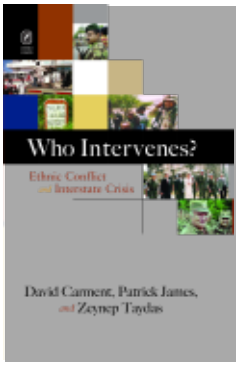
2. The Two-Level Game of Ethnic Conflict



CHAPTER TWO

The Two-Level Game of Ethnic Conflict

> The most stubborn facts are those of the spirit not those of the physical world and one of the most stubborn facts of the spirit remains nationalist feeling—at different scales. (Gottman 1951, quoted in Knight 1982: 520)

1. Toward a Framework for Analysis

Why do some ethnic conflicts lead to interstate war while others do not? Why do some third-party states pursue covert involvement in ethnic disputes while others adopt open approaches? Furthermore, why do some intermediaries seek to manage or resolve ethnic strife while others try to exploit conflict for their own purposes? The epigraph to this chapter suggests that ethnic identity, both for states directly involved in disputes and third parties, will play an immanent role in styles of conflict management and escalation.

To address the preceding queries, this chapter is organized in six additional sections. In the second section, the metaphor of a two-level game is introduced as an effective technique for analysis of ethnic relations between states. Third, domestic processes, international ambition, and rational choice are linked together to develop a new perspective on decision making. Section four focuses on ethnic composition and institutional constraint, variables that are combined to develop a framework of analysis for third-party intervention and interstate ethnic conflict. In the fifth section, conditions enabling ethnic conflict—namely, ethnic affinity and cleavage—are introduced. Sixth, propositions are derived from the framework. The seventh and final section explains the case selection and summarizes the accomplishments of this chapter.

2. The Two-Level Game of Ethnic Conflict

With a focus on the behavior of the potential intervener in an ethnic conflict,

the framework is kept relatively simple: a state's choice of strategy is determined by a limited number of elements, which facilitate a diagrammatic and diagnostic exposition. Analysis of these elements can be divided into three stages. The first stage examines the roles of ethnic composition and institutional constraint in the formation of ethnic foreign policies. Interaction effects are then assessed in light of two enabling conditions that are deemed necessary for an ethnic conflict to reach the interstate level. These are transnational ethnic affinities and ethnic cleavage. In the third stage of the analysis, types of states that are more or less likely to use force in ethnic interactions are identified on the basis of the interaction effects and enabling conditions.

Structure and decision-making motivations combine to form an integrated framework. The emphasis is on linkages between and among structural conditions, normative constraints, and strategic opportunities that are conducive to escalation and intervention. Under certain conditions, motivations and interests arise as much from domestic considerations as from the structural conditions associated with them. For example, instrumental and strategic interests may relate to larger system-level and regional considerations, while affective motivations pertain to a particular set of issues within a conflict. The meaning of these motivations and interests may be context dependent and variable in salience.

Accordingly, an actor-oriented theory of interstate ethnic conflict encompasses two levels of interaction. These levels pertain, respectively, to willingness and opportunity (Most and Starr 1980; Siverson and Starr 1990; Cioffi-Revilla and Starr 1995) of a state with respect to adoption of an ethnic foreign policy.

One tier of interaction includes the processes of decision making, based on some preference ordering, which explains the specific route taken to select a certain policy option. Analysis focuses on substantive aspects of the choice of one option over others. A state's foreign policy is said to be ethnically based when ethnicity is the most salient component within its relations of cooperation or conflict as expressed in the statements and actions of its leaders.

Deciding whether ethnicity is the most salient aspect of an interstate conflict can be a challenge. States may act on a variety of impulses that include instrumental concerns with only a remote connection to ethnic conflict. For the purposes of this inquiry, a state external to a conflict that either expresses or implements support for a state-center or a minority group is said to have an ethnic foreign policy. Support may be expressed through various means, such as diplomatic recognition, the transfer of arms, facilitating the efforts of insurgents, financial aid, provision of sanctuary, and direct intervention

(Heraclides 1991). The state-center, in turn, is said to have an ethnic foreign policy if internal identity-based conflict influences and shapes relations with one or more states.

Interventionism, whether ethnic or otherwise, cannot be "read off" from political structure alone. Instead, politics influence the formation of a decision maker's preferences and resulting actions (Brecher, Steinberg, and Stein 1969; Meadwell 1992). Decision making involves risk and sources of uncertainty that are internal to the state; constraints and opportunities are created by, for instance, ethnic groups and political institutions. External factors also exert influence; a state's capabilities and alliances, for example, would be two obvious, realist-oriented considerations.

This kind of linkage politics perspective portrays elites as essentially non-self-sufficient individuals who respond to their environment and adapt, with varying degrees of success, to the influence of mass sentiments.[1] Elites will seek to optimize results in light of other actors' preferences and options. Accordingly, elites must be able to set priorities among alternative goals in light of both domestic and international constraints. At the national level, domestic ethnic groups pursue their goals in various ways, most notably by pressuring the government to adopt favorable polices. While minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments, governments seek at the international level to maximize their ability to satisfy domestic pressures (Putnam 1988). Sometimes, due to international and domestic constraints, which can work at cross-purposes, the choices made may be suboptimal and relatively unsuccessful, although decision making still is considered to be rational in at least a procedural way.[2] Interstate ethic conflict, when it does occur, is a product of instrumental considerations and affective linkages in combination. Less clear in accounting for this behavior are the precise linkages between and among normative and strategic determinants of elite decisions. An important component of decision making is the strategic interaction inherent in contact between masses and elites (Kaufman 1996).

Another aspect of the approach based on linkage politics is that certain structural features within and between states may be conducive to escalation. For example, elites facing high levels of institutional constraint may be more sensitive to the interests of groups whose support they seek and therefore choose overt and even forceful intervention for reasons different from their low-constraint counterparts. This occurs because under certain conditions, external conflict can serve an important functional role for elites that is specified by a causal link between domestic and interstate conflict. Internal turmoil can lead to international conflict, which in turn has a positive impact on overall support for the leader and internal cohesion.

Leaders of ethnically dominant and institutionally underdeveloped states face a different set of opportunities in pursuing foreign policy objectives than their more constrained and diverse counterparts.[3] Elites of these states can and sometimes will become adept at manipulating mass opinion in order to bring it in line with their foreign policy and nation-building objectives.

