

EDITED BY ZDENĚK KRÍŽ AND JANA URBANOVSKÁ

Examining Armed Conflict: Theoretical Reflections on Selected Aspects



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3. TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF ARMED CONFLICT

Zinaida Shevchuk

3.1 Introduction

The end of the bipolar world has resulted in the emergence of the "new disorder" in which interstate violence has become less of a concern, whereas intrastate conflicts that have increased across the globe have occupied the attention of the international policymaking and academic communities. In this chapter, I will develop a conceptual framework for studying and understanding armed conflict. The objective is to shed light on the contested narratives about conflict phenomena. Typological theorizing provides a rich depiction of phenomena and brings more nuanced and explicit distinction to the understanding of heterogenic aspects of armed conflicts.

The logic of inferences in this chapter is organized as follows. At the beginning of this chapter, I define the phenomena of conflict, leading the discussion to categorization efforts on the conceptual level. The second part of the chapter is based on typological theorizing, evaluating our knowledge about all possible types of conflict that have guided research within the field of international relations. The last part introduces advantages of such an approach and challenges that have to be addressed in future research.

Conflict is part of human history and unfortunately will probably never end. The concept of conflict has been used to identify a variety of social interactions. The most destructive types of conflict involve coercion and armed confrontation among parties, leading to casualties among human lives. Efforts to understand the multiple causes have accumulated scientific knowledge about the phenomena. The mainstream academic literature has produced different approaches about how to study conflict; however, the outcomes to delineate the concept remain ambiguous. In order to understand the research object, an adequate conceptualization that will formulate concepts and illuminate what is theoretically significant is essential. This section gathers the

most influential definitions in the field of IR by those who have collected data on armed conflict.

The term *conflict* is derived from the Latin words *con* and *fligere*, meaning to strike together, and later *conflictus*, a contest. Most of the definitions include the element of collision of inconsistent interests and values among conflicting parties, ranging from struggles for status to resources and social change. In general, conflict is understood in terms of aspirations of conflicting parties to achieve incompatible goals simultaneously (Pruitt et al. 2003). Goals are incompatible when the action of one party threatens the interests of another party. The complexity of conflict depends whether tangible issues (like recognition, security, territory, money) are more significant than intangible aspects like symbolic meanings that shape values and ideologies, legitimizing a certain conflict behavior (Jeong 2008: 26).

Thus, in the conflict research literature, the term *conflict* entails a situation in which at least two actors fight over mutually exclusive and incompatible goals. In the words of famous scholar of ethnic conflict, Donald L. Horowitz, "*conflict is a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals*" (Horowitz 1985: 95). The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research defines conflict as "*the clashing interests (political differences) on national values of some duration and magnitude between at least two parties (organized groups, states, groups of states, organization) that are determined to pursue their interests and win their cases*" (HIIC 2005: 2). Similar logic is used in the book *Using Conflict Theory*, which describes conflict as a unique type of behavior caused by incompatible goals and/or expression of hostility among conflicting parties (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 13).

This chapter employs the definition by Peter Wallensteen, one of the most recognized scholars in peace research, whose definition is accepted by the majority of the academic community in the field. In order to understand and provide conflict analysis, we have to focus on three major components of the phenomenon: (1) actors, (2) process (action), and (3) incompatibility (issues at stake). By combining these aspects, we arrive at a most comprehensive analysis of all possible kinds of conflict, which is a "*social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set*

of scarce resources" (Wallensteen 2011: 15). Therefore, conflicts can be categorized in terms of types of conflicting parties, interaction patterns ranging from war to non-violent conflict, and incompatibility of issues at stake within a particular conflict. This scheme will be applied in the following sections.

3.2 Typology of conflict by its actors

The primary attribute of typology according to actors is embedded in the identification of conflict participants – actors in the international system or states, which play a decisive role in international relations. The major scholarly literature distinguishes four types of conflict: (1) extrasystemic armed conflict, which takes place between a state and a non-state group outside its own territory; in the Correlates of War (COW) project, this category is further divided into colonial wars and imperial wars; (2) interstate armed conflict, which occurs between two or more states; (3) internal armed conflict, in which the government of a state is in conflict with internal opposition groups without intervention from another state; and (4) internationalized internal armed conflict, when conflict occurs between the government of a state and internal groups in opposition to it and with intervention from an outside state (Gleditsch et al. 2002: 11).

The life cycle of a conflict requires the understanding of types of actors involved in an armed confrontation, sources of conflict and their change over time. For example, a civil war, one of the types of conflict which is defined as an armed confrontation within boundaries of a recognized sovereign state, may have multiple issues at stake. In this type of conflict, there have to be two conflicting parties, one of which is a state and both of the parties have to have the capacity to physically harm each other. The issue at stake is the question of a common authority at the outset of organized violence (Kalyvas 2006: 17; Toft 2010: 9).

