Ties Versus Institutions: Revisiting Foreign Interventions and Secessionist Movements

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The international relations of ethnic conflict have been the object of increased attention over the past ten years, responding to the subject's higher profile after the end of the Cold War.[1] In a recent issue of *CJPS*, Louis Bélanger, Érick Duchesne and Jonathan Paquin (2005) examine the conditions under which governments give assistance to secessionist movements in other countries. They challenge what they define the old and new conventional wisdoms, respectively vulnerability and ethnic ties, finding that regime type matters far more. They assert that democracies are less likely to support secessionist movements in other democracies, given the norms that govern self-determination in such countries. The authors advance the debate in the field as they raise important issues about the role of democracy beyond the democratic peace and engage in dyadic analyses, developing a series of thoughtful tests of the various claims. However, their methodology, particularly their coding of ethnic affinity, produces problematic results. In this response, I discuss their

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article, briefly identify some key difficulties and then present a series of analyses that suggest that ethnic ties, properly operationalized, and not democracy, are strongly related to the behaviour of countries towards secessionist movements and to mobilized ethnic groups in general.

Understanding Intervention and Secession

Bélanger and his co-authors correctly identify the conventional wisdom concerning which states are likely to support secession. The vulnerability argument (Herbst, 1989; Jackson and Rosberg, 1982; Touval, 1972) asserts that states facing their own secessionist challenges are unlikely to give assistance to separatist movements elsewhere for fear of either direct retaliation or undermining the international regime prohibiting such support. Bélanger, Duchesne and Paquin (BDP) indicate that this regime weakened in the aftermath of the Cold War (2005: 437). Case studies indicate that this vulnerability was not such a strong deterrent even before the Soviet Union collapsed (Heraclides, 1991; Saideman, 1997, 2001a). In their article, BDP support the previous quantitative work (Saideman, 2001a, 2002) showing that vulnerability does not inhibit support for separatism.

The alternative argument of ethnic ties, termed the new conventional wisdom by BDP, asserts that leaders care more about their own positions than their countries' stability (Saideman, 2001a). Instead of fearing dangerous precedents, elites care about getting into and remaining in office. In reacting to ethnic conflicts elsewhere, they consider what their constituents want, and the primary cue they use to determine such preferences is their ethnic composition. As a result, elites are likely to support that side of a conflict with which their constituents share ethnic ties.[2] Thus, politicians will seek foreign policies that assist the secessionists if their supporters have ties to them, *but* the foreign policy will be aimed at assisting the host governments who are seeking to protect their territorial integrity if the relevant constituents have ties to the people governing the host. Further, if a politician relies on constituents who have ties to both sides, then he or she faces a very difficult situation, as supporting either side will be politically harmful. In such circumstances, there are two likely possibilities: supporting both sides or assisting neither.

BDP only focus on the first part of the ethnic ties arguments, about affinity with the secessionist group, ignoring the two other kinds of ties—to the state or to both sides. Thus, it should not be surprising that they find in their analyses that ethnic affinity does not seem to matter. By their operationalization, we should expect Pakistan, a predominantly Muslim country, to support the Issaqs, who are Muslim, even if they are separating from an Islamic country, such as Somalia, whereas the logic

Abstract. This article is a response to one published by Louis Bélanger, Érick Duchesne and Jonathan Paquin challenging existing accounts for the patterns of external support for secessionist movements. They assert that regime type—democracy—provides a better explanation than either vulnerability or ethnic ties. I take issue with their operationalization of my arguments along with other aspects of their work. Here, I replicate their study first using their data and importing my variable measuring not just ethnic affinity with the secessionists but the possibilities of a country having ties with either or both sides of an ethnic conflict. Then, using my data, I again replicate their analyses. I find that ethnic ties, properly measured, not only better accounts for the international relations of secession but of ethnic conflict in general.