3. Domestic Pressures, International Ambition, and Rational Choice

Decisions to intervene are rational calculations even when based on ethnic attachment. Leaders must take into account the wide range of constraints impinging on their choices. Although events in the target country are the main concern for an intervener, the decision to intervene still is inferred to be the result of a thorough cost-benefit analysis. The internal dynamics of the intervener as related to perceived national interests, probability of success, and possible human and material cost are all important parts of the rational calculus (Regan 2000). While it is difficult to reconcile identity-oriented behaviors with a presumed chain of events, as will become apparent, instrumental and affective motivations can be combined to tell a more complete story about ethnic intervention.

Third-party support for an ethnic minority will reflect the degree of approval for such ideas within a leader's ethnic constituency. Exacerbating these societal tensions is competition among elites for public office, which makes their decisions even more responsive to the aspirations of the masses. A two-level game approach implies that the credibility of an intervention depends in part on the likelihood that it will be carried out, which increases with domestic support for such a commitment (whether the intervention is successful or not is another issue). Conversely, the more powerful the domestic groups that anticipate a resulting disadvantage, the less credible and sustainable will be any presumed policy of involvement.

For example, while everyone within an ethnic group may long for a historically derived state based on shared identity and history, only a few elite members can and will act on it. As positional players at the domestic level, elites try to optimize political choices that are favorable relative to any potential counterelite. In making choices, decision makers must consider the dispersion of preferences and interests of the constituent elements that make up the domestic affairs of the state (Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1992; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Ambitious leaders can be expected to draw on nationalist identities, political symbols, and ideologies to manip-

ulate mass sentiment. According to Putnam (1988: 434), "the unusual complexity of this two-level game is that moves that are rational for a player at one board—may be impolitic for that same player at the other board. Nevertheless there are powerful incentives for consistency between the two games." Thus, in this context, rationality refers to finding the most efficient means under a given set of circumstances to accomplish a specified set of objectives.

Decision makers must be able to comprehend the nature of objectives and the characteristics of the environment in which goals arise (Maoz 1990, 1997a; Brecher 1993). From this perspective, preferences and strategic choice are a function of the decision maker's role as a leader within a specific institutional framework and ethnic group. Based on procedural rationality as described above, this approach shares some basic similarities with prominent foreign policy research in terms of the assumed linkage between structure and foreign policy orientation (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1962; Maoz 1997b; Mintz and Geva 1997; Reed 2002).

Diagnosis of a foreign policy problem, as revealed by a classic examination of bureaucratic behavior, will reflect threats or promises to the organization or entity that decision makers represent as well as to the state as a whole. In other words, "where you stand depends on where you sit" (Allison 1971). Less bureaucratic in orientation is Stein and Tanter's (1980) analytic model, which postulates that decision making emerges from a careful assessment of risks, along with costs and benefits, of alternative options: Decision makers are expected to choose the option with the greatest expected utility, measured in terms of the value of each possible outcome of an action weighted by the perceived probability that it will occur.[4]

Taken together, the preceding models highlight the fact that in the formation of foreign policy, linkages between group structure and individual preferences ultimately determine choices. The maximization of expected utility is the end result of a process, not its sole characteristic. Expected utility maximization emphasizes relativism—plausibility of each choice is assessed relative to others (Maoz 1990).

Interventionist states, however, are more than unified actors that react to domestic strain by projecting it into the external system. Instead, the state is regarded as a rational actor constrained by both internal and external forces (Rummel 1963; Tanter 1966; Wilkenfeld 1968, 1972). Past research on conflict linkage indicates that domestic politics plays an important role in the promotion of international conflict and cooperation. Studies over the last decade show that foreign policy can be explained, at least in part, by domestic factors (Ostrom and Job 1986; James 1988; Putnam 1988; Mastanduno,

Lake, and Ikenberry 1989; James and Oneal 1991; Morgan and Campbell 1991; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; Carment and James 1995; Maoz 1997a). It is no surprise that domestic considerations affect the rational state's pursuit of foreign objectives (James 1993).

In a compelling investigation of regime change and its relationship to foreign policy performance, Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller (1992) find that leaders are well advised to consider the dispersion of preferences and interests among constituents because a misadventure in foreign policy can lead to reduction or even loss of power. While existing studies establish that foreign policy decisions are influenced by domestic constraints, the role of ethnicity remains largely unexplored. One of the most important questions facing a decision maker then might be this one: If I make a foreign policy decision considered favorable to my ethnic group, what are the long- and short-term ramifications of this decision for my own political standing vis-à-vis my ethnic group, the other ethnic groups within society, and relations with other states? In other words, whether explicit or implicit, a foreign policy that includes demonstrations of support for ethnic brethren can both identify and legitimate a leader's actions. It also sets boundaries for foreign policy choices in terms of salient constraints.

4. Ethnic Conflict from a Two-Level Perspective: Affective Motivation and Institutional Constraint

Credibility of support for ethnic brethren, from the two-level game point of view, depends in part on the likelihood that it will be carried out. The likelihood increases with the degree of domestic support for making such a commitment. In deciding to commit support, a leader or head of state must coordinate actions at two bargaining "tables," which correspond to domestic and international politics. By monitoring strategies and tactics in each arena, it becomes possible to understand puzzling developments. More specifically, initiatives in one domain may reflect constraints or opportunities present in the other. This kind of decision-making process is known as a two-level or "nested" game because both domestic and international constraints and opportunities must be taken into account (Putnam 1988; Tsebelis 1990).

Several traits distinguish the two-level game as an outlook on international bargaining and, for the purposes of this study, as a metaphor for understanding and clarifying third-party strategies toward intervention.[5] Interpretation of these strategies emphasizes (1) complex patterns of interde-

pendence that create opportunities, not just constraints, for statecraft; (2) the head of state as the central strategic actor; and (3) simultaneous and interactive calculation of opportunities and constraints at both the domestic and international levels. The most distinctive phenomenon within the two-level game is synergy, where international actions are employed to alter outcomes otherwise expected in the domestic arena (Putnam 1988).

Several assumptions drive two-level explanations of international politics. The first is that decision makers must consider the dispersion of preferences among constituent interests (Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1992). Citizens can separate a foreign policy that they consider a legitimate reflection of their values from one that does not. Thus, the second assumption is consistent with the first: a foreign policy cannot be considered viable if it contradicts the preferences of a decision maker's constituency. The third assumption is that national leaders must retain some minimal degree of support among their constituency to stay in power. The COG (Chief of Government [Putnam 1988], head of state, etc.) otherwise loses power, except for the head of an authoritarian government, who can resist political pressures of opposition up to a certain point.