Civil war-affected states are states in which "*it is almost the case that significant elements of actual or potential military power exist outside the control of the central state apparatus*" (Giddens 1987). Violence is a central feature of such a conflict and the only way to establish the authority of one or the other conflicting party. Under this condition a state uses

its military power to suppress rebellions challenging its authority and legitimacy. As a result, civil conflict is brutish and nasty, accompanied by killing, which is “to a great extent a matter of national pride” (Misra 2008: 45). The use of violence by both rebellion and state may lead to anarchy and the indiscriminate killing of civilians. Incompatibility of goals in civil wars could be motivated by different factors, as for example, the spread of terror among the opposition, the elimination of threats from the opposing party by killing members of the group, the gain of materialistic benefits, implementation of a different ideology or achieving a change in the political regime and political elites (Misra 2008: 52–62).

If we follow recent developments in conflict areas, we cannot overlook the fact that the emergence of new non-state actors has led to the development of new types of conflict. Trends that have increased a range of worldwide arms trades expanded the power of multinational corporations and the growth of trans-border exchange of weapons, drugs, and people, which in turn has contributed to the formation of coalitions that have acquired the capacity to form armies. Consequently, the power of non-state actors has considerably increased, which allows them to enter armed conflict both within traditional states and across state borders (COW 2005).

This development has expanded the typology of armed conflict conducted by non-state actors. Maintaining the focus on the members of the state system, there are four types of armed conflict: first, between states; second, between a state and non-state actors outside of the state; third, between a state and non-state actors within a state; and fourth, between non-state actors taking place outside of the state.

3.3 Conflict typology by process – violence intensity

It is common knowledge that conflicts are not always violent. In fact, the vast majority of conflicts in international relations are non-violent. Thus, there is a significant and growing literature on these types of conflicts that do not always take a violent form. The COSIMO (Conflict Simulation Model) conflict categorization belongs among the most prominent classifications; it has been developed by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK), aiming to grasp

armed conflict from non-violent, latent conflict to violent war phases. Conflict analysis within this framework is divided into two main categories: non-violent and violent conflicts. The non-violent form of a conflict does not mean that the conflict is absent, rather that conflicting parties do not employ violent methods to resolve incompatible goals. Put in the words of Dennis Sandole (1998), non-violent conflict is a manifestation of conflict processes during which one party seeks to undermine the goal-seeking capabilities of another conflicting party by non-violent means, as i.e. economic sanctions, exclusion of some groups from access to power, and so on.

There are two types of non-violent conflict: latent conflict and manifested conflict. While conflicting parties do not use force against each other, a latent conflict occurs when one of the conflicting parties has incompatible differences over issues, values, or objectives that have national significance for them. When these clashing interests are articulated in the form of demands and claims, the conflict enters a stage of manifestation in which tensions still remain below the threshold of full-scale violence. As illustrated in Table 1, the conflicts are divided into two major categories: non-violent and violent conflict.

As far as violent conflicts are concerned, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) introduces an empirical-quantitative analysis of conflicts and offers a deeper differentiation of conflict intensity. There are three categories of armed conflict: (1) minor armed conflict, which involves at least 25 battle-related deaths but less than 1,000 for the whole duration of the conflict; (2) intermediate armed conflict, in which the number of deaths counts more than 25 people and fewer than 1,000 per year, but more than 1,000 during the entire conflict; and (3) war, a conflict in which there are more than 1,000 deaths in one year (Wallensteen 2011: 22). It means that a conflict has to reach a certain magnitude before it is classified as “armed”. It is measured in terms of a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths per year and per incompatibility.

Undoubtedly, the highest level of violent conflict is war. In order to grasp the whole dynamics of war, scholars have developed definitions that stem from different theoretical perspectives. As a result, the research has developed different sets of aspects for investigation. Bull’s definition, which has guided research within the field of IR, defines war as “organized violence carried on by political units against each other”

(Bull 2012: 184). Significant assumptions made by this definition elucidate the following aspects of war: first, it is fought by political organizations (not by any other collective actors, as for example economic corporations); second, war is organized violence with its own rules and norms; and third, war is collective, not individual (Vasquez 1993: 35). This definition, however, does not include that war is a special tool to compel opposing actors to fulfill their will and attain a goal that cannot be attained by other means. As the most well-known definition by famous military theorist Carl von Clausewitz claims "*war is merely the continuation of politics by other means*" (Clausewitz 1989: 87).

Given the diversity of theoretical perspectives and plurality of hypotheses in the literature about the causes of wars, it has been impossible to reach a universally acceptable definition on a theoretical level. Further significant attempts to define war were determined by the empirical domain of the concept. An attempt was made to create a data set that could be used by every scholar to verify or falsify hypotheses derived from different theoretical approaches. In this regard, the criteria to define war were drawn across the causality line. Quincy Wright, an outstanding political scientist, made one of the first contributions to this attempt by involving under the criteria of war all hostilities among "*members of the family of nations, whether international, civil, colonial, or imperial, which were recognized as states of war in the legal sense or involved 50,000 troops*" (Wright 1965: 636). Another prominent scholar, Lewis F. Richardson, took a different perspective. He differentiated war from other acts of violence by the number of the dead, grouped by various logarithms to base ten (Richardson et al. 1960).

