

CHAPTER TWO

The Logic of Nested Security

The model of nested security holds that the external conflict factors consistently trump efforts to mediate internal conflict. This means that effective mediation relies critically upon the background condition of nested security, which may be more important than the mediation itself for reducing tensions on the ground. Nested security can be depicted as a series of concentric circles—beginning with the domestic level where the minority and state majority interact directly [see Figure 2.1]. Moving outward, the middle circle represents the vitally important regional level, which contains ethnic kin and neighboring states as well as bisected ethnic groups, migrants, guerilla fighters, activists, and other entities that exert their influence across state borders. Finally, the outermost circle represents the global level, containing relevant long-distance players such as diasporas, transnational terrorist networks, and regional and global hegemonic powers. It also contains de-stabilizing systemic events such as hegemonic power shifts, global financial crises, disease epidemics, world war, and any other factor that could conceivably upset the balance of power between minorities and majorities at the domestic level.

I do not claim here that *all* civil conflicts are embedded in regional and global conflict processes. Some internal conflicts are genuinely divorced from their immediate external environment—at least at the beginning. The Biafran war of 1967-70 and the Sudanese civil wars, for example, were largely driven by internal ethnic disputes over the control of valuable territory and government; outside actors only became consequential later on. Domestic factors are obviously consequential to the emergence of civil war, such as ethnic symbolism, group competition over resources, or ethnic grievances. I merely contend that ignoring the external dimensions of internal conflicts may fatally undermine attempts to resolve sectarian tensions.

The “Embeddedness” of Internal Conflict

Internal conflicts, whether ethnic or ideological, have traditionally been theorized as dyadic interactions between two sub-state actors—usually a state majority and challenger minority.¹ A newer literature has, however, focused on the transnational and international dimensions of “civil” wars.² For instance, foreign governments sometimes wage proxy wars in a third state when direct confrontation is deemed too dangerous or risky.³ Rival states may fight to annex territory or to dominate the third state or the region as a whole. Alternatively, trans-border diaspora groups or transnational activist networks may intervene with the effect of exacerbating internal divides.

A cursory review of the most protracted civil conflicts around the world confirms that many are embedded in bilateral or regional conflicts (see Table 1). The conflict in Cyprus between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots is nested in a century-long conflict between Greece and Turkey. The war in Northern Ireland was nested in a territorial dispute between Britain and Ireland. The Palestinian conflict is in large part sustained by the regional conflict between Israeli and neighboring Arab states; the 1990s wars between Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats and between Croats and Krajina Serbs were driven by regional struggles between Serbia and Croatia; and the ongoing conflict in Kashmir is embedded in a decades-long border dispute between India and Pakistan. Unsurprisingly, given that many bilateral disputes are waged over borders, entrenched civil wars are often situated at the fault line of two conflicting states or coalitions of states. These

¹ A “minority” is defined here as a minority that is numerically inferior to the politically dominant minority in the state. “State,” “majority,” and “central or host government” are used interchangeably throughout the book to refer to the state center with which the minority bargains.

² Suhrke and Noble, *Ethnic conflict in International Relations*; Brown, *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*; Lake and Rothchild, *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*; Carment and James, “Internal Constraints and Interstate Ethnic Conflict”; Carment and James, “Secession and Irredenta in World Politics”; Brecher and Wilkenfeld, “Wars in the Midst of Peace.”

³ Midlarsky, *The Internationalization of Communal Strife*; Rosenau, *International Aspects of Civil Strife*.

include Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Kashmir, Palestine, Kosovo, Bosnia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Ogaden, Sri Lanka, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Transdniestria.

Civil conflicts become even more intractable when the bilateral struggles in which they are embedded are themselves embedded in wider regional or hegemonic struggles. A paradigmatic example is the conflict between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the West Bank, which is situated in a conflict between Israel and its Arabic neighbors. During the Cold War, the regional conflict was in turn embedded in the U.S.-Soviet struggle. In another example, the post-1999 conflict between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo was embedded in a conflict between Belgrade and Pristina, which in turn was fuelled by episodic conflict between the U.S. and Russia.