Résumé. Ce texte est une réplique à l'article de Louis Bélanger, Érick Duchesne et Jonathan Paquin, qui conteste les explications usuelles des variations dans l'appui international aux mouvements sécessionnistes. Selon eux, plus que la vulnérabilité ou les liens ethniques, c'est le type de régime – soit la démocratie – qui explique mieux le phénomène. Je remets en question leur façon d'opérationnaliser mes arguments, ainsi que plusieurs autres aspects de leur recherche. Afin de tester leurs résultats, je reproduis d'abord leur étude en utilisant leurs données et en y ajoutant ma variable qui mesure non seulement les affinités ethniques avec les sécessionnistes, mais également l'éventualité qu'un pays entretienne des relations avec l'un ou l'autre des protagonistes d'un conflit ethnique. Puis, je reprends leur analyse en utilisant mes propres données. Il en ressort que, lorsqu'elle est mesurée correctement, la variable des liens ethniques fournit une meilleure compréhension non seulement des relations internationales du phénomène de sécession, mais également des conflits ethniques en général.

of ethnic ties espoused above would predict Pakistan and other Islamic countries to largely stay out of the dispute. Thus, the main contention in this response is that BDP get different results because they do not correctly operationalize ethnic ties, but their analyses also suffer from some other significant problems as well.

Before moving on to the analyses, I should consider the role of democracy that BDP see as central to the international relations of ethnic conflict. To be clear, BDP view democracies as less likely to intervene in the secessionist conflicts of other democracies, as minorities can exercise their right to self-determination via democratic processes rather than through secession. Yet there is nothing in their logic limiting the shield of democracy from blocking intervention by democratic outsiders towards non-secessionist ethnic conflict as well. That is, democracy should not only be viewed as reducing the legitimacy and appeal of secessionists to outsiders but also that of ethnic dissidents with other goals, such as changing the government. BDP focus exclusively on secessionist minorities, but as an additional test of their argument and mine, below, I extend the universe of cases to include all ethnic groups. After all, theories that account for more behaviour are generally viewed as superior those with narrower scopes. Indeed, in some of my earlier work (Saideman, 2001a, 2002), I found that groups in democracies received less external assistance, although democratic countries were no more or less restrained, but these were not dyadic analyses, so BDP's effort to move the field towards dyadic analyses, where we can test the relationships in play, is an important contribution.

A Problematic Challenge

Bélanger, Duchesne and Paquin claim that their analyses are a better test of the international relations of secession by focusing solely on secessionist conflicts. They imply (2005: 437) that their results are different than mine (2001a, 2002) because of this restriction in the dataset as I considered all ethnic groups in the minorities at risk dataset (MAR).[3] Consequently, I run several sets of analyses, using first their dataset with addition of a better measure of ethnic ties. Then I do several analyses with a dataset that I developed, using first the BDP groups, then a different specification of secessionist groups and finally all groups in the MAR dataset. Of course, this discussion raises a significant question: why would an approach that covers a narrower set of cases be seen as superior than a theory that covers a broader set of cases? While it may be important that the international relations of one kind of ethnic conflict may be distinct than that of another kind, if, in the end, there is a logic that covers a variety of forms of ethnic conflict, then should we not be focused on the one that explains more, rather than less, behaviour?

BDP, like me, develop two dependent variables—the existence of external support and the level of support—building from the MAR dataset and its code sheets. Their levels variable is similar but not identical to my intensity variable (2002: 34), as they take MAR's coding and use it as if it were an ordinal ranking. This is quite problematic as this was not the intention behind MAR, and a close look at the ranking makes it difficult to determine why active combat units, for instance, might be considered at a lesser level than cross-border raids, and, more obviously, why it might be less than "diffuse support." Therefore, for the analyses below, I stick with the intensity measure used in previous work rather than BDP's as the MAR categories can be re-organized into increasing levels of significance, risk and probable efficacy as well.