Mel Small and David Singer, who have developed the conceptualization and typology of war within the Correlates of War Project, have combined work of their two main predecessors, Wright and Richardson. The starting point for Small and Singer, who collected data on war since 1816, was to understand the concept as follows: "*we must define war in terms of violence. Not only is war impossible without violence (except of course in the metaphorical sense), but we consider the taking of human life the primary and dominant characteristic of war*" (Small and Singer 1982: 205–206).

Since then the concept of war has been based on two primary criteria: (1) a certain magnitude of battle related fatalities (initially includ-

ing only soldiers and military staff) and (2) the status of the conflicting actors. According to these scholars, the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths caused by sustainable organized armed forces differentiates war from other types of conflict (Singer and Small 1972: 8). This criterion is broadly accepted by the academic community; however, the threshold of 1,000 deaths was broadened to include civilian casualties, as is described above.

Table 1. Categories of Conflict Intensity

Violence	Intensity	Name of Intensity	Definition
Non-violent	Low	Latent Conflict	A positional difference on values of national meaning articulated by one party and perceived by the other as such.
		Manifest Conflict	The use of measures located at the preliminary stage to violent force, such as economic sanctions or verbal pressure to use violence.
Violent	Medium	Crisis	At least one of the parties uses violent force in a sporadic way.
	High	Severe Crisis	A conflict in which violent force is used repeatedly in a systemic and organized way.
		War	The type of armed conflict in which violence reaches a certain magnitude and the conflicting parties exercise extensive measures.

Source: HIIK 2005.

Clearly, there is a number of issues over which conflicting parties fight each other. Classification of the issues is necessary to achieve comprehensive analysis and potential policy recommendation for the resolution of a conflict. The next section of the chapter presents typology of major theoretical approaches that shed light on the causes, processes and conditions that are entailed in understanding interaction patterns in a conflict.

3.4 Competing goals: typology of issues at stake in armed conflicts

Last but not least it is possible to build a typology of conflict by issues at stake. In this respect academic research focuses on such aspects as religion, ideology, language, ethnicity, resources and markets, dominance, equality, and territory. This classification is widely accepted in political science, and conflict research illuminates the significance of each aspect at the stage of conflict outset, its escalation, and its resolution. This section differentiates the major aspects in conflict research in order to explain five major types of conflict: (1) ethnic conflict, (2) conflict over political arrangements, (3) ideological, (4) economic, and (5) territorial cross-border conflict. Such analytical categories present a definition of a particular conflict type and illuminate aspects that are at stake during the entire conflict dynamics. As mentioned above, the aim is to provide a typology of conflict with regards to issues at stake. By identifying clusters of characteristics that differentiate instances of the conflict phenomenon, typological theorizing contributes a powerful tool in conflict studies.

3.4.1 Ethnic conflict

The ubiquity of ethnic aspects in armed conflicts has increased the necessity of giving a scientific definition to the phenomenon of ethnic conflict. There is no comprehensive and widely accepted empirical theory to explain ethnic conflict. Rather, each of the approaches (as discussed below) explains a particular aspect of ethnic confrontation. There is an ongoing scholarly debate over the study as to whether ethnic diversity breeds armed conflict (Wimmer et al. 2009), what the relationship between ethnicity and the duration of armed conflict is (Cederman and Girardin 2007; Collier et al. 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Sambanis 2001), and if ethnic conflicts are more violent in comparison to non-ethnic conflicts (Eck 2009; Kalyvas 2001, 2007). Some scholars argue about the “banality” of ethnic conflict (Mueller 2000) and emphasize the role of violence as a central component of both ethnic and non-ethnic conflicts (Kalyvas 2001). The major shortcoming of such approaches lies in their linking ethnicity and armed

conflict in a problematic way – as if all ethnic conflicts had uniform causes.

Qualitative research highlights the need to “scale down” and trace the *bellicose* aspect in the relationship between ethnicity and violent conflict (Beissinger 2007; Van Evera 1994). What marks ethnic conflict as different from other types of conflict is that the interests and claims of ethnic groups are based on ethnic affinities rather than material pay-offs (Sambanis 2001). In other words, the contested nature of the claim defines what a conflict is about and whether key issues and incompatibility in goals are overtly ethnic in nature. Ethnicity in this study is defined “*as thought and action stemming from identification with a community of putatively shared ancestry that exceeds the scale of face-to-face gemeinschaft*” (Kaufmann and Conversi 2012). Aspects like a common *proper name*, the myth of *common ancestry*, shared *historical memories*, *elements of common culture*, a link to *homeland* and a sense of *solidarity* are used by ethnicities to demarcate their boundaries (Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 6–7).