Table 2.1 Embedded Internal Conflicts, post-1945

Majority-Minority*	Regional Conflict	Wider/Hegemonic Conflict
Protestants and Catholics of Northern Ireland	Great Britain-Ireland	
Greek and Turkish Cypriots	Greece-Turkey	
Israelis and Palestinians	Israel-Arab states	U.S.-USSR
Maronite Christians and Palestinians in Lebanon	Israel-Syria-Iran-Lebanon	U.S.-USSR
Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir	India-Pakistan	U.S.-USSR
Chinese and Taiwanese		China-U.S.
Chinese and Tibetans	China-India	
Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka-India	
Ethiopians and Somalis in Ogaden	Somalia-Ethiopia	
Croats-Krajina Serbs	Croatia-Serbia	
Bosnian Muslims, Serbs, and Croats	Bosnia-Serbia	
Serbs and Albanians in Yugoslavia (pre-1999)	Albania-Serbia; NATO-Serbia	NATO-Russia
Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo (post-1999)	Kosovo-Serbia	NATO-Russia
Georgians and South Ossetians	Georgia-Russia	U.S.-Russia
Georgians and Abkhazis	Georgia-Russia	U.S.-Russia
Azerbaijanis and Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh	Armenia-Azerbaijan	U.S.-Russia
Moldovans and Transdnistrians	Moldova-Russia	
Latvians and Russophones	Latvia-Russia	U.S.-Russia
Estonians and Russophones	Estonia-Russia	U.S.-Russia
Ukrainians and Russians in Ukraine	Ukraine-Russia	U.S.-Russia
Macedonians and Albanians in Macedonia	Macedonia-Albania	
Saharawis and Moroccans	Morocco-Mauritania-Algeria	
Congolese and Banyamulenge in Eastern Congo (First Congo War)	Congo v. Rwanda, Uganda, and Angola	

*As noted in the Introduction, I use the terms majority and minority to denote dominant and subordinate groups in a state; a majority may sometimes be a numerical minority of the state population.

The Regional Level

Sectarian divisions can also be fuelled by *contagion*, where war in one state sends refugees, weapons and warriors across state boundaries.⁴ Hutu refugees fleeing the Rwandan Patriotic Front in 1994 sparked a vicious civil war in neighboring Congo. The 1997 civil unrest in Albania produced a flood of weapons that were trafficked over the border for use in the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) insurgency against Yugoslavia. Similarly, U.S. weapons transferred to the *mujahedeen* during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s turned up in the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. The *muhajadeen* themselves participated in these conflicts as volunteers and mercenary soldiers. Internal rebellions also serve to foment insurgencies in neighboring countries. In 2001, former KLA fighters slipped over the Kosovo border into Macedonia to ignite a violent conflict between Skopje and the Albanian minority. Cross-border ethnic ties, too, can provoke civil warfare when the political leaders of the first state attempt to “rescue” a domestic constituency’s trans-border kin as a means of securing their electoral support.⁵ A rebel movement in one state may likewise use the territory of a neighboring state as a physical sanctuary, escalating ethnic tensions in the second state.⁶

The external environment may also influence minority-majority relations through *diffusion* or demonstration effects, whereby a successful movement in one place inspires activists in another place to mimic these tactics in hopes of achieving the same result.⁷ Methods of resistance in one conflict are routinely copied by groups that find themselves in similar situations elsewhere.⁸ For example, Beissinger demonstrated that the momentum built up 1980s independence movements in

⁴ Lischer, “Collateral Damage”; Lischer, *Dangerous sanctuaries*; Salehyan and Gleditsch, “Refugees and the spread of civil war”; Salehyan, “Transnational rebels.”

⁵ Saideman, *The ties that divide*; Saideman, “Inconsistent irredentism?”

⁶ Salehyan, *Rebels Without Borders*.

⁷ Hill and Rothchild, “The Impact of Regime on the Diffusion of Political Conflict”; Hill and Rothchild, “The Contagion of Political Conflict in Africa and the World”; Hill, Rothchild, and Cameron, “Tactical Information and the Diffusion of Peaceful Protests.”

⁸ Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*.

the Baltics led to a cascade of independence movements in other Soviet republics, including Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Regions plagued by conflict spillover and copycat insurgencies are sometimes described as “bad neighborhoods.”⁹ Salehyan builds on this concept in his work, identifying three uniquely dangerous neighborhoods or “conflict clusters” in West Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia where cross-border flows of refugees, weapons and warriors serve to perpetuate civil violence in an endless feedback loop.¹⁰ Rival governments may also stoke ethnic rebellions over the border to destabilize their neighbors, as seen in the periodic trans-border support of Kurdish insurgencies by Turkey, Iraq, and Iran.

Indeed, many of today’s civil wars actually began as border conflicts between neighboring states, as in the cases of the 1970s Ethiopian-Somali war over Ogaden and the 1990s Croatian-Serbian war over Bosnia. In such cases, the border regions in question are rarely just any piece of land, but have significant economic or geopolitical value to the disputant states. Control over south Lebanon and the Golan Heights, for example, offer strategic advantages to the regional rivals Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.

Through the first half of the twentieth century, the Åland Islands were sought by Finland, Sweden, Germany and Russia, since control over the territory gave one’s navy a decisive advantage in achieving dominance in the Baltic Sea. After the First World War, the Teschen region was claimed by both Czechoslovakia and Poland because it was rich with coal and contained a vital railway from the Czech lands to South Slovakia. The contested Saarland Basin and Upper Silesia were mineral-rich regions invaluable for developing industrial economies in Central Europe, particularly in Germany. Meanwhile, Memel and Danzig were sought by Lithuania, Poland, and Germany, as they were important port cities on the Baltic Sea. Many if not

⁹ See especially Weiner, “Bad Neighborhoods, Bad Neighbors.”

