadic characteristics: external state and conflict state	Shared border, contigency	Heraclides A. (1990), Davis D. & Moore W. (1997); Brown W.E. (1993), Lemke D. & Regan P. (2004), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Regan P.M. (1998)
	Capability ratio, power differentation	Davis D. & Moore W.(1997), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006)
	Power considerations, joint alliance, rivalry, old war	Davis D. & Moore W. (1997), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Gurr T.G. (2014)
	Colonial history	Lemke D. & Regan P. (2004), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006)
	Regime similarity (joint democracy, ideology)	Davis D. & Moore W. (1997), Gurr T.G. (2014), Belanger L., Duchenese E. & Paquin J. (2005), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Petersen K.K. (2004), Saideman S.M. (1997)
Dyadic characteristics: outside state and conflict state	Affective motivations/ ethnic affinity, religious affinity, different degrees of cleavages, diaspora	Heraclides A. (1990); Davis D. & Moore W. (1997), Carment, D., James P. & Taydas Z.(2006); Akhbaba Y., James P. & Taydas Z. (2008); Saideman S. & Ayres W. (2013), Saideman S. (2001), Saideman (2002), Shain Y. & Aharon B. (2003), Woodwell D. (2004), Jackson R. & Rosberg C. (1982), Findley M. & Teo T.K. (2006), Ganguly R. (1997), Petersen K.K. (2004), Saideman S. M. (1997)
Triadic characteristics: ethnic group, conflict state, external state	Triadic relationship (balanced/unbalanced)	Corbetta R. (2012)

Macro theories of IR differ in what they view as the explanatory factors of foreign policy behaviour in general, the major distinction lying between systemic (external) and domestic (internal) factors. Such factors typical for states in the same region, as interdependence, common IGO membership and common cultural characteristics (such as ethnic diversity) have allowed the author to narrow down the list of possible explanatory factors. Because of its focus on what

happens inside the state, liberal theory appears to be the most plausible macro theory of IR to explain the variation in external state support for ethnic minorities within East Asia after the end of Cold War.

Three explanatory factors are identified which should be addressed when researching external state involvement in East Asia.

The first is the ethnic affinity between the ethnic minority in the conflict state and the majority in external state. The hypothesis is that a minority ethnic group is likely to get support from an external state, if the population of that state considers the ethnic minority as its brethren. The identity of the group and the perceptions of the population are of vital importance. Even if two groups of people share a lot of characteristics, it does not mean that they view each other as brethren.

The second factor includes the domestic political system of the state and the role of ethnicity in its power structure. On one side, democratic states are less likely to intervene, although. On the other side, democratic states where the power struggle is connected to ethnicity are expected to provide support to their ethnic brethren.

Finally, the third factor is the economic motivation of the external state expressed in the costs of the on-going conflict and the perceived gains of involvement.

It should be kept in mind, however, that such factors as the capability ratio should be also checked, when a cross-case comparison is undertaken. In addition, the vulnerability of a state expressed in the existence of on-going ethnic conflicts or cases of ethnic violence is another factor that decreases the likelihood of providing support and should be controlled for in cross-case comparisons.

All theories mentioned in this paper have to be empirically tested in order to be confirmed or falsified. However, the author has made a preliminary selection of explanatory factors for the variation in ethnic minority support in East Asia after the Cold War. The selection, aimed at developing variables and hypotheses for the further qualitative research of international relations in East Asia, was based on the easily identifiable characteristics of IR and states in East Asia.

The focus on East Asian states does not mean that this region is unique in regards to external state involvement in ethnic conflicts, or its scope and causes. The focus on one region controls some of the many possible explanatory factors and provides us with cases that have some historical, cultural and geographic similarities. Thus, some of the possible explanatory factors derived from numerous theories have similar values in the majority of cases and can be disregarded. Researchers have to test a smaller number of factors using the "most similar" case selection method.

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