An influential piece of conventional wisdom about ethnic conflict is based on the assumption that ethnic composition of a society influences the probability of ethnic conflict due to tensions across ethnic lines. Many theories – primordial, instrumental, and constructivist – have proposed the explanation of ethnic conflict.

Primordialists argue that ethnicity is rooted in historical experience and that ethnic identity does not change over time (Geertz 1996; Weber 1996). Primordialist is an umbrella term, which, according to one of the most prominent scholars, Anthony D. Smith (1994, 1995, 1998), involves three different approaches: (1) “naturalist”, (2) “evolutionary”, and (3) “cultural” determinants. The naturalist approach emphasizes that the nation or ethnic group to which one belongs is “naturally fixed” (Smith 1995: 31). Naturalists do not differentiate between nations and ethnic groups. All nations have a distinctive way of life, “natural frontiers”, specific origins, a golden age, “as well as a peculiar character, mission and destiny” (Hutchinson and Smith 1995: 34).

According to one of the main representatives of the evolutionary approach, Pierre Van den Berghe, a human society is based on three principles: kin selection, reciprocity, and coercion (Van den Berghe 1978: 403). This involves more “intergroup than intra-group variance”

(Van den Berghe 1978: 406–407) based on kinship and loyalties of “inclusive fitness” (Smith 1998; Thayer 2009). “*Reciprocity is cooperation for mutual benefit ... and it can operate between kin or between non-kin. Coercion is the use of force for one sided benefit*” (Van den Berghe: 403). A similar combination of ethnic affiliation with kinship ties is presented in Horowitz’s very influential work *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*: “*Ethnicity is based on a myth of collective ancestry, which usually carries with it traits believed to be innate. Some notion of ascription, however diluted, and affinity deriving from it are inseparable from the concept of ethnicity*” (Horowitz 1985: 52).

The next approach, which is known as cultural primordialist, goes beyond pure primordialism and is based on a combination of three major ideas: primordial identities are (1) *a priori* given and static, (2) coercive, and (3) emotional (Eller and Coughlan 1993). The most prominent representatives of cultural primordialism are scholars Edward Shils and Clifford Geertz, who emphasize the power of cultural perception and a belief in “sacredness” by ethnic groups.

The second approach, which is in contradiction with primordialism, is instrumentalism. The instrumentalist approach explains ethnic conflict as rooted in (1) modernization, (2) economic indicators, and (3) the role of political leaders (Fearon and Laitin 1996; Brass 1996; Laitin 1998).

Through the process of modernization, which involves better education, urbanization, the creation of better communication channels and mass media, ethnic groups become more aware about their disadvantages, distinctions between them and others, and a need to compete with other ethnic groups (Connor 1972). Political leaders manipulate ethnic identities for their own interests, for example to stay in power. Accordingly, political leaders may occur as supporters of conflict across ethnic lines “*in order to protect their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantages for their groups as well as for themselves*” (Brass 1991: 111).

There is a big debate in mainstream academic literature between the primordialist and instrumentalist approaches. In order to challenge fundamental assumptions, scholars of each approach have developed a broad range of critical arguments. However, instead of going into a discussion about the weak and strong points of each approach, I would

like to introduce a “third way” in the study of the causes of ethnic conflict represented by such outstanding scholars as Anthony D. Smith, John Hutchinson, John Armstrong, Stuart Kaufman, Daniele Coveri, and Andreas Wimmer.

Ethno-symbolism is a more homogeneous category, involving the elements of both previous approaches. It allows us to capture the complex nature of ethnic identity formation, which “*can be located on a spectrum between primordial historic continuities and instrumental opportunistic adaptations*” (Connor 1993). According to this approach, the causes of ethnic conflict are rooted in (1) myths and symbols, (2) fears, and (3) opportunity for mobilization.

Myths and symbols are significant in an ethnic group’s construction process. Memories, myths, symbol values, common feelings and opinions may justify a collective behavior. It may take different forms, such as, for example, flags, language, rituals, hymns, special food and costumes, banners, coins, and representations of ethnic heroes and the glorious past (Smith 1999: 16). The core meaning of these symbols represents “inclusive fitness” (Smith 1998: 146–150) to one group, its legitimacy for existence and fear of other groups.

The next necessary condition for ethnic conflict is fear for the existence, security, and status of the ethnic group. As is very rightly stated by David Lake et al., “*ethnicity is not a cause of violent conflict. ... But when ethnicity is linked with acute social uncertainty, a history of conflict and, indeed, fear of what the future might bring, it emerges as one of the major fault lines along which societies fracture*” (Lake et al. 1998: 7). The causes of ethnic conflict stem from “emerging anarchy” when a weakening state is unable to provide security guarantees for ethnic groups within the state (Posen 1993). Barry Posen’s neorealist assumption is based on the ethnic security dilemma explanation. According to this logic, the incentives to use pre-emptive offensive strategies are high, and factors like emotions, historical memories, and myths exacerbate the escalation of tension to armed conflict.