¹⁰ Salehyan, *Rebels Without Borders*. 15-17.

most border regions are ethnically mixed; what separates contested from uncontested border regions is the perceived value of the territory itself.

Ongoing border conflicts tend to feed and exacerbate internal tensions. The civil conflict in Cyprus, for example, is largely kept alive by bilateral conflict between Greece and Turkey. The same story can be told of the Indian and Pakistani conflict over Kashmir, Irish and British competition over Northern Ireland, the Russian and Japanese dispute over the Kurile Islands, the Ethiopian and Somali war over the Ogaden region, the Israeli and Syrian conflict over the Golan Heights, the Israeli and Lebanese conflict over South Lebanon, and so on. It bears repeating that it is the perceived value of the land, rather than the plight of one's co-ethnics, that tends to fuel these bilateral conflicts. State governments routinely pay lip service to the status of cross-border ethnic kin, but will only undertake military interventions to "rescue" them when it is perceived to be in that state's interest.

The Global or Transnational Level

Civil conflicts can also be triggered by actors and events that lie outside the immediate neighborhood. Far-flung ethnic diasporas¹¹ may lobby their host states to intervene in homeland disputes, as the American-Armenians did with respect to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. They may also raise funds for armed insurgencies. Examples include the Homeland Calling Fund, which mobilized support for the Kosovo secessionist movement in the late 1990s; and the Tamil diaspora in Canada, the U.S. and the UK, which helped the Tamil Tigers build a formidable fighting force to challenge the Sri Lankan state. The Croatian diaspora in North America was a major source of funding

¹¹ Shain and Barth, "Diasporas and International Relations Theory." define diaspora as "a people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland—whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control."

for the electoral campaigns of Franjo Tudman, leading his party to ride to victory and ultimately war in the early 1990s.¹² Transnational terrorist networks have similar conflict-promoting effects.¹³

Events and changes in the international system have also had a tendency to prolong civil conflict. According to Hironaka, international norms after the Second World War encouraged a proliferation of weak states that are incapable of suppressing violent insurgencies, resulting in civil wars that stretch on for years if not decades. She writes, “once a civil war has begun... international processes play a critical role in perpetuating the conflict and even escalating the intensity of war.”¹⁴ Technological innovations may have also promoted and lengthened conflict by giving non-state actors the resources to challenge their governments. Wider access to the internet, satellite communications, and mobile phone networks permit previously marginalized minorities to advertise their plight and mobilize support for their cause.¹⁵ Meanwhile, increased mobility and porous state borders give non-state actors the means to mount unprecedented challenges against their government.¹⁶ Finally, systemic war, hegemonic power shifts, and global economic change furnish vital political opportunities structures by which non-state actors challenge state governments on a more even playing field.

Nested Security and ‘Outside-In’ Conflict Mediation

Events and actors on the regional and global levels can escalate internal conflict in three ways.

First, systemic events can escalate internal conflict *indirectly* by upsetting the regional equilibrium, as when the global hegemon intervenes to alter the balance of power between regional players. The

¹² Gagnon, *The Myth of Ethnic War*; Tanner, *Croatia*.

¹³ Sandler, “Collective Action and Transnational Terrorism”; Sandler, Tschirhart, and Cauley, “A Theoretical Analysis of Transnational Terrorism”; Adamson, “Globalisation, Transnational Political Mobilisation, and Networks of Violence.”

¹⁴ Hironaka, *Neverending Wars*.

¹⁵ Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion*; Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining: The Paradox of Minority Empowerment*.

¹⁶ Adamson, “Globalisation, Transnational Political Mobilisation, and Networks of Violence.”

empowered regional player may then intervene on the side of the minority or majority at the domestic level, leading the empowered domestic player to radicalize its claims and thereby extract a greater share of state resources. Second, systemic events can escalate internal conflict *directly* by empowering either the majority or minority against the other, leading it to radicalize its position at the domestic level. Third, regional-level events can themselves provoke internal conflict by empowering one actor over the other, leading that player to radicalize for a greater share of resources. The corollary is that external events and actors can also *moderate* internal conflict through the same three pathways by increasing the expected peace dividend or by re-aligning the domestic balance of power to coincide with the existing distribution of state resources.