For both their criteria for case selection of secessionist movements and for their measurement of vulnerability, BDP use MAR's measure of autonomy grievances, particularly whether a group aspires for independence. While this is not a poor measure, there is a better one for the logics they are trying to test, one that measures not whether members of a group consider a particular grievance to be important but whether the group is actively engaged in separatism. While the two measures are correlated, the separatism index used here is more inclusive, so we have more than ninety cases of separatist groups.[4] While BDP might find the inclusiveness here to be responsible for the different results, I include a set of analyses that follows their more restricted definition of which observations should be in these kinds of analyses.

Table 1

Levels of Support: Coded by Increasing Intensity

Value	MAPS Label	Minorities at Risk Labels
0	None	No support received
1	Low	Ideological encouragement (1), diffuse support (14),* other unspecified support
2	Moderate	Non-military financial support (2), access to external communications (3), markets, transport
3	Strong	Funds for military supplies (4), provision of military equipment and supplies (7), military training in exile (6), advisory military personnel (8), peace-keeping observers (9)
4	Intense	Blockades (10), cross-border sanctuaries (5), rescue missions in country (11), cross-border raids (13), active combat units in country (12)

* Diffuse support is a rather open category, referring to relatively weak forms of support.
( ) Indicates level as coded on BDP.

BDP include a few control variables that I omitted before and will do so again here. They include a measure of co-operation and conflict, based on the Kansas event dataset, for instance. However, since the relationship between two countries may, in part, be related to whether one supports ethnic groups in the other, including this variable is likely to raise questions of endogeneity. Is this independent variable affecting the dependent variable or vice versa? While BDP find the variable to be significant, I omit it in the later analyses.[5] I drop alliances as well, which they find to be insignificant, for the same reason that the ethnic politics in play may be shaping the larger strategic relationship. Instead of alliance, relative power is included here to address realist arguments.[6]

BDP use logit for their analyses of occurrence and ordinary least squares regressions for their analyses of levels of support. Given the problems with their levels indicator and its replacement with an ordinal variable, ordered logit is more appropriate (the results below do not change very much if we do use OLS although interpreting the findings does change).

Re-Analyzing the International Relations of Secession

BDP's dyadic approach is adopted here so the observations are of ethnic groups and their politically relevant dyads: neighbouring states and great powers are the possible potential supporters. I use joint democracy and autocratic[7] dyads as two independent variables, following BDP. My variable for vulnerability is different as I use active separatism to code whether a potential supporter is vulnerable to secession, rather than

the grievances variable BDP adopt.[8] I include a similar measure for contiguity, border countries and those divided by less than 150 miles of water. I also add a new control variable to capture the impact of power, the relative power of the external actor compared to that of the host government. The original intent behind the coding of this variable was to test offensive versus defensive variants of realism, as it may be the case that stronger states use ethnic divisions to undermine weaker states, as India did to Pakistan in 1970–1971. On the other hand, weaker states may consider minorities in stronger states to be potential allies as they seek to balance against stronger states, as Pakistan continues to support groups in India.

In the analyses of my dataset below, the focus is on 1994–1995, rather than 1990–1992 in the BDP dataset. The choice is based on both practical and methodological grounds. First, to be honest, I had already coded 1994–1995, and coding ethnic ties, in particular, is a labour-intensive task. Second, as BDP point out, the world was still adjusting to the shocks of Soviet and Yugoslav collapses in 1990–1992, whereas expectations started to solidify by 1994–1995. The European Union developed criteria for recognition towards the end of 1991 in reaction to the demise of the two federations. Thus, 1994–1995 might provide a better idea of what current behaviour might be. Third, it should not matter much which year in the 1990s is chosen, as the patterns of external assistance are quiet stable in the 1990s, as I showed in a series of figures in chapter six of my book (2001a).