The combination and interaction of those aspects creates a spiral of escalation, if the necessary conditions – myths justifying ethnic hostility, ethnic fear, and opportunity to mobilize – are present. While ethnic myths and fears can provide justification for ethnic mobilization, there should be political, territorial, and external opportunities for

ethnic groups in order to mobilize their forces (Kaufman 2001: 32–34; Wimmer 2002). The role of the political system (Saideman 1997), the strength of political institutions, the pattern of ethnic settlement, the geographic distance of the ethnic group from the political center (Cederman et al. 2010), transborder kinship support (Wolff 2004), and willingness of external powers are the main determinants of ethnic mobilization.

To sum up, ethnic conflict is a conflict in which the key causes of confrontation run along ethnic lines, which involve some elements of ethnic identity, the status of ethnic groups, and the opportunity to mobilize violent confrontation. At the outset of a conflict, ethnic conflict could be identified by the observable pattern of rebel recruitment, while ethnicity by itself could be a motivation to mobilize forces.

3.4.2 Conflict over political arrangements

Academic research on the links between the political system of the state and armed conflict has a long history in the social sciences. The most prominent scholars of democratization and political transformation, such as Samuel Huntington, Robert Dahl, and Edward Mansfield have emphasized the significance of strong political institutions capable of managing popular political participation of newly enfranchised masses (Huntington 2006; Dahl 1971).

Political conflict is a broad term. For the purposes of this chapter, political conflict is defined as a clash and violent attacks used by groups within a political community against political regimes and authorities (Gurr 1980: 3–4). It is a conflict in which rebels target a political community or regime in a given state with the goal to achieve a degree of political change; a violent confrontation between political elites and counter elite ensues (Eckstein 1980: 137).

As is outlined by Harry Eckstein in the *Handbook of Political Conflict Theory and Research*, the fundamental incompatibility in goals between conflicting parties is the desire to maximize influence or power over decision-making institutions in a state. In order to achieve this goal, collective political violence is a “normal” action, whereas violence is a matter of tactical considerations. Such tactical choice involves cost-benefit ratio calculations, which make cultural patterns less important

(Eckstein 1980: 143), unlike, for example, in ethnic conflicts where the logic of violence is important.

As we have witnessed, the causal connection between democratization and conflict has been significantly striking since the end of the Cold War. Ted Gurr’s findings in the late 1980s and 1990s are embedded in the process of democratization (Gurr 2000: 163). One of the most influential political science scholars, Horowitz, argues that weak civil societies, lack of power-sharing commitments, and sharp discrepancies between elite and non-elite groups all increase the probability of armed conflict (Horowitz 1985). “*Democracy is about inclusion and exclusion, about access to power. ... In severely divided societies, ethnic identity provides clear lines to determine who will be included and who will be excluded*” (Horowitz 1994).

A considerable contingent of academics argue that the beginning stages of any transition to democracy are most dangerous and give rise to armed conflict (Horowitz 1985; Saideman et al. 2002). The argument that transition to democracy is risky does not prevent such a development. The struggle for self-determination and political change in newly created states is a dynamic process and cannot be stopped (Mansfield and Snyder 2007). What matters is the way the transition is brought about – with the right steps toward democracy. “*The probabilities of a political system developing in a non-violent, non-authoritarian and eventually democratically viable manner are maximized when a national identity emerges first, followed by the institutionalization of the central government, and then the emergence of mass parties and mass electorate*” (Nordlinger 1971: 458).

Weak institutions per se do not increase the chance of an armed conflict; they do so only during the early phases of an incomplete democratic transition (Mansfield and Snyder 2007). In this case political leaders frequently employ ideological or charismatic appeals to bolster their rule. The contest over national self-determination takes place as the fortunes of both elites and mass groups are shifting. Elites left over from the old regime seek strategies that will prevent their fall, while rising elites try to muscle in, and both scramble for allies among the newly aroused masses.

From this we can stipulate the conditions under which a political conflict is more likely to occur. Of course, the political problems dis-

cussed above lead to different kinds of political conflict. A more fruitful avenue of inquiry than focusing our research on the “causes” of conflict and the “conditions” of peace is to uncover significant characteristics directly relevant to political consolidation and struggle. In order to explain political conflict, it is necessary to operationalize those aspects by which two or more politically defined actors learn that their goals could be achieved only by armed confrontation. The long-term political relationship becomes increasingly conflictive and hostile when (1) political change is used as a tool to mobilize masses, (2) there are conflicting visions about the political arrangement of a state, and (3) incompatibility of goals rests upon a change of political regime.

3.4.3 Ideological confrontation and its consequences

Ideology has been one of the most widely used terms in political thought during the twentieth century. Different scholars used the term in different ways, which poses the question of what this concept means exactly. In this section, I will explore the role of three core determinants of ideology, which are significant to explain armed conflict: (1) a set of norms, (2) political orientation, and (3) religion.