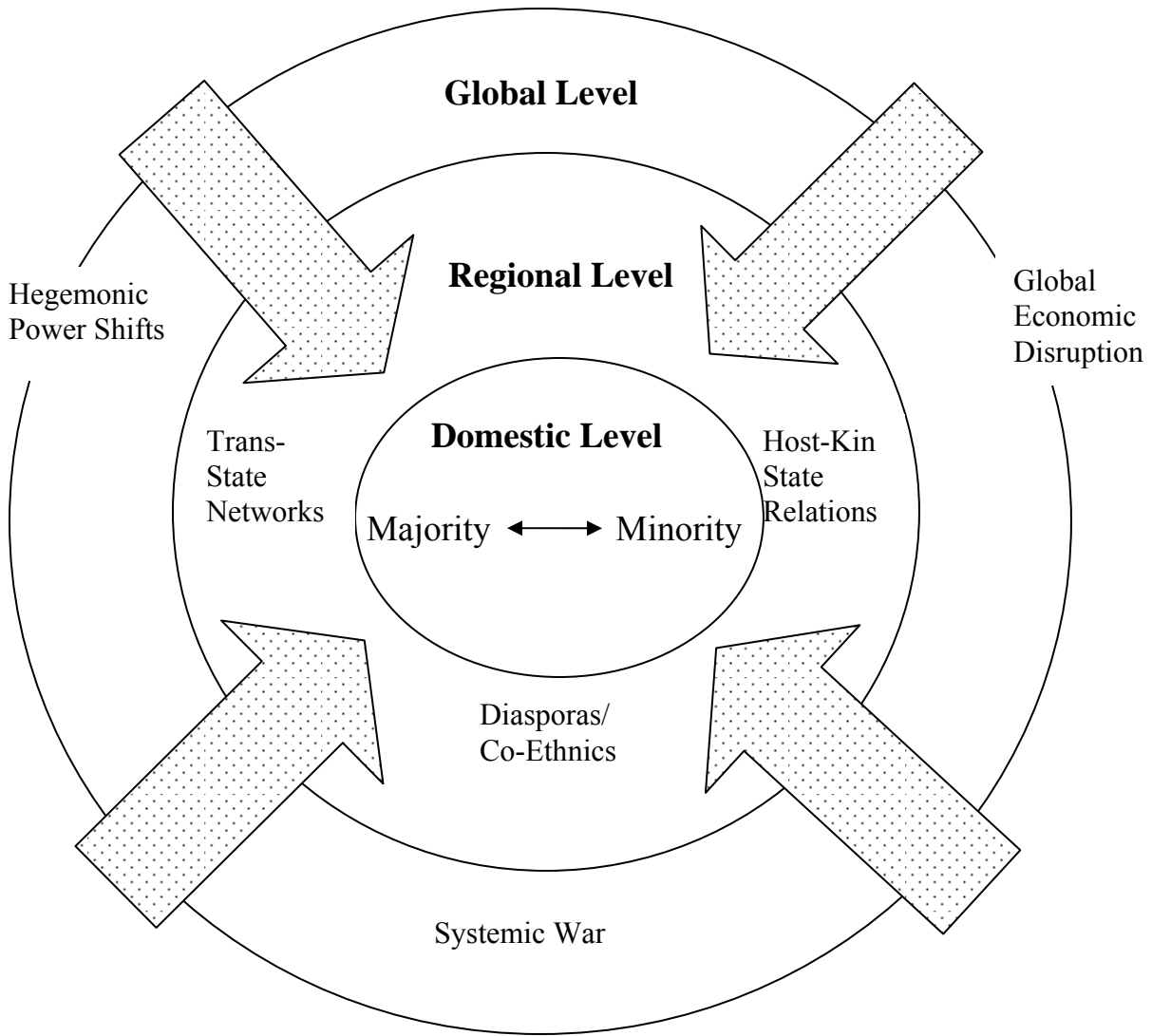
The logic of nested security rests on the premise that actors and events on the domestic-level rarely have a *symmetric* impact on actors and events at higher levels. This is because actors operating at higher levels of political order tend to choose their policies based on a wide range of inputs, interests and constraints, whereas the minority and majority are more narrowly concerned with their relative share of state resources. More importantly, actors at higher levels of political order, such as regional or global hegemony, usually command greater resources which they can use to influence political actors on lower levels.¹⁷ To illustrate, getting involved in a localized conflict is something that regional or global actors may or may not decide is in their interest given their wide scope of interests and concerns. This means that a local conflict does not automatically “pull in” outside interveners, no matter how desperate the situation may appear for the interveners’ co-ethnics. Consistent with this expectation, homeland states are no more likely to intervene on behalf of their kin when they are repressed than when they are not, suggesting that the intervener is calling the

¹⁷ Lemke likewise argues that major powers will have an asymmetrical influence on local power structures or “hierarchies” because major powers have global reach, whereas minor powers do not. For this reason, “leading members in the top of the nested hierarchies can affect members below and not the other way around” (Lemke, “Parity and War,” 82).

shots.¹⁸ For the domestic actors, meanwhile, their disposition to engage in conflict is strongly influenced by the behavior of regional and global hegemony who intervene to alter the opportunities and constraints faced by both sides. This means that external conflict processes are far more likely to influence the internal conflict than vice versa. Effective conflict management therefore requires addressing the external levels in which civil conflicts are embedded first before moving to domestic-level causes.

¹⁸ Davis and Moore, "Ethnicity matters."

