

DEFINITIONS AND TRENDS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF ARMED CONFLICT

Mgr. Zinaida Bechná, Ph.D.

MVZ208 Security and Democracy in the South Caucasus

Week 2: 26/9.2016

Structure

- Introduction
- A taxonomy of conflict
- Who fights?
- Why do they fight?
- Where do they fight?
- Is the world getting more or less peaceful?

Introduction



- International violence is becoming less problematic than it was during the last century – more intrastate conflicts, than interstate struggles.
- From 1989 to 1996 there were 69 armed conflicts, of which only five have been between states.

Trends in conflict I

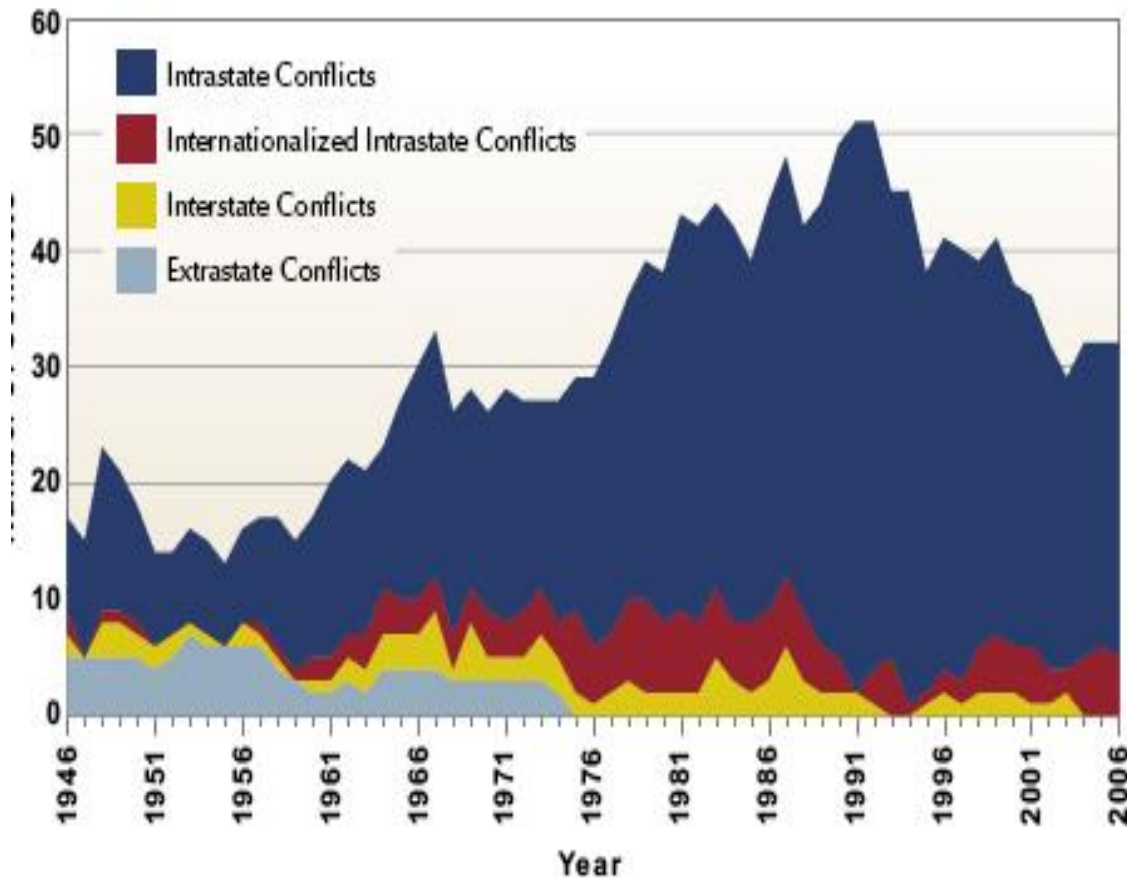


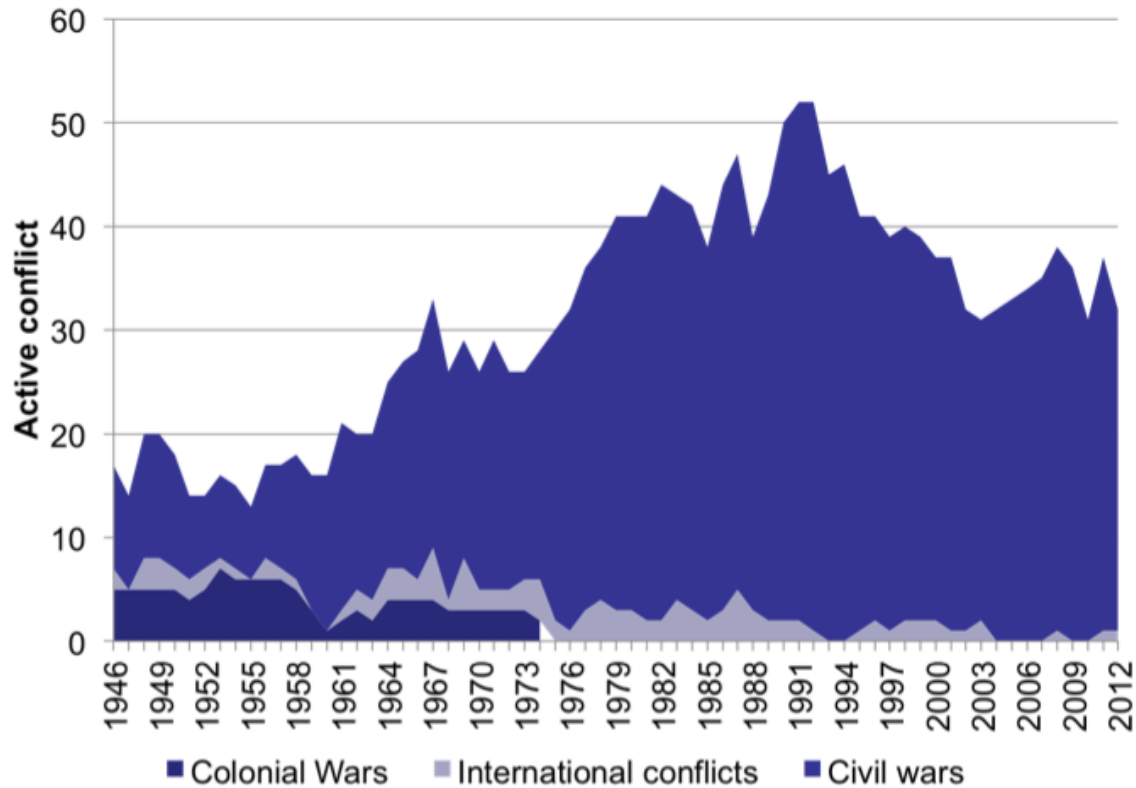
Figure 3.1 State-Based Armed Conflicts by Type, 1946-2006

After more than a decade of uneven decline, the number of state-based conflicts being fought around the world has levelled off.