The function of ideology can be explained in different ways. Ideology could be understood as “*a set of systemic principles projecting and justifying a socio-political order*” (Pravda 1988: 227). Ideology can also be understood as the moral basis to justify the use of power by elites. This means that in order to process power, it is important to have a moral and legal basis, doctrines, and beliefs that are accepted by the population. The function of ideology, in this sense, is to integrate the group and legitimize its normative order. It could be a tool used by conflicting parties to maintain or create such normative orders. Other scholars have explained ideology as a “myth” that has supported and determined the group’s action in a struggle against other groups. Thus, ideology can have different roles, ranging from strengthening the ties within the group and its identity to aiding conflicting groups in their claims and interests to strengthening the will of particular members of the group to wage war against other groups (Larrain 1979). In some armed conflicts, the same ideology that strengthens ties within a group can also contribute to conflict behavior against other groups.

The linkage between ideology and armed conflict is profound in the states that emerged after the demise of the Soviet Union. The state ideology of Marxism-Leninism was pronounced defunct and Western neoliberalism was introduced in order to assist the political transformation in the whole post-communist sphere. The crucial factor in this process was a need to determine a new place in the “new order”, to insure membership in alliances and access to foreign economic assistance, trade, and investments. Following this logic, “*ideology needs to be placed in a continuum of expression of political thought*” and as a concept which provides a “*systemic interpretation of the past and a programme or unfolding future*” (Fawn 2004: 3–4). In this sense, ideology assists the understanding of foreign policy goals of countries and their aspirations in defining their roles on the regional and international level. Put in the words of one of the most prominent scholars, Ole Holsti, “*an ideology provides the intellectual framework through which national roles, images, policy and moral and ethical beliefs are constructed*” (Holsti 1974: 266–267).

The demise of the Soviet Union and the collapse of its institutions were followed by the displacement of universal values, the task of state-building, and the rise of nationalist movements. All of these factors contributed to the significance of a new ideology in post-communist states. The foreign policy goals of these states cannot be understood without a discourse of belief structures, their system of values, and the perception of the population’s and the political leaders’ ideological orientation (even if it is in the process of formulation) and their place in the world.

Another type of ideological conflict is rooted in disputed religious beliefs. Religious segregation leads to struggle in a similar way that ethnicity does, but often with more vehemence (Bell-Fialkoff 1996). Religious identity forms a group identity, which might be different from the others and contribute to the escalation of in- and out-group dynamics. The goal of conflicting parties is to replace their civic identity with more faith-based identities (Misra 2008: 15). Religion serves as a power tool for mobilization, strengthening the identity-related need of the individual (Seul 1999). The crucial point that one needs to keep in mind is that particular religious ideas, values, and beliefs have their origins in the supernatural. Religion in this sense is uncompro-

mising (Toft 2006). Differences on this level may contribute to violent behavior by religious actors: non-believers might be converted by force or punished (Basedau et al. 2011).

Overall prejudice against any particular religion by others may have an impact on conflict dynamics. Multi-religious states, such as India, could be more prone to armed conflict across religious lines. The intergroup relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim groups is problematic in European countries too, as, for example, in the United Kingdom.

Links between religion and armed confrontation are the subject of increased interest in international politics. Much of the academic literature focuses on terrorism or tests Huntington's famous thesis on the "clash of civilizations". Some studies argue that in order to answer such a question as, "*How has it come about that a generation of village boys and girls, born in the atheist Soviet Union, have turned into Islamic suicide bombers and child killers?*" (De Waal 2004: 55), we have to understand the process of politicization of religion and the role of political leaders (Toft 2006; Basedau et al. 2011). Following this logic, religion can turn to armed confrontation if (1) the religious make-up of a state involves different religious groups, (2) there are conflict-prone religious structures, and (3) religion is a politicized issue and serves as a tool in the hands of political leaders.

3.4.4 Economic conflict

The economic dimension of conflict, uneven distribution of wealth, contributes to antagonism within a state. This has been investigated by many international studies. Since economic stability affects almost all aspects of human life and states alike, research has identified several core issues which are central for international stability. They include fair trade relations, fair competition, foreign investments, distribution of goods, services, and technology, North-South inequalities, and economic crises.

The well-known liberal argument that economic interdependence promotes peace is based on the assumption that trade agreements and institutions reduce conflict on an international level (Doyle 1997; Nye 1971; Russett and Oneal 2001). Trade ties among national states gener-

ate a sense of community, increase trust, and enhance peaceful relationships through expectations of future profit (Deutsch 1957; Mansfield et al. 1999; Russett et al. 1998). Some studies have illustrated that trade ties promote peace processes and that trade partners within the same institutional arrangement use military force against each other less often than states that do not have trade ties (Oneal et al. 1996; Mansfield and Pevehouse 2003).