Figure 2.1 **The Model of Nested Security**



Empirical Predictions

The key to achieving nested security largely depends on where the conflict is in its life cycle. For conflicts that have not yet turned violent, nested security is best achieved by neutralizing conflict processes in the wider neighborhood. Outside mediations aimed at conflict prevention (preventive diplomacy or induced devolution) are unlikely to succeed if interventions or conflict contagion on the systemic and regional-levels are not first neutralized; such interventions lose their effectiveness if and when such conflict processes reemerge.¹⁹

Nested security makes three broad predictions concerning successful non-violent conflict management (NVCN). First, the regional or bilateral environment in which the internal conflict is embedded may be *destabilized* at any time as a result of power shifts or events on the regional or systemic level, effectively “unnesting” the conflict. There are two possible variants here. External factors that generate perceptions of *increased minority leverage* against the state center are likely to produce minority radicalization,²⁰ leading the center to offer the leveraged minority concessions or to confront the minority through violence. Alternatively, external factors might produce perceptions of *increased majority leverage*. This heightens the likelihood that the government will attempt to suppress a rebellious minority while it still has the upper-hand.

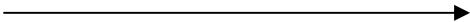

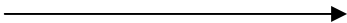
¹⁹ Once the conflict has passed into a violent phase, state authority may become fragmented and sovereignty divided with the appearance of new security actors such as non-state militias and warlords. Under these conditions, third party mediation is unlikely to succeed until nested security is achieved not only on regional and global levels, but also the *domestic* level. A third party presence on the ground is usually necessary to check the power of new domestic security actors in the context of compromised state authority. Confronting war entrepreneurs in this way requires coercive exercise of power and a troop presence to police and enforce peacekeeping institutions. Simultaneous efforts must be made to stabilize the equilibrium at the regional level so that external intervention and conflict spillover is contained. Although a significant domestic occupation may reduce the impact of external factors on the conflict, regional stabilization becomes vitally important once external forces are withdrawn. This argument will not be tested in the present volume, which is devoted to assessing NVCN interventions in largely non-violent conflicts where the state authority remains intact.

²⁰ Jenne, “A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that Did not Bite in 1990 s Yugoslavia”; Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining: The Paradox of Minority Empowerment*; Cetinyan, “Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-party Intervention.”

Second, the conflict between the relevant regional actors (such as the host government and minority's lobby actor) may be *exogenously* stabilized. Here, the regional conflict is held in check by outside inducements or sanctions. In this case, overt conflict between the minority and center is likely to de-escalate, but both sides will remain mobilized and inter-ethnic cooperation will be minimized because the stability is understood to be externally induced and may unravel at any time. In other words, although exogenous pressures may “nest” or stabilize the internal conflict, both sides remain mobilized along sectarian lines in case these pressures are lifted and the peace deal disintegrates.

In the third scenario, the conflict may be *endogenously* stabilized. This occurs when the relevant regional actors anticipate significant mutual gains from bilateral cooperation, such as a valuable trade agreement or a bilateral security alliance against a common enemy. If the minority and majority perceive the regional peace deal to be self-enforcing and thus sustainable, the sectarian divide may gradually lose its political salience, permitting the emergence of inter-ethnic cooperation at the domestic level. This is termed “nested ethnic peace.”

Table 2.2 Nested Security Hypotheses

3) De-stabilization		Unnested Conflict
<p>Variant A: <i>If destabilization leads to perceptions of increased minority leverage, the minority is likely to mobilize. The majority will meet the challenge through concessions or armed combat;</i></p> <p>Variant B: <i>If destabilization leads to perceptions of increased majority leverage, the minority is likely to remain passive. The state can choose to do nothing or use its leverage to suppress the minority.</i></p>		
1) Exogenous stabilization		Nested Ethnic Conflict <i>(no overt conflict, both sides remain mobilized)</i>
2) Endogenous stabilization		Nested Ethnic Peace <i>(ethnic divide lose political salience; emergence of inter-ethnic cooperation)</i>

In sum, just as the path toward conflict proceeds from the outside-in, so too does the path toward peace. Third party mediation is unlikely to succeed in de-escalating sectarian tensions until the conflict dynamics at the regional and systemic levels are first neutralized. This is the logic of nested security, which calls for a strategy of ‘outside-in’ conflict management.

Methods and Research Design

The *dependent variable* of the analysis is conflict reduction, or more accurately, *shifts in the level of communal-based conflict* between a rebellious ethno-territorial minority and the state. This is a departure from more conventional conceptualization of intervention outcome, which is success versus failure. There are a number of reasons why it makes practical sense to test the model by

accounting for shifting communal conflict rather than mediation success. For one thing, mediation success is usually measured as a reduction in the level of communal conflict; however, the two must not be conflated. This is because conflict reduction may be due to factors other than the mediation itself. It is therefore important not to build this assumption about causality into the research design. Second, a continuous variable is nearly always preferable to a dichotomous variable, in that continuous variables contain more information than a dichotomous variable; the line that separates success from failure is often fairly arbitrary in cases of conflict management, so dichotomization is best avoided whenever possible.