The biggest difference in independent variables between BDP and my current analysis is the inclusion of variables that measure not just affinity with the secessionist group but the ethnic ties in play to all sides. Each dyad is coded for three different identities—race, religion, and language[9]—with the focus on whether the most politically relevant constituencies in the potential supporter are of the same or similar identity as the majority of the secessionist group, as the politically dominant group in the host state or both. I describe in the data appendix how each component was coded, but the key idea here is that each observation is coded as follows. A dyad is coded as −1 for racial ties, for instance, if the host government has the same racial identity as the external actor only, as 1 if external actor's key constituents has the same race as secessionist movement only, and as 0 if both sides of the conflict have the same race and it is the same as potential intervener or if the external actor's constituents have no racial ties with either combatant. I then combine the three individual identity variables into one measure of total ethnic ties by adding them together, as presented in Table 2.

We should, therefore, expect more support for the ethnic group if the ties variable is positive and less if it is negative. Before presenting the analyses based on my dataset, Table 3 presents a replication of the

TABLE 2

Coding Ethnic Ties

Coding	Potential Supporter's Ties to the Ethnic Group and Host State
−3	Linguistic, racial and religious ties to host state only.
−2	Three kinds of ties to host and one to ethnic group; two kinds of ties to host state, and none to ethnic group.*
−1	Two kinds of ties to host state, one kind to ethnic group; or one kind of tie to host state and none to ethnic group.*
0	No ties to ethnic group or host state;* or one kind of tie to host state and one kind of tie to group (or two ties to both group and host, or three ties to both).
1	Two kinds of ties to group state, one kind to host state; or one kind of tie to group and none to host state.*
2	Three kinds of ties to group and one to host; or two kinds of ties to ethnic group, none to host.*
3	Linguistic, racial, and religious ties to ethnic group only.

*A dyad is coded as 0 for a particular set of ties, for instance, when no racial ties exist to either side or racial ties exist to both sides.

BDP analyses with one change—the substitution of my ethnic ties variable for their ethnic affinity.

The simple substitution of the ethnic ties indicator for BDP's affinity produces similar results for all of the variables, except ethnic ties is now significant and in the predicted direction. While this demonstrates that proper operationalization of the ethnic ties argument produces the expected results, this replication is not sufficient. First, the dependent variable of levels is problematic as mentioned above. Second, their indicator of secessionism is unduly restrictive. Third, the ethnic ties variable was coded for a subsequent period. While it is likely that little changed in the overall analysis, the best test is to consider the 1994–1995 period for which it was designed. In Table 4, we present the findings of three pairs of analyses, focusing on two sets of dependent variables measuring whether a government gave support to a group and how intense that assistance was and using three different universes of observations—all secessionist groups in MAR, all the groups fitting the BDP criteria, and then all politically relevant dyads involving any MAR group.[10]

The analyses here contradict those of Bélanger, Duchesne and Paquin, as regime type consistently falls far short of significance whereas ethnic ties consistently plays a role in the international relations of secessionist conflicts—and of all ethnic conflicts as well. These results are robust, regardless of specification.[11] Using alternative measures of ethnic ties, with narrower definitions of what counts as a shared identity,[12]

Table 3
BDP's Results Replicated[26]

	Original Analyses		With Ethnic Ties	
	Level (Regression)	Incidence (Logit)	Level (Regression)	Occurrence (Logit)
Joint Democracy	−.37***	−1.39**	−.32**	−1.3**
	(.14)	(.65)	(.14)	(.65)
Joint Autocracy	.62	.72	.60	.59
	(.42)	(.50)	(.44)	(.52)
Vulnerable	.002	−.11	−.003	−.14
	(.07)	(.15)	(.07))	(.17)
Affinity	.-.17	−.36		
	(.29)	(.54)		
Ethnic Ties			.28**	.32*
			(.11)	(.19)
Cooperation/Conflict	−.07***	−.16***	−.07***	−.16***
	(.02)	(.05)	(.003)	(.05)
Contiguous	.45***	1.46***	.48***	1.28**
	(.15)	(.48)	(.15)	(.50)
Alliance	−.03	.15	−.02	.11
	(.09)	(.21)	(.19)	(.22)
Regime Durability	.004	.01	.004	.01
	(.004)	(.02)	(.004)	(.01)
Constant	.16	−4.11***	.10	−3.84***
	(.32)	(.91)	(.38)	(.94)
N	385	385	356	356
R^2	.07	.16	.09	.17

*$p < .1$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .001$

the results are very similar. Dropping variables does not change the pattern of results, and if we use alternative statistical techniques, such as rare events logit (King and Zeng, 2001a, 2001b), the findings remain largely the same, except relative power becomes somewhat more significant.