However, this liberal assumption has its limitations, and there are good reasons to be skeptical about its empirical evidence. Trade ties may lead to trust-building and reciprocity only under a symmetrical relationship between liberal states. However, interdependence is complex and mutual membership in institutions realistically speaking – is epiphenomenal. Like military power, membership in international institutions "*gives states ability to coerce, bribe, reward, or punish others, defining the conditions under which acts of military aggression or cooperation are rational strategies of action*" (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2012: 258).

Research by the excellent scholar Katherine Barbieri (1996, 2005) illuminates that bilateral trade increases the probability of armed conflict. Thus, it is important to find out which variables and what different levels of dependency (direct and indirect, dyadic and systemic, single and multi-dimensional) generate incentives for peace in some circumstances and conflict under others. Liberal preconditions could be expected in such circumstances under which economic dependence among states is relatively equal. However, disparity in interdependence may promote distrust and intensification of armed conflict (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2012: 263).

Where economic causes of armed conflict are concerned, outbreak of armed conflict is causally connected with rapid industrialization and transformation of centrally regulated economies to the principles of unregulated market economies (Schneider 2001). Theories of armed conflict suggest that the causes of violent conflict are rooted in "greed and grievance" (Collier 2000). The mechanism for mobilization stems from political deprivation (Gurr 2000) and self-interest in material gain (Regan and Norton 2005).

According to the theory developed by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeller, the probability of violent conflict is high under the following

conditions: dependency on a primary commodity export, a low level of secondary education, large populations, low economic growth, low income per capita, and the presence of previous armed conflict. All of these are assigned to “greed” proxies. This theory emphasizes the role of greed and grievance to explain the outbreak of war (Collier and Hoeffler 2004).

Another economic model of armed conflict emphasizes the role of self-interested behavior “*in which participation is a form of crime; the rebels are criminals acting in pursuit of economic gains*” (Regan and Norton 2005: 322). It does not mean that grievance is unimportant; it is a ubiquitous aspect of every conflict. In other words, while grievance creates the “backbone of protest” of minorities at risk, the resources and the incentives to mobilize are significant factors in an escalation process.

Distinguished scholar Jeremy Weinstein argues that “*differences in how rebel groups employ violence are a consequence of initial conditions*” that rebel groups have at their disposal. “*Rebel groups that emerge in environments rich in natural resources or with the external support of an outside patron*” are “opportunistic rebels” – greed leads to grievances. “*Movements that arise in resource-poor contexts perpetrate far fewer abuses and employ violence selectively and strategically*”; these are “activist rebellions” – grievance leads to greed (Weinstein 2006: 7–10).

The logic of violence according to the theory of relative deprivation is related to the instrumentalist approach, which is discussed in the section about ethnic conflict. The economic model of armed confrontation is also linked to the rational choice theory. However, what is more important for the analysis of economically motivated armed conflict is that the “greed model” and easy access to valuable resources can contribute to the creation of “opportunistic rebellion” motivated by self-enrichment incentives, but there are also powerful theories that explain the motivation of rebel groups aiming to achieve their political goals: the “grievance model” and the “activist rebellion”. The relationship between economic issues and armed conflict takes violent form if there are contested attitudes between conflicting parties about primary access to the valuable resources, there is asymmetric dependency on trade ties and export, and there is disparity in access to jobs.

The relationship between economic issues and armed conflict takes a violent form if there are contested attitudes between conflicting parties about primary access to the valuable resources, if there is asymmetric dependency on trade ties and export, and if there is disparity in access to jobs. Economic development, improvement of the social-economic situation, and democratic transition cannot be achieved without peaceful resolution of conflicts. Almost every armed conflict results in huge economic losses. However, to address economic issues at stake that may lead to conflict escalation, it is essential to point out that some economic processes may lead to armed conflict. For the purposes of this chapter, economic aspects of conflict are operationalized as follows: (1) economic decline and inequality in the economic development of different regions, (2) the shadow economy (smuggling, drug trafficking, illegal trade activities), and (3) interest to control key economic resources.

3.4.5 Territorial cross-border conflict

Territorial issues have been identified as the most war-prone issue in conflict studies. The tendency is seen in the great willingness of people to fight over their homelands as well as over economically and strategically important territories. As John Vasquez wrote, “*territorial issues are best handled by use of force and violence*” (Vasquez 1993: 140). People tend to be emotionally attached to their territory; homeland becomes an integral part of their identity; and the question of who controls the territory becomes very important (Tir 2010).

Territory is a significant part of any state-building process, and it carries its own value. Natural resources, strategic importance in terms of state boundaries, access to the open sea or control over transport routes are all factors contributing to the significance of this issue. It is not surprising, then, that when territoriality is at stake in armed confrontation, a conflict is linked with such issues as the territorial integrity of a state (Wolff 2004). The territorial dimension of internal armed conflict is based on close study of how an internal armed conflict in one place can generate instability in another and what the effects of the actions of one country are on the development of internal conflict in another. Territorial cross-border conflict studies the mechanisms that increase the risk of transmission of instability to a different place.