To test the predictions of the model, I track over-time changes in the dependent variable (the level of communal conflict) in the course of external intervention to see if these changes are preceded by changes in the independent variable (stabilization of conflict processes at the regional and systemic levels) in the manner predicted by the nested security model. If this pattern is found, then process tracing (PT) is used to trace the pathways that connect the shifts in the causal variable with shifts in the dependent variable. The goal is to identify the sequence of actions and reactions that precede temporal shifts in conflict on the ground. This allows me to determine whether regional stabilization is associated with domestic conflict and, if so, whether the relationship is causal or spurious.²¹

At the same time, the controlled comparative method (CCM) is used to explain the variable outcomes of the same strategy within each regime—effectively controlling for the strategy used, the historical and geopolitical circumstances surrounding the intervention, and the identity and resources of the intervener.²² When comparing mediations using the same strategy across space and over time, these causal connections are first mapped longitudinally within each

²¹ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*.

²² Ragin, *The comparative method*; Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*.

case and then compared within each cluster of cases to determine whether nested security is a necessary condition for the success of each mediation strategy.

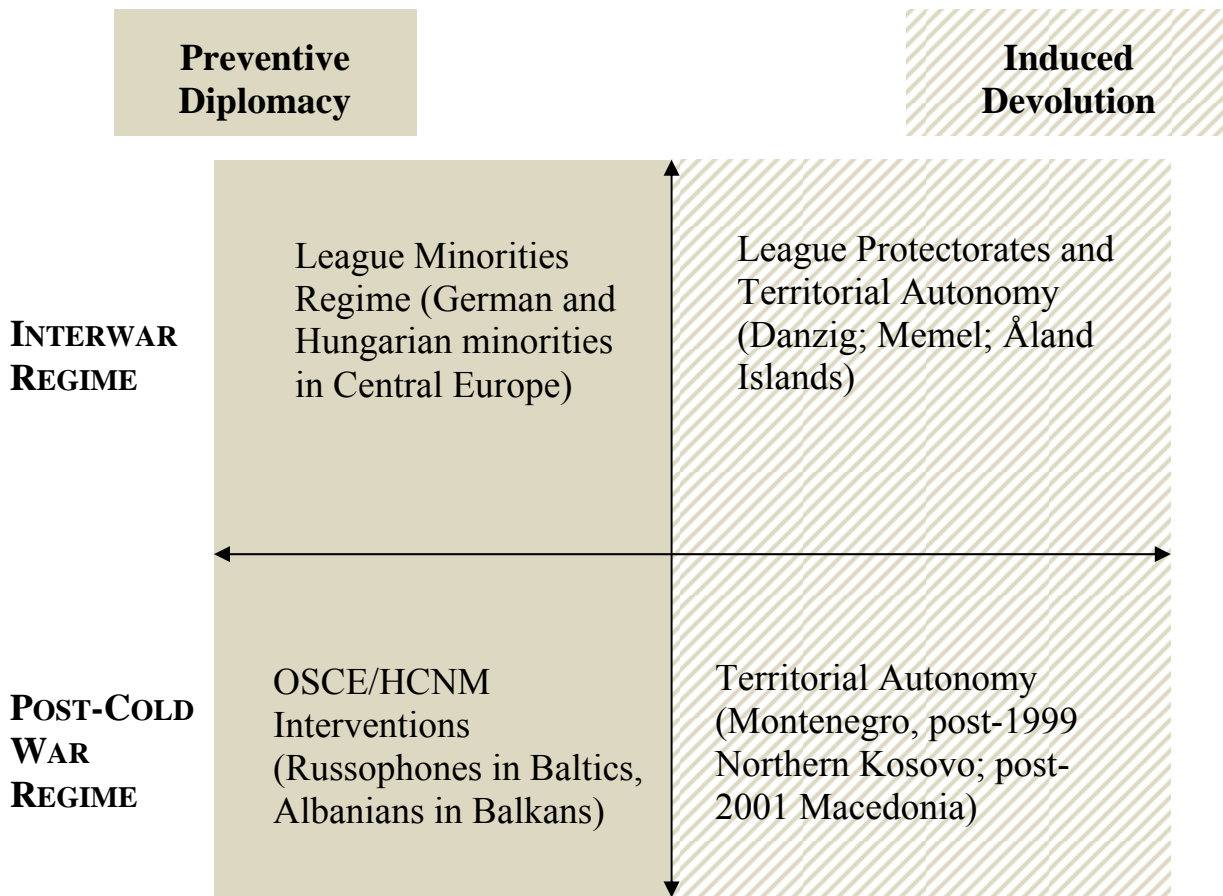
How exactly are these patterns used to test the theory of nested security against competing theories? I do this by assessing whether the cases reveal the evidentiary “signature” of nested security versus those of alternative theories. Nested security implies that the stabilization of conflicts at the systemic and regional levels ameliorates ethnic tensions at the domestic level, and vice versa. If institutional theories are correct, then sectarian tensions should diminish once the minority is offered concessions such as minority autonomy or power-sharing in the central government; we should not see a decrease of tensions in the absence of such concessions. If it is the mediation itself that matters most, then we should see a decrease of sectarian tensions following increased power, resources, or perceived credibility of the third party mediator. If liberal minority policies are decisive, then ethnic tensions should decrease when the host government enacts or implements substantial minority protections.