Before moving to explain the findings, I used Clarify to determine the relative weight of each variable in shaping the likelihood of external support (King, Tomz and Wittenberg, 2000; Tomz, Wittenberg and King, 2001). Clarify is a set of tools that allows one to simulate outcomes by manipulating the variables of interest. To determine the impact of each variable, I focus on the analyses of all secessionist groups and set the values of all variables at their minimum except for relative power, which is set at its mean. Each variable, in turn, is given alternative values, its minimum and its maximum to determine the difference it makes on the likelihood of particular outcomes.

TABLE 4

Democracy, Ethnic Ties and External Support, 1994–1995

	Secessionist Groups		BDP Groups		MAR Groups[27]	
	Incidence (Logit)	Intensity (Ordered Logit)	Incidence (Logit)	Intensity (Ordered Logit)	Incidence (Logit)	Intensity (Ordered Logit)
Joint Democracy	−.17	−.15	−.26	−.26	.14	.14
	(.40)	(.41)	(.70)	(.72)	(.25)	(.25)
Joint Autocracy	−.19	−.19	−.45	−.52	−.10	−.07
	(.34)	(.33)	(.58)	(.55)	(.23)	(.23)
Vulnerable	.52*	.53*	.64	.66	.90***	.90***
	(.30)	(.30)	(.50)	(.50)	(.22)	(.22)
Ethnic Ties	.69***	.67***	.66***	.64***	.69***	.67***
	(.13)	(.13)	(.17)	(.16)	(.10)	(.09)
Relative Power	.001*	.002*	.001	.001	.001***	.001***
	(.002)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.0003)	(.0003)
Contiguous	2.30***	2.28***	2.18***	2.17***	2.00***	1.97***
	(.41)	(.41)	(.77)	(.78)	(.23)	(.22)
Constant/Cut 1	−4.64***	4.64	−4.56***	4.54	−4.91***	4.88
	(.47)		(.87)		(.29)	
Cut 2		5.48		4.86		5.99
Cut 3		5.69		5.01		6.34
Cut 4		6.37		5.49		6.93
N	956	956	308	308	2692	2692
Pseudo R^2	.1562	.1173	.1515	.1116	.1502	.1181

*p < .1, **p < .05, ***p < .001

Ethnic ties has the largest substantive impact, as a state is 8 per cent more likely to give assistance to secessionist group if it has racial, religious, and linguistic ties only to the group and none to the state, compared to a situation where the state has ethnic ties only to the host government.[13] States are 1 per cent more likely to assist groups in neighbouring states than distant ones. The confidence intervals of the remaining variables include zero, so we cannot be certain that they have any particular impact, which corresponds with the significance levels found in the earlier analyses.

TABLE 5

First Differences

Variable	Mean	Standard Error	95% Confidence Interval	
Ethnic Ties	.082	.043	.026	.195
Joint Democracy	−.0002	.001	−.002	.001
Joint Autocracy	−.0002	.001	−.001	.001
Vulnerability	.001	.001	−.0001	.004
Contiguous	.012	.006	.004	.027
Relative Power	.034	.053	−.0001	.183