Data Sources: UCDP/PRIO; UCDP, Human Security Report Project Dataset

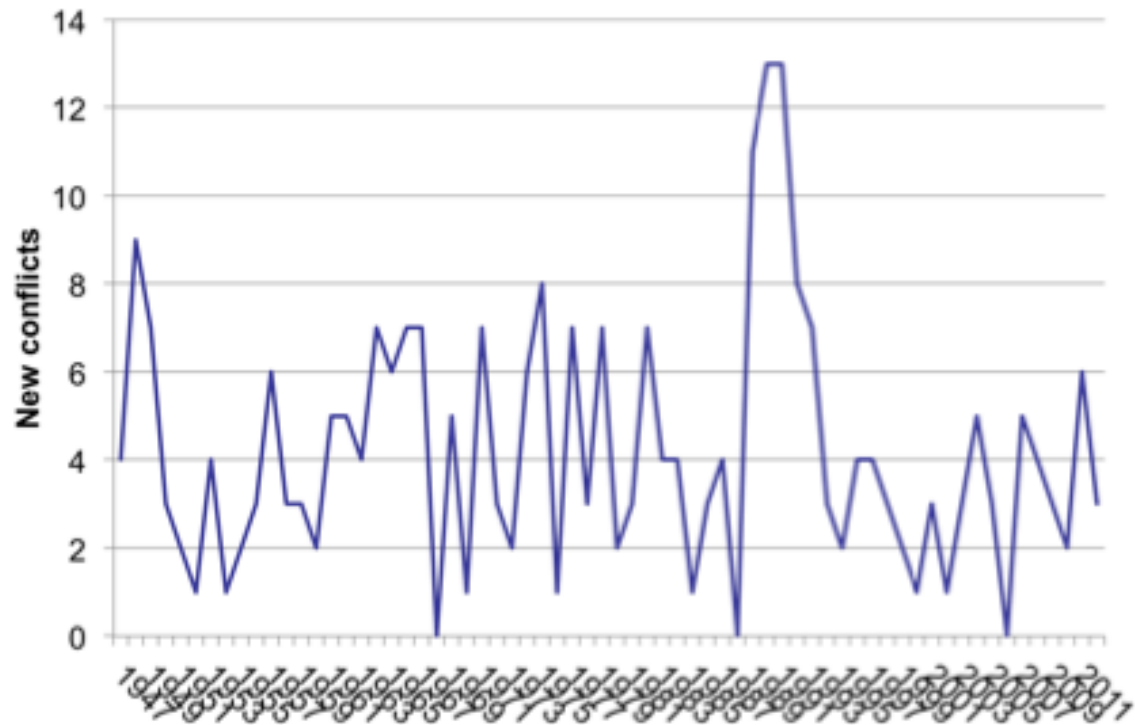
Trends in conflict II

Trends in conflict



Trends in conflict II

Conflict onsets



A taxonomy of conflict

- Who fights?
 - Governments
 - Organizations
 - Individuals
- Why do they fight?
 - Politics?
 - Economics?
 - Insanity?
- Where do they fight
 - Home or away?
- Consequences of conflict
 - How many were killed?
 - What is the time frame?