Two-level game analysis will build on the confluence of ethnic structures, normative determinants, and strategic choice. In particular, how do political constraints and opportunities interact with ethnic composition in influencing decisions about whether to intervene in an ethnic conflict? Since elites play politics at two different levels—domestic and international—the payoff structures of both must be considered (Putnam 1988: 434). It will be assumed that a state is represented by a single leader (with independent policy preferences) in search of a foreign policy that is attractive to his or her constituents. Depending on interaction effects between variables, some leaders will prefer confrontational policies because of anticipated domestic payoffs, while in other instances the configuration of domestic variables will inhibit such tactics and shift the elite toward more covert or possibly even peaceful measures.[6]

These conclusions follow from certain principles—what Putnam (1988) calls "win-sets"—about available choices. A win-set at stage one is defined as all the successful foreign policy strategies that would "win," that is, be considered successful by the masses. The first part of this analysis concerns stage one wins-sets. The size of a stage one win-set is governed by several factors, and for obvious reasons the interaction effects have important implications for determining the strategy pursued (Evans 1993). Simply put, stage one win-sets influence a state's calculation of the cost-benefit ratio in pursuing involvement in an ethnic conflict.

Figure 2.1 shows how win-sets are anticipated to vary on the basis of interaction effects, which create four ideal types of state. (The examples listed within the figure are explained in subsequent chapters.) This does not mean that all states can fit in these categories exactly—in practice, a continuum is expected to exist along the dimensions corresponding to institutional constraint and ethnic composition. The win-set is minimal for high-constraint, ethnically diverse states (Type II_b) and maximal for low-constraint, ethnically dominant states (Type I_a). All other things being equal, these opposite ends of the typology are driven by two distinct logics: system- and constituency-driven for low- and high-constraint situations, respectively.

Preferences for involvement in an ethnic conflict are reflected in the win-set's size. Since states of Type I_a from the figure can choose from a broad range of options that would be satisfactory to the masses, *belligerence* is preferred. Here a leader may adopt a "hawklike" stance while incurring the lowest domestic political costs. Differences between Types I_b and II_a are difficult to predict; each is expected to fit between extremes. Type I_b states are inhibited because of diversity and engage in *passive lobbying,* while II_a states are constrained by institutions and exhibit *sporadic interventionism.* Both are labeled as moderate, although outbidding can increase II_a's propensity toward intervention. In these instances leaders succumb to being agents of particular groups' ethnic foreign policy interests, if that support is crucial. Options contract as interaction effects between ethnic composition and institutional constraints exert full force. Thus a Type II_b state, under normal conditions, is least likely to find an outcome that is acceptable to its constituents. Overt support to ethnic brethren across national borders, all other things being equal, will not be an attractive option, so *realpolitik policies* will prevail. The situation of each ideal type of state vis-à-vis intervention will be considered in turn.

4.1 Type I_a: Low Institutional Constraint and a Dominant Ethnic Group

Interaction effects will be considered first for low institutional constraints in dominant and diverse settings, Type I_a and I_b, respectively. Analysis begins with these arrangements because of relative simplicity in the relationship between elite and masses. Where constraints are low, first stage win-sets are large. In more formal terms, if *W* is the size of the winning coalition and *S* refers to the size of a "selectorate" of those eligible to be in *W*, then *W* is much smaller than *S* in Type I_a political systems. At a substantive level this would correspond to a rigged electoral system such as that of any Eastern

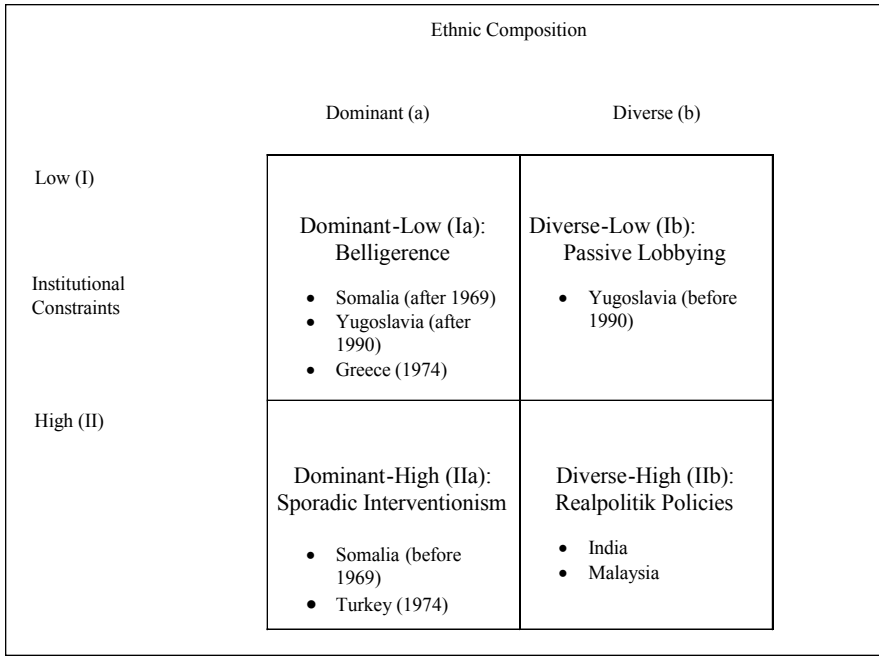


Figure 2.1. A Typology of Potential Intervening States: Ethnic Composition and Institutional Constraints

Bloc state during the Cold War (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003: 54). The only formal constraint on elites in these cases is the bureaucracy or military. If the elite comes to power through force (e.g., Somalia in the 1970s), it will depend on a narrow band of support from specific groups, such as the military and bureaucracy, which are comparatively free of domestic pressures. The relationship between the military and the elite therefore is an important, but not enervating, constraint. Indeed, compared with high-constraint elites, these leaders are more able to manipulate the size of their stage one win-set. When present, checks on executive authority tend to be "on paper only" because in low-constraint settings, affect is important in influencing political interactions between decision makers and the overall population.

For example, in Type I_a cases, a dominant ethnic group controls an ethnically homogenous military that will mobilize the population through manipulation of group symbols in order to pursue foreign policy goals. Consensual procedures in the formation of foreign policy decisions, if present, are likely to be "rubber stamp" operations. Power will be concentrated heavily, and the elite is assumed to be relatively immune to domestic pressures. Foreign and

domestic policies are designed to appeal to the dominant ethnic group, but not in a way that would threaten the power base of elites.