Assessment and Conclusions

These analyses suggest that ethnic ties holds up better in dyadic analyses than democracy in accounting for which states are likely to give assistance to ethnic groups, secessionist or not. How can we account for the differing results? Given the robustness of the findings regardless of the observations included—BDP groups, all secessionist groups, or all MAR groups in politically relevant dyads[14]—the results cannot be driven by which cases are included in the analyses. As mentioned above, I use a different period—1994–1995—because of the data I had in hand. However, this should not have mattered that much, given how stable the international relations of ethnic conflict is (Saideman, 2001b). The results may differ because of interactions within my models or BDP's. The ethnic ties and democracy findings do not change in my tests, regardless of specification. Given their coding of ethnic affinity versus the indicator I created to test best the logic of ethnic ties, to one side, the other or both, it is my estimation that the difference in coding this variable accounts for much of the conflicting results. The outstanding puzzle is why democracy falls short in my analyses, rather than the performance of ethnic ties, which is easily explained by the use of a better measure of the hypothesis in question.

Why should this matter? First, democracy should not be seen as a panacea or shield against external involvement in one's own secessionist conflicts. For BDP and for this journal's readers, the case that most obviously comes to mind is, of course, Québec. While it might be nice if the rest of the world would leave this secessionist dispute alone if it were to heat up yet again, taking solace in Canada's democracy may not be appropriate. While violence may be a key variable drawing external involvement,[15] the shared democratic identity of potential supporters and of the government hosting the ethnic group in question does not seem to matter. Thus, we can expect other countries to attempt to play a role. Second, ethnic ties tells us which ones are likely to get involved and on which sides. Again, with the case of Québec in mind, France is the most obvious case of a country likely to assist the secession, even sans De Gaulle, given its linguistic ties to one side of the conflict.[16] The logic of the ethnic ties argument is that it would be far too tempting for France's politicians to offer at least some support to Québec to prove to their domestic audience that they are sincere nationalists, regardless of Canada's democratic norms. On the other hand, Canada would likely receive support from the Anglophone world.

Obviously, more is in play, as the R^2's, and their equivalents, in both sets of studies are small, and the substantive impact of ethnic ties is around or below 10 per cent. Other factors, such as the level of violence, must also be impacting the decisions of governments to get involved in the secessionist conflicts of other states. But we cannot be so optimistic about democracy playing much of a role in all of this.

Data Appendix:

Descriptive Statistics for All Secessionist Groups

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Support	1032	.13	.58	0	4
Joint Democracy	978	.26	.44	0	1
Joint Autocracy	1032	.18	.39	0	1
Vulnerability	1027	.61	.49	0	1
Ethnic Ties	1032	−.11	.92	−3	3
Relative Power	1010	38.77	116.62	.0002	1692.76
Contiguity	1032	.47	.50	0	1

Support: Derived from MAR code sheets, see Table 2 for the labels used to code this variable.

Joint Democracy: Same as BDP—potential supporter and host government both considered as a 6 or above in Polity2 dataset.

Joint Autocracy: Same as BDP—potential supporter and host government both considered as below 6 in Polity2 dataset.

Vulnerable: If the host state is coded in the MAR dataset as having at least one actively separatist group in the 1990s.

Relative Power: Using a standard recipe in the field, each country is averaged in terms of the percentage of its capability in five areas (military personnel and spending, production of iron and steel, total population) relative to the world. For each observation, the potential supporter's percentage is divided by the host states to create a relative capability ratio. In alternative tests, I use the natural log of this ratio and get very similar results.[17]

Contiguity: Similar to BDP. If the potential supporter and the group's host country border each other or are separated by less than 150 miles of water, that is, Cuba and the United States are considered contiguous.

Ethnic Ties: I start with separate measures of ethnic ties. I code each group and each country as having a dominant race, religion and language. For states (both potential supporters and host states), I code the ethnic characteristics shared by a plurality of the most politically important group(s) in 1994–95.[18] To code race, a difficult concept to operationalize, I used conventional categories used by anthropologists. Thus, a group or a state was coded as predominantly White/European/Caucasian; African/African-American/Black; Semitic/Arab; Slavic; East Asian; Indo-Pakistani/West Asian; Pacific Island; Indigenous; or Other (with countries with no predominant race coded as other).[19] A potential supporting country is coded as having racial ties with a group if they are coded as having the same predominant race. Likewise, a country is coded as having racial ties with a host state if both the potential supporter and the host state have been coded the same race. A dyad is coded as 1 if the

potential supporter has racial ties only to the ethnic group, as 0 if it has racial ties to both the host state and ethnic group or to neither, and as −1 if it has racial ties to the host state.

