



Perspektiven auf globale Politik

AFK-EUPRA – 4: INTERVENTION AND ACTIVISM

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AFK-EuPRA – Panel 4: Intervention and Activism

Chair: Bettina Engels (FU Berlin, Germany)

Presenters:

Margit Bussmann (University of Greifswald, Germany): France’s Military Interventions: Diversion from Domestic Problems?

A large body of research investigates whether democracies’ decisions to intervene militarily are guided by external threats and strategic considerations or whether domestic factors play the predominant role. Foreign military intervention can create a “rally-round-the-flag” effect and might be used to divert attention away from domestic problems. Empirical research on diversionary conflicts has not shown conclusive results yet. We will reassess diversionary theory for France, as one of the most militarily active European powers, which has hardly been subject to rigorous empirical research so far. We will test whether France is more likely to intervene militarily in the global South if it is confronted with domestically difficult times. While controlling for external influences and France’s post-colonial foreign relations with the help of a directed-dyad analysis, we will investigate whether French foreign military intervention is systematically related to domestic factors, such as the political orientation of the government, presidential approval rates and economic conditions. The results of our analysis will not only contribute



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to our understanding of France's interventional behavior but will also enable us to draw conclusions on the role of Europe.

Johannes Vüllers (University of Konstanz, Germany): Jointly Successful? Measuring the Effectiveness of Religious Peace Activism on Inter-Religious Violence

Under what conditions is religious peace activism effective? Infamous inter-religious violence in Nigeria, Indonesia or Syria reminds us of the difficulties of religious groups living peacefully together. However, religious actors are also active for peace in times of such conflicts. This paper addresses the effectiveness of religious peace activism in a systematic way using newly combined data on peace activism and involvement in inter-religious violence on the religious group level in 128 non-Western countries (1990-2008). The study shows that religious peace activism substantially decreases the number of deaths in inter-religious clashes. Moreover, it shows that inter-religious peace campaigns in contrast to campaigns by a singular religious group have the most substantive effect.

Sabine Otto (Uppsala University, Sweden): UN Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection: The Role of Pro-Government Militias

Why are some UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) effective in reducing violence against civilians but others are not? While researchers have started to disaggregate PKOs to explain missions' success, most studies assume that the government is a unitary actor. However, in many civil wars governments rely on pro-government militias (PGMs) fighting on their behalf. I argue that the presence of PGMs undermines the UN missions' effectiveness in protecting civilians. First, governments have incentives to outsource violence to PGMs while claiming to comply with civilian protection strategies. Second, PKOs can be a threat to the existence of PGMs. In such circumstances, PGMs are likely to target civilians to spoil the peace process. Third, the existence of PGMs exacerbates the commitment problem for rebel groups. Since PKOs act at the consent of the governments, UN missions rarely combat forces loyal to the government. Therefore, rebels are less likely to restrain from violence and to disarm. Taken together, the presence of PGMs reduces the effectiveness of UN PKOs civilian protection strategies. I test the proposition by combing fine-grained data on UN PKOs, different types of armed groups, and data on civilian targeting.

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