The Cases

The units of analysis are non-violent mediations of emerging ethno-territorial conflicts in interwar and post-communist CEE. For preventive diplomacy under the League, the cases include the twenty-year League mediations of minority conflicts deemed to have the greatest potential for violence: the German minorities in Poland and Czechoslovakia and the Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia and Romania. For the post-Cold War period, I examine diplomatic mediations of conflicts deemed most explosive in CEE: the Russophone minorities in Latvia and Estonia and the Albanian minorities in Macedonia and Kosovo. For induced devolution under the League of Nations, I examine the impact of devolution arrangements for

restive minority regions—the Åland Islands, Danzig and Memel. The post-Cold War cases include NATO-induced devolution in Macedonia and EU-induced devolution in Montenegro and Kosovo.

Figure 2.2 Non-Violent Conflict Management in Contemporary Europe



Concepts and Measurement

I track shifts in external stabilization and domestic conflict in each case over time to assess whether variations in mediation success can be explained by the theory of nested security. These variables

are measured qualitatively using field data and secondary analyses. *Regional stabilization* will have occurred when the host state and intervening lobby actors conclude a peace pact or normalized diplomatic relations, when cross-border support for minority rebellion is disrupted, and when conflict spillover from neighboring states is contained. Regional *destabilization* occurs when any one of these conflict dynamics (re)emerges. Stabilization will be judged *exogenous* when regional conflicts between the host state and lobby actor are suppressed through third party conditionality, pressure, coercion or security guarantees; it will be judged *endogenous* when the peace between regional actors is self-enforcing, such as when the host and lobby states agree that it is in their mutual interest to establish or maintain peaceful bilateral relations. The distinction between endogenous and exogenous stabilization is made by assessing the policies and official statements of the state governments or other lobby actors and by reviewing scholarly accounts of these events. In this way, I determine whether the peace agreement was the outcome of external pressure or, alternatively, perceived common interests. The level of stabilization can be seen to shift over the course of each intervention; I examine these shifts using process-tracing to identify causal connections between the external environment and internal conflict while controlling for environmental factors.

The dependent variable *internal conflict* is measured qualitatively using the following indicators: (a) inter-ethnic political coalitions at the local and national levels; (b) public support for nationalist parties; (c) repressive/non-repressive minority policies; (d) sectarian violence on the ground; and (e) integration of the minority in educational, employment, and other arenas. Since the micro-level analysis focuses on *shifts* in internal conflict, I focus primarily on relative measures—that is, whether these indicators increase or decrease over time. If one or more of these indicators increases, the conflict will be judged to have escalated, and vice versa. If two

or more indicators move in opposite directions, the level of conflict will be judged indeterminate.

In the course of this analysis, careful process-tracing is used to establish the causes of conflict (de)escalation in order to rule out alternative explanations. Each case study is divided into periods that represent shifts in the level of internal conflict. Each shift is then be closely examined using field research material (for contemporary cases) and scholarly sources (for both periods) to determine why each shift occurred when it did, and not earlier or later. Nested security posits that external stabilization is a necessary condition for internal conflict management. The theory will be disconfirmed if evidence is found that an internal conflict de-escalated in the *absence* of external stabilization. I also pay attention to whether shifts in internal conflict *preceded* or *followed* external stabilization; a finding that they preceded external stabilization would similarly disconfirm the theory.

By taking the steps outlined above, I assess whether these cases match the evidentiary “signature” of nested security better than that of alternative accounts. To facilitate these assessments, I lay out the predictions or “signatures” of the competing explanations at the outset of each of the four empirical chapters.

The Data

The case evidence includes personal interviews and other field data as well as historical records and scholarly accounts. The indicators for the independent and dependent variables are measured qualitatively through data triangulation, which is a “method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data.”²³ To obtain data on interventions in post-Cold War CEE, I visited the archives of the OSCE, the EU, and the Open

²³ O'Donoghue and Punch, *Qualitative Educational Research in Action.*, 78.

Society Institute (OSI) to review internal reports prepared by the interveners concerning the impact of mediation on the conflict in question. I also conducted dozens of interviews with OSCE representatives, High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) officials, NGO workers, activists, and local analysts to identify shifts in internal conflict and solicit expert opinions concerning the causes of each shift. I supplement these data using scholarly accounts, research reports and news articles concerning the relative success of the mediators and the obstacles they faced in managing conflict.