In one sense, it is an oversimplification to categorize intervention as either elite or mass led; obviously, an ethnically based foreign policy cannot continue long without both leadership and mass support (Kaufman 1996). Nevertheless, in some cases, elite action, independent of the masses, is decisive in shaping outcomes. When the elite is relatively immune from domestic pressures, as with Type I_a cases, there will be a greater tolerance for gaps between elite and mass preferences, and the interests of the masses are subordinated to those of elites.

Without democratic pressures, elites obtain an extra resource with which to mobilize support, namely, affect, a low-cost political device. Type I_a means that, in essence, the elite leads and the population follows. Elites in a low-constraint situation are not expected to pursue an ethnic foreign policy if it constitutes a threat to their power. When constraints are low and an ethnic group is dominant, the elite is unlikely to face significant criticism at home for pursuing external involvement that leads to confrontation. Elite foreign policy is influenced primarily by the identity of its constituency. Pursuit of an ethnically oriented foreign policy therefore becomes an optimal strategy in a relatively wide range of situations. Thus the win-sets at stage one are large and the maximum that possibly can be obtained.

Type I_a elites will pursue involvement if it means achieving specific goals in the international arena. The payoffs in this case are situated at the international rather than domestic level. Such a policy will be heavily imbued with ideology, but it need not be inherently aggressive. If elites are assumed to act rationally, their choices will allow for a range of factors and constraints that include their capabilities, power discrepancy, alliance structures, and so forth. Thus Type I_a is associated with belligerence in figure 2.1.

Absent internal constraints, an elite can find its international position strengthened. Minimal uncertainty about domestic politics could translate into higher resolve in the international arena. In this instance, the ability to control domestic outcomes can be achieved through a "forced" convergence of interests between a national leader and the state being represented. Lower levels of domestic uncertainty have important implications for interactions with other states (Evans 1993).

Elites in unconstrained situations are in a better bargaining position than those whose power is dispersed. The former are less prone to involuntary defection because they can control domestic political outcomes. However, given that unconstrained elites do not have to worry about the ramifications of an ethnic foreign policy for the masses, they might be more tempted to

"voluntarily" defect because of the low political costs of doing so. In other words, unconstrained elites in dominant settings can be expected to behave as rational maximizing egoists as represented in the game of prisoner's dilemma (Axelrod 1984, 1977). Rent-seeking imperialism is expected among dictatorships rather than democracies (Olson 1993).

Under such conditions, observed differences in state strategies and goals reflect what could be achieved within the constraints set by the external political situation. Anarchy and the self-help system will create the appearance that these states have a uniform set of basic goals and interests. Decisions to intervene would seem to reflect distinctive "hard-shelled," unitary rational actor characteristics. A rational elite would take into account a limited number of international factors, including absolute and relative capabilities, alliance structure, and so forth. From a realist perspective, foreign policy then would be understood as a function of external constraints in terms of the distribution of military and economic power, the level of uncertainty in the regional and local system, the cost of bargaining, and similar concerns. States of this kind are most akin to self-sufficient units operating in an international environment that provides a reasonably predictable and stable set of constraints within which to pursue intervention.

4.2 Type I_b: Low Institutional Constraint and Diverse Ethnic Groups

In diverse, low-constraint settings, or Type I_b, issues important to the mass public of a specific ethnic group are unlikely to influence policy choices among elites because the magnitude of anticipated payoffs is low. Leaders of ethnically diverse, low-constraint states are unlikely to pander openly to the interests of any one ethnic group. If the military is of a different ethnic group from the majority population or if the elite represents more than one ethnic group (i.e., diverse), then it would be impolitic to pursue a confrontational ethnic foreign policy unless the opportunities to do so provide sufficient international *and* domestic benefits. The size of the stage one win-set will be smaller than that of Type I_a and outcomes initially will be suboptimal.

Lower incentives exist for pursuit of an ethnically oriented foreign policy because of potential ramifications for domestic politics. Countercoups motivated by ethnic allegiance would be the most prominent risk to the regime status quo or internal balance of power. Making ethnicity a salient aspect of foreign policy also is risky because it could incite potential internal enemies to seek support from neighboring states (e.g., Rwanda's covert support for rebels in the Congo in the 1990s). While expecting gain from opportunism in

a foreign country, the costs can increase incrementally to an ultimately unacceptable level. This can provoke ethnic violence within the state itself and eventually weaken state institutions. If no such risks are present or can be managed, an ethnic foreign policy is more likely. Unlike those of Type I_a, these states are not immune to involuntary defection. Their ethnic diversity increases the chance that leaders of a group either cannot or will not cooperate on certain policies. At the international level, this makes these states more vulnerable to defection on agreements. Therefore, to maintain support, Type I_b elites need to monitor and control defection, which includes creation and exploitation of international rules and institutions that derive from a sense of shared vulnerability. Thus, Type I_b in figure 2.1 is labeled as the passive-lobbying variant. Elite behavior approximates the concept of the inhibited state that Jackson and Rosberg (1982, but see Saideman 1998a, 1998b for contrary evidence) use to describe the maintenance of African boundaries in the 1970s and 1980s.

For Type I_b states, inhibitions on behavior can be countered by "reverberation" inherent in putting foreign policy into place. Normally, rational choice approaches require that the structures of issues and payoffs be specified in advance (Putnam 1988: 454). In this case, however, reverberation refers to the way in which preferences are altered unintentionally by external pressures. The extent to which the state mobilizes social resources to mount a credible campaign to assist ethnic brethren is arguably as much a function of strong preferences about issues at stake as compared to capabilities. Transnational ethnic linkages can create extreme preferences that compensate for a deficiency in capabilities in weighing options related to intervention as in the case of Rwandan support for rebel groups in the Congo in 2004 (Carment and James 1995).

Consider, in that context, recurring Iraqi threats against the low-constraint, ethnically diverse state of Iran over disputed territories after the Islamic revolution of 1979. In this instance, Iraqi threats reverberated within Iran's domestic political scene and increased support for the new Khomeini regime. Furthermore, Iraqi threats did not generate substantial internal opposition. As a result, Iran's capacity for carrying out foreign policy objectives exceeded the level that normally would be expected for a multiethnic state. In other words, Iraqi pressures on Iran may have been counterproductive—"international pressure reverberates negatively if its source is generally viewed by domestic audiences as an adversary rather than an ally" (Putnam 1988: 456).