Trans-border cooperation and military support against a state government may make internal armed conflicts more likely. The nature of the external group and the impact on regional security should be taken into consideration, as they may lead to the outbreak of conflict. Most internal armed conflicts have notable implications for regional stability and have a “spillover” effect. Some neighboring states can trigger the conflict by supporting different groups. This strategy is based on the interests of a particular state. Conditions under which the spillover effect can transmit violence to different places occur when internal tension and instability in one country gives the opportunity to an external power to intervene in order to maximize its interests and gain power. The issue of military intervention is the subject of another chapter of this book.

One of the types of armed conflict involving territorial issues is irredentism. Irredentism is not a state-based process; it is a movement that seeks to attain the external support and territory of the group across the existing border. The goal of this group is to add territory *and* population into an existing state by reason of common affinities, such as ethnic, cultural, historical, or linguistic ties (Wolff 2007). An outstanding study of the complexity of territorial claims of particular minority groups living within the borders of one country and gaining support from outside kinship groups is Stefan Wolff’s *Disputed Territories: The Transnational Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict Settlement*.

Another type of territorial confrontation is secession, which is a process at the end of which a population group inhabiting a defined territory within an existing state has succeeded in splitting itself and its territory off from a titular state. As a result it has established an independent state of its own (Wolff 2004). Secession is a process of political divorce and the formation of at least one new sovereign unit through a formal declaration of independence (Yates 1998: 35). Secession has consequences on political structures, economic development, and the geographic borders of a state. However, it is first of all about the territoriality and sovereignty of a particular land. It may take different forms. First, a large political unit (like a state) separates from the larger entity (union, empire) and declares itself to be an independent unit (for example, the secession of colonies from the United Kingdom). Second, the larger unit is dissolved and all regions secede from it. An example

could be the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, what is the most significant feature of this process is that it involves violence used by conflicting parties to achieve independence.

In summary, a study of territorial armed conflict has to distinguish between the nature and the level of territorial claims of conflicting parties. In most cases of armed conflict, territorial issues are strongly correlated with other issues in conflict dynamics, such as, for example, ethnicity, lootable resources, or the political system of a state.

3.5 Conclusion

Typological theorizing can be a powerful tool in conflict studies. As is represented above, explanatory typology is based on explicitly stated preexisting theory. It is a complement to deductive approaches. The creation of each type requires working through the logical implication of a particular theory to identify the key aspects of a particular conflict type. Thus, typological theorizing may have a classificatory function too. When applied to case studies, we can determine to which “type” this case belongs. Empirical data could be coded as falling into one category or another. It allows us to trace if there is congruence between categories. By placing cases in different categories, we can make most productive comparisons for testing theories.

As stated by Jeffrey Checkel, it is critically significant to think about the dialog between the conceptual and operational level of our analysis (Checkel 2010). The problem remains of how to assess the causal impact of one factor in relation to others. One of the possible ways for establishing the relation between operationalization and measurement lies in the case-oriented view. Within-case causal process observation involves the reconstruction of an empirical sequence of conditions, which are postulated by the theory. The challenge for further research is to explore not only the combination of issues at stake in armed conflict, but also the correlation and causal relationships among these aspects.

Such an approach allows us to bridge theory with practice and assess the extent to which a conflict is about ethnicity, political claims, ideology, territoriality, or a combination of these factors. However, no

conflict is motivated by a single factor, and to avoid oversimplification of our analysis, we have to be aware of some challenges in the process of assessment at the extent to which an individual case conforms to the stipulated causal logic outlined in the theory or shows variation in causal explanations. In within-case causal process observation, the empirical question is to identify not only whether antecedent conditions are linked with the outcome but also whether they do so through the stipulated causal mechanisms too.

Each conflict differs on a range of dimensions and may include ethnicity, religion, political, economic, and territorial aspirations. The question is how these dimensions interrelate in the whole process of conflict dynamics and how far each contributes to armed conflict.

The aim of this chapter was to provide a typology of conflict. The created typology aims to explore the characteristic features of the phenomena and utilize discussion on the theoretical level. Such nuanced distinction brings a need of better understanding of conflict processes. Even though it is hard to grasp the entire dynamics of an armed conflict within a single study, it is important to distinguish the nature of conflicting groups, conflict onset, its escalation, the context of conflict termination, and peacekeeping efforts. A conflict may erupt, for example, from ethnically defined groups, ignited by incompatibility goals over a political issue, which may result in secession at the stage of conflict termination. In other words, ethnic mobilization can be useful for explaining some aspects of armed conflicts, but not useful for explaining others: in time, other features may become a much more powerful identifier of the conflict relationship. By analyzing the heterogenic nature of internal armed conflict we can promote academic study, explore the causes of the conflict and how they change over time, which will contribute to resolution efforts in the future.

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