To code religion, I adapt MAR's coding of groups' "most common religion or sect," and apply the adapted coding not only to groups, but to potential supporters and host states.[20] I made two changes to the MAR coding, setting up a distinct category for entities (groups or states) where the plurality of believers are Orthodox,[21] and distinguishing largely Hindu entities from the category of "Other."[22] Thus, the adapted MAR coding leaves us with eleven categories: Roman Catholic, Protestant, other Christian Sect, Orthodox, Sunni, Shi'ite, other Islamic Sect, Buddhist, Animist, Hindu, Other. I developed two measures: religious ties, narrowly defined; and religious ties, broadly defined. In the former, religious ties are code as 1 if the ethnic group and the potential supporter largely shared the same religion—if the ethnic group was largely Sunni and the potential supporter was mostly Sunni.[23] The dyad is coded as zero if the group is mostly Sunni and the potential supporter is mostly Shi'ite. Entities that fit into the "Other" categories are treated as having no religious ties. For broadly defined religious ties, I collapsed the Protestant, Catholic, other Christian categories into one category, and the Sunni, Shi'ite, and other Islamic into a second category. This helps us to address arguments about Christians versus Muslims, and so on. I use the broader measure in this article.

For linguistic ties, I use the language family index from *Ethnologue* (Grimes and Grimes, 2000) that codes groups by common supersets. The basic notion is that languages belong to families, and that the more branches down a family tree two languages share, the more they have in common. First, we code how similar the languages of the ethnic group and the potential supporter are, and then we code how similar the languages of host and potential supporter are.[24] This initial indicator varies from one to twenty. A coding of one indicates a group or host state that is in a completely different language family than that of the potential supporter (e.g., Japanese and English, for example). Twenty reflects a situation where the two entities share identical languages. Given the particular distributions of these raw indicators, I collapsed the variables so that they ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 representing two entities with languages from completely different language families and 5 representing two entities with nearly identical or completely identical languages.[25] Subtracting linguistic ties between a potential supporter and a host state from linguistic ties between a potential supporter and the ethnic group produces a variable ranging from −3 (linguistic ties to host) to 3 (linguistic ties to ethnic group). To make this variable comparable to others, this variable is collapsed to create an indicator ranging from −1 to 1.

Notes

1 For reviews, see Carment, James and Taydas forthcoming and Saideman and Jenne forthcoming.

2 Carment, James and Taydas (2006) find that ethnic ties matter as well. The voluminous literature on diasporas (King and Melvin, 1999; Shain, 1999; Shain and Barth, 2003) also provides evidence of the relevance of ethnic ties.

3 For more on MAR, see http://www.minoritiesatrisk.com/. MAR has faced some criticism for selection bias—that rather than gathering data on all ethnic groups around the world, its observations are those more likely to engage in violence. This is not as problematic for understanding why some groups receive international assistance as it is for understanding why some groups mobilize. Because MAR is the only dataset that codes politically relevant groups around the world, it is the best source of data for the question at hand.

4 Some of the cases omitted by BDP but included here are groups that most immediately come to mind when we think of secession and its international relations: Catholics in Northern Ireland, Basques of Spain, Corsicans of France, South Ossetians of Georgia, Somalis of Ethiopia, Moros of the Philippines, Malays of Thailand, and Tamils of Sri Lanka.

5 When conflict/co-operation is included, using my dataset and the BDP definition of groups, it is significant: states tend not to give assistance to groups in countries with which they have co-operative relationships. Including this measure does not significantly alter the rest of the results.