Normally, Type I_b elites express a moderate preference for involvement. The leaders of these states prefer not to galvanize significant domestic oppo-

sition and narrow the base of popular support; all other things being equal, it is unlikely that they will engage in interventionist policies. The phenomenon of reverberation, however, demonstrates how these preferences can be altered and expanded. Reverberation can increase an elite's domestic win-set so that it derives greater utility from an interstate ethnic conflict than would be normal otherwise.

4.3 Type II_a: High Institutional Constraint and a Dominant Ethnic Group

Accurate predictions about the choice of strategies and potential size of stage one win-sets for elites in high-constraint situations can be made only after more extensive interaction effects are considered. Leaders of these states are constrained simultaneously by the ethnic affinities of their supporting coalition and formal institutional arrangements. Foreign policy decisions regarding separatism or irredentism are acute particularly in democratic societies in which the degrees of internal constraint upon decision makers are expressed in terms of party formation, electoral politics, and cabinet composition (Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992).

For high-constraint situations, the size of the state one win-set is relatively small. Preferences for belligerence are limited because to be considered successful, an ethnically oriented foreign policy must satisfy several additional conditions in comparison to low-constraint states. These factors in turn will influence potential interstate ethnic conflict. According to Morgan and Campbell (1991: 191): "[C]onstraints should be greatest when competition is highly institutionalized. Well-organized permanent parties that compete in a systematic fashion provide a ready outlet for opposition to a leader and constitute a focal point around which opposition can form." Elites, in sum, will be "hamstrung" in pursuit of foreign policy goals by the competing interests of various groups—including ethnically based ones.

For Type II_a cases, where institutional constraints are high and elites represent a single and "like-minded" ethnic group (i.e., dominant), leaders go along with the ethnically oriented sentiments of the population. If not, they may end up being replaced by rivals. When the majority of the electorate belongs to a single ethnic group, leaders are vulnerable to challengers who claim that the interests of this crucial constituency have been betrayed. Concerns about involuntary defection will be paramount. In this case, as opposed to either Type I_a or I_b, the elite is expected to follow rather than lead the masses. Therefore, Type II_a in figure 2.1 is expected to engage in *sporadic interventionism.*

"'Like-minded,'" as used a moment ago, refers to those cases where even political opponents offer "all-purpose" support to an ethnic foreign policy. This support is crucial to expanding the stage one win-set; indeed, Type II_a elites may go along with an ethnic foreign policy even if it appears irrational in the international arena (i.e., there may be a threshold as to how much cost is borne, if it promises domestic payoffs to all elites [Putnam 1988]). A good example of that situation is Turkish intervention in Cyprus. In 1964, the Turkish government thought about intervening in the island after a cost-benefit assessment, but intervention did not occur because of strong opposition from the international arena, particularly the "Johnson Letter." U.S. President Lyndon Johnson, speaking as a superpower leader, changed the calculus of costs and benefits for Turkey with his firmly worded letter that opposed intervention. However, in 1974, despite the ongoing Cold War and strong domestic opposition, the Turkish government decided to intervene in Cyprus. Domestic considerations, determined both by affective and instrumental ties, seemed to outweigh the constraints imposed by the international arena through Cold War rivalry, which had not been the case a decade earlier.

Elites will seek to enhance their position in the stage one game by increasing political resources through side payments (such as increases in power and influence) or by minimizing potential losses (like electoral defeat). For example, a head of government may seek popularity anticipated from pursuit of a politically rewarding foreign policy. Indeed, viewing the elite as an individual without preferences opens the possibility that constituents and political opponents may be more eager for an aggressive ethnic foreign policy.

Management of the discrepancy between their constituents' and political opponents' expectations and the outcome is the main problem facing the elites of these states. Leaders must be aware of the choice of tactics by opponents, which can be influenced heavily by ideology, a sense of historical injustice, perceived grievance, or a threat to values that justify a future society. Elites are more likely to be successful if they channel such interests toward their objectives.

Another way of describing the behavior of a Type II_a state is to observe that elites can be expected to persist with involvement when benefits are situated primarily in the domestic arena, while costs may come at the international level. Empirical instances of Type II_a in its present form are unusual, largely because states with some kind of institutional constraint rarely are dominated by a single ethnic group that supports policies across the board. (Japan and Germany would seem to be notable exceptions.) Implications for newly democratizing states dominated by a single and relatively like-minded

ethnic group, such as those in the Balkans, are clear. Past cases of ethnic conflict, including confrontations between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, would suggest that high-constraint states are not immune to the pursuit of aggressive policies (Russett 1993; Maoz 1997a).

4.4 Type II_b: High Institutional Constraint and Diverse Ethnic Groups

When the constituency is composed of members of several different ethnic groups (i.e., diverse) and institutional constraints are high, a leader will face new incentives and constraints and therefore exhibit different policy preferences. In Type II_b cases, a foreign policy based on ethnicity remains unlikely as long as elites can withstand the pressures of ethnic outbidding. The size of the stage one win-set will be the minimum of the four types examined, and the disposition toward an ethnically oriented foreign policy will be the lowest of all. This is particularly true if force is anticipated to be used against members of a group sharing an ethnic affinity with at least some constituents. Use of ethnicity for political gain is a risky strategy because supporters easily can become divided. Elites therefore can be expected to promote self-policing policies that downplay ethnicity as a source of foreign policy. Due to all these characteristics, Type II_b in figure 2.1 is labeled as *realpolitik*.

Institutional constraints will reduce even further the opportunities for pursuit of a risky foreign policy (Morgan and Campbell 1991). COGs in these cases, all other things equal, will be the most "dovelike" of the four types. Success in the role of a dove opens up possibilities for alternative strategies (Maoz 1997a). Depending on the degree of dovishness, the COG still could become involved in covert operations when no public and mutually acceptable action is feasible (Zartman 1992: 38). Furthermore, a more dovelike, neoliberal type of state that supports international norms and nonintervention in spite of the presence of ethnic affinities might be rather close to its neighbors on some scale of cooperation (Carment, James, and Rowlands 1997). Solidarity between states, as dictated by domestic sensitivity and mutual inhibition, diminishes incentives for third-party intervention even further. Under these conditions, a Type II_b state can be expected to adopt a relatively mild position on the autonomy and political goals of ethnic brethren (Maoz 1997a). Efforts to mediate become more likely and positive experiences in the role of a dove could facilitate a more conciliatory approach (Russett 1990, 1993).

