Ethnic Inequality and Conflict

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SNIS Biennial Conference on “Political and Economic Inequality”, ETH Zürich, January 28-29, 2016
Outline

- Inequality and conflict
  - Ethno-political inequality and civil war
  - Ethno-economic inequality and civil war
- Trends and causes of inequality
  - Ethno-political inequality
  - Ethno-economic inequality
- Conclusion
Ethnic inequality in recent and current civil wars

South Sudan

Israel, Gaza, West Bank

Isis

Ukraine
An economic approach to civil war

- Inequality irrelevant!
- “Greed/Opportunities” rather than “grievance”

“So what causes civil war? Rebel movements themselves justify their actions in terms of a catalogue of grievances: repression, exploitation, exclusion. Politically motivated academics have piled in with their own hobbyhorses, which usually cast rebels as heroes. I have come to distrust this discourse of grievances as self-serving.”

Bottom Billion, OUP 2007
Our research

- Focus on how ethnic inequality along political and economic lines may trigger civil war

**Inequality, Grievances and Civil War**
- Lars-Erik Cederman, ETH Zürich
- Kristian Skrede Gleditsch Univ. of Essex
- Halvard Buhaug, PRIO

Cambridge University Press, 2013

From ethnic inequality to civil war

Ethnic inequality

Group identification
Intergroup comparison
Evaluation of injustice
Framing and blaming

Macro link

Grievances

Mobilization

Repress or redress?
Ethnic Power Relations Dataset

- Ethnic groups’ power access and settlement areas worldwide 1946-2013

Vogt et. al. 2015. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*

http://growup.ethz.ch
Ethno-political inequality and civil war

See Cederman, Wimmer & Min (2010)
Source: Ethnic Power Relations (EPR-ETH) Dataset, [http://growup.ethz.ch](http://growup.ethz.ch)
Ethno-political inequality and conflict, cont’d

- Exclusion and conflict duration:
  - Wucherpfennig et al. (*World Politics* 2011)

- Ethnic inclusion and power sharing:
  - Cederman, Hug, Schädel & Wucherpfennig (*APSR* 2015)
  - Wucherpfennig, Hunziker and Cederman (*AJPS* forthcoming)

- Exclusion and oil:
  - Hunziker and Cederman (2016)

- Language and religion:
  - Bormann, Cederman & Vogt (*JCR* 2015)

- Transnational relations and refugees:
  - Cederman, Gleditsch, Salehyan & Wucherpfennig (*IO* 2013), Rüegger (2015)
Explaining postcolonial conflict

Ethno-economic inequality and civil war

Measuring inequality

Yugoslavia: GECON and GeoEPR (1990)

Gross Cell Product

- under 1.94
- 1.94 – 3.88
- 3.88 – 5.82
- 5.82 – 7.76
- over 7.76

Effect of inequality

Conflict prob.


See Cederman, Weidmann & Gleditsch (2011)
Nightlights and ethno-economic inequality

- Chen & Nordhaus (PNAS 2011)

G-Econ Estimate  Nightlights Estimate

Trends toward ethno-political equality

- Powersharing
- Excluded
- Discriminated

Year:
- 1950
- 1960
- 1970
- 1980
- 1990
- 2000
- 2010

Values:
- 0.0
- 0.1
- 0.2
- 0.3
- 0.4
- 0.5
Trends in ethno-political inequality: Excluded population in world regions
Diffusion of ethnic inclusion

Transitions to inclusion/exclusion by regional neighborhood

Shift to inclusion

Shift to exclusion

Inclusion in neighborhood
Trends in ethno-economic inequality

Asia

Sub-Saharan Africa

Effect of globalization on relative poverty

- Gap between included and excluded groups *widened* in “neopatrimonial” states and *narrowed* in “developmental” states
Conclusions

What do we know?

- Ethno-political inequality → Conflict
- Ethno-economic inequality → Conflict
- Ethno-politics inequality has mostly been decreasing except in the Middle East
- Globalization reduces ethno-economic inequality in “developmental” states but not in “neopatrimonial” ones

What needs to be done?

- Data, data, data...
- Violent and non-violent consequences beyond civil war
- Mechanisms driving ethnic inequality