6 The addition or omission of relative power does not change the results much at all, although the variable is significant in most specifications.

7 To be clear, I use their coding of autocratic, which is anything falling short of democracy, whereas the literature on democratic peace often distinguishes autocracies from anocracies, regimes that are in between.

8 See footnote 4 as well as the text preceding it.

9 The justification for this is definitions of ethnicity usually focus on the perception of real or perceived ties based on some sort of trait, usually focusing on race, religion, language, kinship or custom (Horowitz, 1985). Coding any of these is hard, but the latter two are most difficult. In previously presented work (Saideman, 2001b, 2003), I present results with distinct indicators for race, religion, and language, but present only a composite of total ties here since the goal here is to show that ethnic ties matter, rather than the salience or relevance of particular forms of identity.

10 I reverse BDP's order of presentation with incidence first and then intensity.

11 Again, adding the variable for conflict/co-operation does not change the results, except for increasing the pseudo-R^2.

12 For instance, in the broader sense, Sunnis and Shi'ites are considered as sharing religious ties, but in the narrower measures, they are considered to be distinct religious groups, and similar coding strategies are used for Protestant and Catholic as well. See the data descriptions in the appendix.

13 The impact of ethnic ties on the international relations of all MAR groups exceeds 10 per cent.

14 In additional tests of all dyads, politically relevant or not, with more than 33,000 observations, joint democracy and joint autocracy are still insignificant, while the other variables are all quite significant ($p < .001$).

15 In both earlier work (Saideman, 2001a, 2002) and the dyadic work (Saideman, 2001b, 2003), states are more likely to give assistance to groups engaged in violence against their host governments. For an analysis of the interactions between violence and support, see Akbaba, James and Taydas (forthcoming).

16   Indeed, in my coding scheme, France would be coded as "2" if we use a narrow definition of religious ties, as Quebec and France are both predominantly Catholic, in addition to their shared language, although in terms of the politics of the likely decision processes, obviously language would be most relevant.

17   I am very grateful to Doug Van Belle for suggestions on to how construct this indicator. For a similar effort to code relative power, see Bremer (1992: 322). Because of missing data, particularly for energy use, the indicator here is not identical to Bremer's.

18   I determined which groups were politically important by focusing on the political base of the regime. In democracies, this largely refers to the general population, but if parties represent competing ethnic groups, then the ethnic background of the leading party (or parties, if a coalition government) were considered. In authoritarian regimes, the focus is on the ethnic composition of the leader and of the means of coercion (the armed forces, presidential guard, secret police, etc.).

19   I based the categorization on the existing literature on race, both biological and anthropological. See Cavalli-Sforza and Cavalli-Sforza, 1995; Garn, 1962; Lewontin, 1982; and Osborne, 1971. I included Slavic as a separate racial group, even though anthropologists tend to code Slavs as Caucasians, as study of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union suggests Slav refers to a racial, not just linguistic or religious, identity.

20   For an extension of MAR coding on religion, and using it to see if religious identities draw intervention, see Fox, 2001.

21   MAR's original coding has Orthodox groups as "other Christian."

22   There are more predominantly Hindu ethnic groups in the data set than Buddhist, more Hindu host states than other Christian, other Islamic or Animist, and about as many Hindu potential supporters as Shi'ite (two).

23   This discussion, for the sake of simplicity, does not consider ties to the host state. The indicators here, like the racial ones, vary from -1 to 1.

24   If more than one language was spoken, we used the language spoken by the largest percentage of members of the ethnic group or of the politically relevant constituents of the state.

25   Because some languages have more branches than others, it is hard to say whether having five branches in common means that the languages are much more similar than having eight. Collapsing the variable helps to focus on the crucial similarities, and thus perceived ties, than if we do not.

26   All analyses use robust standard errors to maintain consistency with BDP.

27   The results remain the same if we use all dyads, not just those that are politically relevant, except joint democracy has a negative but still insignificant coefficient.

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