Specific instances of Type II_a or II_b ethnic outbidding arise when a leader faces a population composed of only part of a single ethnic group. Political

competition may become intense through multiparty ethnic factionalism. A kind of extreme hypernationalism is likely to emerge from leaders who become interested in "outflanking" other political parties. In this case, an ethnic foreign policy is "heterogeneous" to the extent that there is greater factional conflict on this issue (Kaufman 1996; Saideman 1997). For example, Downs (1957) shows that political parties in two-party systems tend to imitate each other and become ideologically immobile. Both parties strive to appeal to as many different viewpoints as possible, and the result frequently is that moderate views prevail. Multiparty systems, by contrast, often accentuate ideological "product differentiation" (Downs 1957: 141). New parties that stress an aggressive, ethnically oriented foreign policy may emerge when there is a great deal of similarity between two moderate parties. All other things being equal, multiparty systems are more likely than two-party systems to give birth to involvement in ethnic strife. In the Type II_b case, for example, the initial size of the stage one win-set is small because of institutional constraints, but elites often will seek to increase their options by initiating issue-based conflict through processes of interelite confrontation (Tsebelis 1990).

As noted by Tsebelis (1990), special interest ethnic parties are most prevalent where both internal and external imperatives of the ethnic group exist in relation to others. Cases such as Kenya, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Yugoslavia, at varying points in time, come to mind. Nigeria, for example, had major party systems based on three ethnic cleavages during periods of democratic rule (Sklar 1980). Similarly, studies of Sri Lankan politics suggest that attempts at nonethnic multipartyism will eventually be displaced by ethnically based parties (Horowitz 1985; Chandra 2004: 291 n. 9). If two groups exist with only one party each, then distances between them should become minimal and conflict can be brokered. If, by contrast, each group is represented by more than one party, then outbidding can be expected to occur (Saideman 1997).

Multiethnic parties, defined as those that do not serve as champions of "one particular ethnic category or set of categories" (Chandra 2004: 3), occasionally are able to withstand outbidding processes. For example, during the 1960s, the Indian Congress Party maintained control because it (*a*) developed a minimally successful compromise on language issues; (*b*) overrepresented in state cabinets the group with the stronger flank party; (*c*) allowed a Sikh to lead the party between 1956 and 1964; and (*d*) had representation at both the state and national levels (Nayar 1966; Brass 1974, 1990).

When a democratically elected multiethnic party succumbs to parties on one or both sides, a shift occurs to a one-party state (e.g., Zambia, Kenya).

This, put simply, represents Type II_a outbidding. Unable to satisfy either side, the original multiethnic party will be left with a shrunken base, and single ethnic parties become the norm (Horowitz 1985).

Either way, to maintain support, leaders of an ethnic group may strive to be its best representative (Horowitz 1985). Such competition in Type II_a and II_b cases could lead to a more aggressive foreign policy than otherwise would be expected. The political party with the greatest interest in an ethnic foreign policy will have the most extreme position on that issue; if its rivals (including the governing party) can offer effective resistance, then an ethnic foreign policy is almost certain to be played down.

Options contract as interaction effects between ethnic composition and institutional constraints take hold, so a Type II_b state, under normal conditions, is least likely to produce an outcome that is agreeable to all constituents. High institutional constraints oblige leaders to retain at least a plurality of popular support in order to maintain political power. Leaders therefore will not pursue any policy that serves the interests of one group at a real expense to others, and ethnic adventurism becomes unlikely. This prudent approach can be called *realpolitik* because it reflects calculations about power at home and abroad and results in caution in the face of multiple constraints. Ethnic interventions can be expected to occur only when there are strong, even overwhelming preferences among the state's ethnic groups or where a general consensus exists that the state has important reasons for involvement abroad.

4.5 Summing Up the Typology

Outbidding can increase the win-sets for both Type II_a and II_b states, so the latter still have some limited potential for an ethnic foreign policy. The unconstrained Types I_a and I_b have a broader range of choices that would be considered satisfactory and therefore reveal high and moderate dispositions, respectively, for intervention. Accurate predictions concerning differences between Types I_b and II_a are difficult because both are expected to fit between the two extremes. Type I_b states are constrained by ethnic diversity, while Type II_a states are held back by institutions. Both are labeled as having moderate preferences toward intervention, although outbidding can increase the disposition of Type II_a.

The preceding metaphors provide insight into how foreign policy strategies are shaped through the interaction between ethnic composition and political constraints. The argument sketched out above establishes that, in specific instances, elites must attend to the domestic political ramifications of

their foreign policy actions. The analysis also offers insight into which states are likely to engage in confrontational policies. The larger the win-set at stage one, the more probable it becomes that a confrontational ethnic foreign policy will be implemented.

5. Enabling Conditions: Ethnic Affinities and Cleavage

Enabling variables may impact upon the size of a stage one win-set. Such factors can increase the chances of a state initiating an ethnically oriented policy that leads to crisis. What, then, will affect the size of the stage one win-set? For an ethnic foreign policy to result in interstate conflict and crisis, the most important set of factors pertains to a state's own ethnic characteristics and those of other states. As noted in defining interstate dimensions of separatist and irredentist crises in chapter 1, two elements distinguish these kinds of conflicts from nonethnic crises: the presence of transnational ethnic affinities and ethnic cleavage. These characteristics create opportunities to be exploited and therefore increase the probability of involvement in irredentist and separatist conflict. For low-constraint states, international opportunities are more important than domestic ones. If there are domestic implications, affinities and cleavage heavily influence the strategies of highly constrained elites. After all, these elites must be sensitive to the interests of constituents—even those beyond the state's borders.

COGs may be pressured by political opponents or more directly by the masses to act on ethnic linkages (Davis, Jaggers, and Moore 1997). The resulting foreign policy can lead to intensified interstate strife when ethnic minorities search for credible support from ethnic allies in neighboring states (Zartman 1992: 37). When these allies cannot commit to a policy of nonintervention, then crisis and war may ensue.

Ethnic affinities relate directly to the problem of sovereignty, that is, the ability of states to implement authoritative claims. Efforts to control the flow of people, culture, and resources are significant in interstate ethnic conflicts. Quite often, authority is not defined solely in terms of territory; fragmentary sovereignty exists and will shape the size of a state's win-set (Saideman 1997).