For the interwar period, I draw on a mix of scholarly accounts and materials obtained at the League of Nations archives in Geneva, Switzerland concerning the effects of League mediation. With respect to archival materials, I rely to a great extent on the minutes of the meetings of the League Council and Assembly as well as official correspondence and commission reports concerning the impact of mediation; much of this material is contained in the Official League Journals. Special attention is paid to the Secretariat's responses to petitions on behalf of the German and Hungarian minorities that were sent to the League in the 1920s and 30s, as well as the outcome of these mediations. In addition to Official Journals, I use primary archival materials such as memos, telegrams and other correspondence between League officials and mediators on the ground. This is especially important for the cases of Memel and Danzig, about which there was considerable correspondence between field officials and the League headquarters. I supplement these analyses using diplomatic records from the British foreign office, as well as scholarly accounts of minority conflict and conflict management in interwar Europe.

Caveats and Methodological Limitations

The ambitious scope of this study over space and time presents significant challenges. The first relates to the comparability of cases. Despite considerable similarities in mediator aims and strategies under the two European security regimes, the question remains whether the lessons of the interwar period remain relevant today, given the very different global environment during the two periods. The contemporary world is far more interconnected, and non-state actors have had a far greater and more instantaneous impact on “high” politics. Moreover, the OSCE, EU and NATO enjoy far more leverage in CEE countries today than the League did in the interwar period. Finally, although there was a similar division of labor among mediators during both periods—with the League Secretariat and the OSCE/HCNM in charge of conflict prevention while the Conference of Ambassadors and NATO handled conflict resolution—the current European system is far more complex than the League system, with no overarching authority to coordinate the actions of the numerous organizations involved in conflict management. A related question is whether the intervening variables may be “controlled for” when comparing cases of interventions across regimes. It is even questionable whether interventions under the same regime are comparable, given how widely conflict processes can be expected to vary from one country to the next. Moreover, an adequate assessment of competing tools requires separating the effects of each intervention from those of other factors that may be intervening simultaneously.

While acknowledging the importance of these concerns, I argue that it is the very diversity of these cases that makes this comparative analysis so valuable. Indeed, the primary motivation for this study was to determine whether the model maintains its explanatory leverage across very different mediations undertaken in a variety of regional and historical settings. In

this sense, the selection of cases serves as a hard test of the generalizability of the model across different regions, conflict participants, strategies of mediation, and global environments. I expect to demonstrate that nested security is a precondition of success for all cases of conflict management. In social science terms, this constitutes an application of Mill's method of agreement whereby very different interventions are compared with one another to identify the common denominator of successful mediation. Meanwhile, within each intervention over time, and between similar interventions under the same regime, Mill's method of difference is used to test the causal mechanism of mediation success.

A second challenge relates to the problem of measuring "success." Indeed, the usefulness of this study turns on the extent to which I can devise a measure of mediation effectiveness that can be applied across a wide range of interventions. In some cases, intervention success is extremely difficult to measure. Such is the case with preventive or "quiet" diplomacy, where a third party offers confidential advice to the disputants, facilitating dialogue between two or more sides, thereby de-escalating a brewing conflict. For these reasons, I do not attempt to assign interventions to discrete categories of success and failure. I instead focus on whether and why conflicts fluctuate once the mediation has begun. In so doing, I account for patterns of conflict over time and across interventions rather than the overall level of success of each intervention. I expect to find that external stabilization serves as a key precipitating factor for conflict de-escalation and, conversely, that external *de*-stabilization tends to cut short periods of peace.

Conclusions and Policy Relevance

This project investigates a range of interventions across space and time to determine whether nested security is, as expected, a precondition for successful conflict management. It stands to make an important theoretical contribution insofar as I can demonstrate that nested security is a necessary condition for de-escalating conflicts of varying intensity across a range of historical circumstances. This project also speaks to the literatures on ethnic conflict and conflict management, foreign policy and intervention, regional security regimes, international relations of ethnic conflict, and external conditionality.

The findings of this analysis have direct policy relevance as well. By exploring Europe's failures and successes under the League regime, this analysis yields important insights concerning the ways that policy-makers can avoid replicating the mistakes of an earlier generation of European leaders. These policy insights are of crucial importance to Europe today, as the EU struggles to accommodate new member states beset by problems of conflict spillover, mass migration, ultra-nationalist movements, minority rebellions, and marginalized groups such as the Roma. Moreover, this study has applications well beyond Eastern Europe, since internal conflicts span the globe. State governments and international and regional organization have intensified their search for remedies to conflicts that create humanitarian disasters and exacerbate failed and failing states. If strategies of *non-violent* mediation can be found that effectively dampen these conflicts, then we have come a considerable distance toward fulfilling the dictum of the Hippocratic Oath "to do good or to do no harm."

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