Transnational ethnic affinities exist among most groups in the international system, especially those that have undergone the experience of diaspora. Russians living in the Ukraine and the Baltic, the Tamils of South India, and the Chinese of Southeast Asia, Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, and elsewhere are a few prominent examples (Taylor and Jodice 1983; Taylor and Hudson 1972; Neilsson 1985; Gurr 1992, 1997). Defining transnational affinity is

difficult, however, because there is more than one way to establish ethnic identity (Rothschild 1981; Horowitz 1985; Smith 1993a, 1993b). Race, religion, tribal (kinship), and linguistic cleavages may not coincide, so affinity in one area (e.g., linguistic) may be at odds with another (e.g., kinship) (Chazan 1991). Moreover, elites can attempt to mobilize other transnational identities (pan-Arabism as opposed to Islam, for example) or cultural subsystems at the expense of transnational ethnic affinities. In sum, ethnic linkage with a group in another state does not guarantee mutual interest (Zartman 1992; Midlarsky 1997).

When a greater number of affinities exist (e.g., linguistic, race, religion) between members of an ethnic group in two or more states, the anticipated connection is stronger. When identities converge, it becomes more likely that an ethnic group will seek external support (Stack 1997). Both the state-center and an internal minority adversary will try to take advantage of such linkages. In some of these cases, elites may be carried along by mass ethnic fervor (Chazan 1991). Moreover, mutual interests are strongest for groups that experience high international ethnic affinities and perceive the "other" group as an enemy of the supporting state. The other or "out" group in this instance can be either the state-center or an ethnic minority (Zartman 1992; Saideman 1997).

States that experience intervention will feature a high level of ethnic minority consciousness due to regime repression, civil unrest, and loss of civil liberties. These states have highly divided political loyalties and are less likely to develop civic cultures conducive to the pursuit of policies that manage and reduce ethnic conflict. The degree of division is comparatively high for those minorities who seek to transform the political status quo through force and/or external assistance. Such ethnically based divisions are referred to as "cleavages" (Gurr 1992, 1996).

As noted in chapter 1, relationships involving ethnic affinity and cleavage can be understood best through the use of two overarching concepts: *opportunity* and *willingness* (Most and Starr 1989). An intervening state always faces a trade-off between supporting ethnic brethren in a neighboring state and maintaining or developing a cooperative relationship with that state. The willingness of a potential intervening state to expend resources on a minority brethren's cause is assumed to be a direct function of its relative interest in the issue (Carment, James, and Rowlands 1997). Elites not only view ethnic affinity as a possibly useful trait, but specific groups on whom elites rely for support also perceive these international ethnic linkages as potentially valuable. For example, transnational affinities may enhance a state's interest in a conflict—if not for leaders directly then through constituencies that pressure leaders to act.

Under certain conditions, these affinities can determine the intensity of preferences for intervention (Carment, James, and Rowlands 1997).

6. Propositions

This chapter offers a framework that builds on rational choice arguments without positing isolated and self-sufficient decision makers. Instead, interdependence between elites and masses is assumed. Both the choices of elites and masses, along with their interaction effects, are important from the outset. While seeking to minimize adverse consequences of foreign developments, leaders also must attempt to satisfy domestic needs. The causal mechanism linking domestic structure to conflict behavior for unconstrained and diverse states focuses almost entirely on various ethnic segments that encroach on an elite's hold on power. Thus the only constraints on such decisions are those that operate through a leader's perceptions of how the decision will affect their ability to remain in power (which remains important to even the most entrenched dictators) and the state's security. However, in the absence of institutions, ethnic groups will find it very difficult to mobilize, short of the use of force, against leaders (Carment and James 1996). Since military regimes have a comparative advantage in the use of force, ethnic opposition will be relatively weak as compared to high-constraint states unless external military support is forthcoming. To summarize:

> 1. Mechanisms are available to states that allow them to pursue ethnic foreign policies. For example, states can manipulate ethnic divisions within other states and reinforce transnational ethnic affinities through material and diplomatic support;
>
> 2. The leaders of a state will be penalized if they fail to protect their ethnic groups (i.e., domestic constraints) or if they pursue objectives beyond their means (i.e., international constraints);
>
> 3. For a multiethnic, institutionally constrained state, the preferred strategy is one that focuses directly on the strategy the other player is using; in particular, it is best if this strategy leaves room for development of interstate cooperation. This conclusion is consistent with the "governing principles" identified by Bueno de Mesquita in his exposition on the strategic approach toward international politics (2000): Leaders always

> choose what they believe best for themselves after carefully evaluating all developments and factors. No foreign policy action can occur without taking into consideration domestic political consequences; in sum, relations between leaders and nations are driven by strategic considerations.

These points illustrate a three-stage process of interstate ethnic conflict. For example, at stage one, there are four ideal types of states, each with different preference structures for supporting ethnic brethren. At stage two, affinities and cleavage can create a security dilemma for third-party states. Elites face the decision of whether and how to commit to support for an ethnic minority. Choices may create problems for a leader's internal political situation. For states that face high domestic costs because of institutional constraints and ethnic diversity, the use of force is the least attractive choice in finding a solution to the dilemma. Domestic repercussions could exacerbate that state's security dilemma. Possible stage three processes include the onset of crisis, efforts at mediation, diplomatic activity, and use of force.

Whether a state will use force depends on the extent to which there is a discrepancy between elite and mass preferences. Sometimes elite action is decisive in causing conflicts to become violent (Kaufman 1996). Keeping in mind the size of the stage one win-set, the use of force in interstate ethnic conflict becomes most probable for interactions involving Type I_a (i.e., low-constraint, ethnically dominant) states and least probable for Type II_b (i.e., high-constraint, ethnically diverse) states, with Types I_b and II_a in between.

Since the behavior of these Type I_a states is inhibited primarily by international rather than domestic constraints, confrontations including them will depend on international benefits provided by involvement in ethnic conflict. The expectation of relatively low constraints in both environments can create policies of intransigence that lead, in turn, to use of force. The COGs of these states would be expected to pursue interests with an international payoff, such as reclaiming territory. Interstate ethnic crises involving Type I_a states could become the most violent of all with commensurate compensation.

All other things being equal, low-constraint elites in diverse settings do have to worry more than their counterparts in dominant settings about implications of an aggressive ethnic foreign policy for their ethnic groups. Indeed, relative to the extent of domestic ethnic conflict, only a few African interstate crises have escalated to open warfare. Collins (1973) suggests that the fear of ethnic disorder inhibited conflict between states in Africa, while Saideman (1997, 1998a) takes up this point in greater detail and provides evidence to the contrary. When conflict does arise, it is because these states experience greater instability or

sensitivity to disorder (Jenkins and Kposowa 1992). For high-constraint states, the potential for interstate conflict will affect the choice of strategies and tactics. In a conflict between two constrained, multiethnic states, for example, the elite of each state should try to minimize the other side's win-set, that is, ensure that its counterpart does not formulate a policy of aggression. When ethnicity is politicized it becomes a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the larger the win-set, the more capable a state becomes in carrying out its foreign policy objectives, including those with an ethnic basis. On the other hand, under certain conditions, enlarging the win-set could weaken a leader's domestic position. For a constrained but dominant (i.e., Type II_a) state, enlarging the win-set through outbidding, for example, may lead to dangerous and potentially irreversible aggressive behavior that produces a political calamity at home. Regime type and ethnic composition are highly visible characteristics of states, as elites of other states will seek to exploit advantages these characteristics make available to them. For example, Hitler used the Sudetenland Germans as a pretext for taking over Czechoslovakia in 1938 and knew that the badly divided and ineffective democracy in France would work to his advantage, in the form of poor morale and fighting effectiveness of Germany's traditional adversary, if a war occurred.

Doubly constrained states are expected to be cautious in confrontations with those of the same kind. Under such conditions, if ethnicity does become a salient issue, both sides may try first to resolve their differences through negotiation. Elites also must consider the long-term, possibly unanticipated ramifications that hostile policies engender (Putnam 1988). Strategy selection and change therefore are determined by preference structures: For example, how does a very large domestic constraint influence preferences? The likelihood of substantial domestic political costs decreases the expected value of strategies that involve the use of force (Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992). In interstate ethnic interactions an elite's best strategy is not independent of those used by others. Elites engage in "safety" strategies that minimize domestic costs (Maoz 1990, 1997a).

Strategy selection must be understood in a larger context that includes significant links between domestic ethnic politics and third-party intervention. The costs associated with politically constructed "strategic ideologies" are too high to make them reliable sources for interventionist strategies in ethnic conflicts. Whether mediation, tacit support for an ethnic challenge, or forceful intervention, a single strategy is unlikely when a COG depends on a domestic constituency. Leaders and their constituencies can have preferences that diverge over support for ethnic "brethren." Thus the first of five general propositions about interstate ethnic conflict and crisis is as follows:

P_1—Constrained states will pursue multiple strategies when intervening in ethnic conflict.

When international initiatives (including interventionist strategies) arise out of limited autonomy (i.e., where both executive aims and constituency desires are fundamental to the dynamics of a choice of strategy) for COGs, the tension between elite and domestic preferences will result in interventions of lower intensity. This pattern is expected because interventionist initiatives can awaken dormant domestic constituencies that undercut or even redirect a COG's initiative in an unfavorable direction. Thus a second proposition is derived:

P_2—Ethnically diverse states are less likely to initiate crises with violence.

Conversely, forceful intervention is most likely when costs and benefits are highly concentrated. Minimal political resistance from constituents (i.e., an authoritarian regime) or generic, all-purpose support from members of the same ethnic group (i.e., ethnic group dominance) produces this expectation. A third proposition therefore emerges:

P_3—Crises are likely to be more severe when unconstrained, ethnically dominant states are involved.

Interstate ethnic crises that are conditioned by high levels of cleavage and affinity present additional opportunities and constraints. Thus a fourth proposition arises:

P_4—High cleavage and affinities increase the probability of intense interstate ethnic conflict.

Fifth, and most encompassing of the propositions, is the one about relative likelihood of ethnic intervention:

P_5—Ethnic intervention is more likely, in descending order, for Type I_a (low-constraint, ethnic domination, i.e., belligerence), Type II_a (high-constraint, ethnic domination, i.e., sporadic interventionism), Type I_b (low-constraint, ethnic diversity, i.e., passive lobbying), and Type II_b (high constraint, ethnic diversity, i.e., *realpolitik*).

Various structural, normative, and strategic features of interstate ethnic conflict combine to reveal that as power is distributed among more than one ethnic group, interethnic cooperation becomes more likely. The phenomenon of nested games is used to explain high-constraint domestic political situations. When power is concentrated in the hands of a few leaders, as in the case of military regimes, the decision makers are less constrained in their domestic actions, and the nested game shifts to interelite strategic interaction within the international arena. Some elites, therefore, may be disposed toward finding relatively cooperative arrangements to resolve a dispute, while others may lead in the direction of more confrontational policies.

7. Summary and Case Selection

Determining which states are more likely to become involved in interstate ethnic strife so far has been a matter of a priori reasoning. This chapter has derived a framework based primarily on interaction effects for two variables, ethnic composition and institutional constraint. Each set of interactions will result in varying levels of decision making and implementation costs to elites. Conceptual analysis has focused on the *framework,* which begins with an explanation of elite preferences for involvement in ethnic strife, according to four ideal types or metaphors. This analysis includes the underlying logic and presumed linkages of the framework.

In short, this chapter has developed a framework of analysis for interstate ethnic crises. This framework, which pays close attention to the characteristics of the potential intervener, can provide useful insights regarding third-party intervention in ethnic conflict. It applies to any ethnic conflict that includes a potential intervener. The collective purpose of the five case studies in this volume is to illustrate the value of the framework in explaining how interstate ethnic crises do (or do not) come about. In other words, case studies will reveal whether the presumed linkages from the framework are valid interpretations of reality. We are mainly interested in theory *development* rather than *testing*. Thus the case studies are intended to show the value of our framework in explaining interstate ethnic crises and third-party activities.

The cases have been selected to include an example of each type from the typology, along with some regional diversity. We try to understand how interventions take place. In other words, by looking at the history in some detail, we try to determine whether the mechanisms suggested by our framework are consistent with events on the ground.[7]

In a classic exposition, King, Keohane, and Verba (1994:130) warn about dangers of selection on the dependent variable: "The cases of extreme selection bias—where there is by design no variation on the dependent variable—are easy to deal with: avoid them! We will not learn about causal effects from them." Researchers usually are curious, however, about some specific, important event, like a revolution, war, transition to democracy or breakdown of a democratic regime (Collier 1995; Geddes 1990; Collier and Mahoney 1996). Along these lines, Collier, Mahoney and Seawright (2004: 87) suggest that selection of these extreme cases is a well-established tradition in case-oriented research. In fact, under some circumstances, this kind of selection becomes useful because it allows the researcher to gain knowledge of a previously understudied or even generally unknown phenomenon that is of direct interest. In this study, the focus is on intervention in ethnic crises and it does include minimal variation, at least in terms of intervention that reaches the crisis level. While we are interested primarily in intervention as related to crisis, we also have included one case short of that level, that is, the Thai Malay.

The following chapters will examine the processes by which an ethnic conflict leads to intervention, interstate crisis, and sometimes even cooperation.

Sri Lanka, 2004. http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/