A taxonomy of conflict

Interstate war

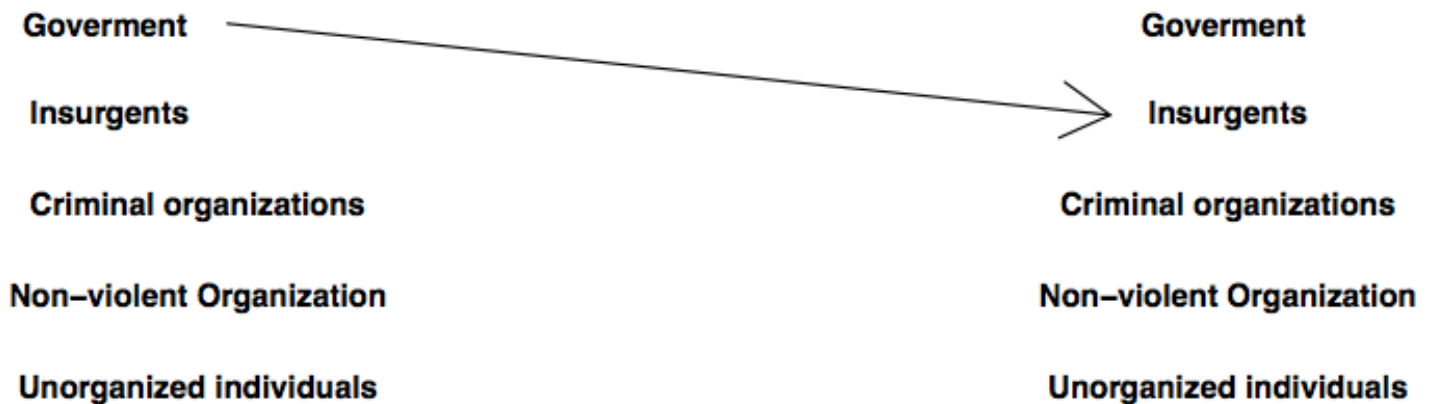
Figure: Interstate war



A taxonomy of conflict

Intrastate war

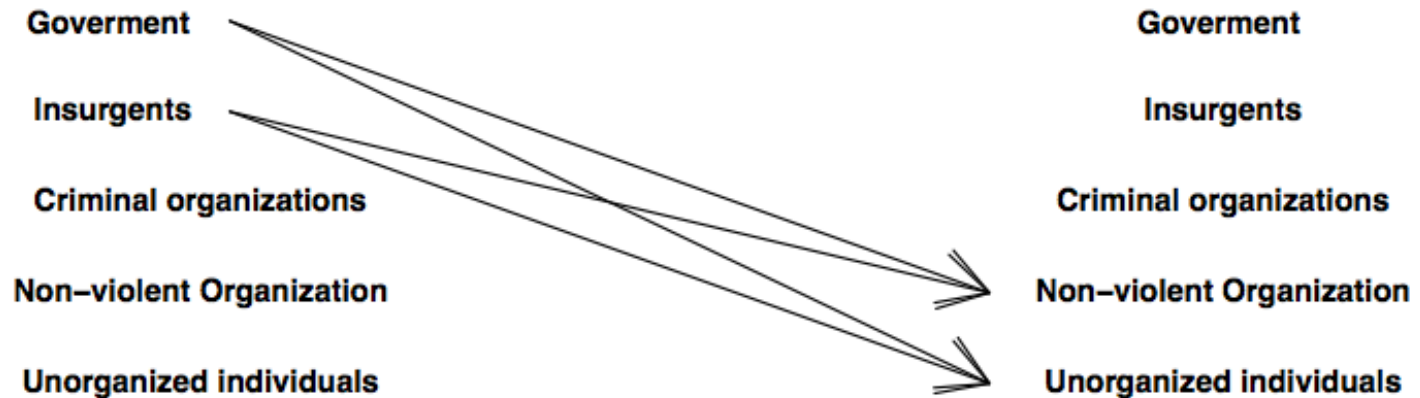
Figure: Intrastate war



A taxonomy of conflict

One-sided violence war

Figure: One-sided violence



A taxonomy of conflict

Non-state conflict

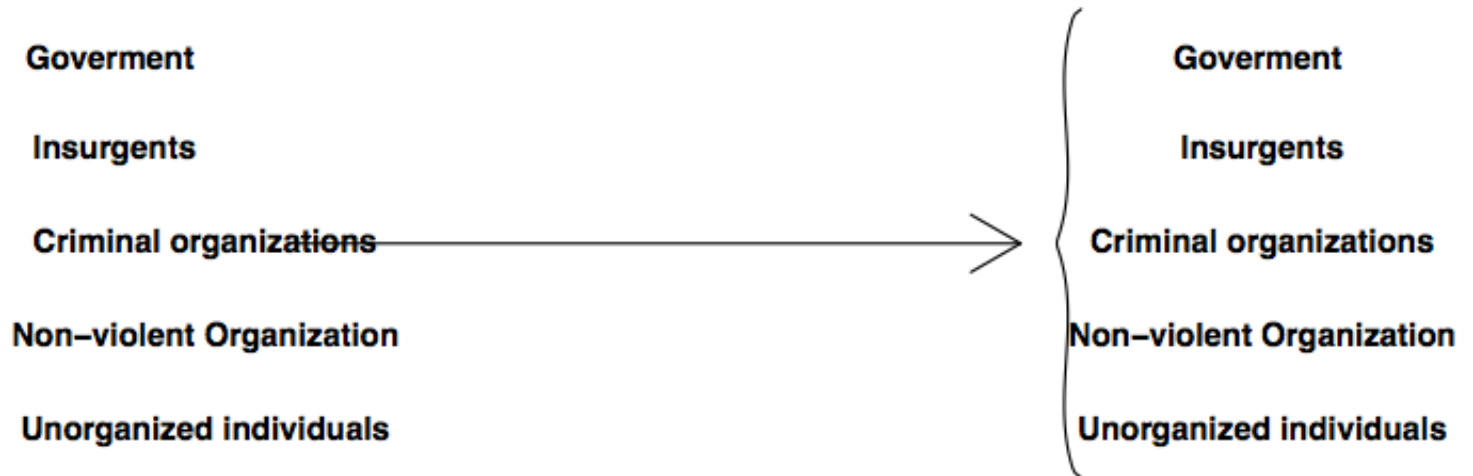
Figure: Non-state conflict



A taxonomy of conflict

Criminal violence

Figure: Criminal violence



The concept of conflict

- This word is derived from the Latin “con-fligo” which means strife.
- “Conflict is a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals”.
- Conflict is “a social situation in which minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at same moment in time an available set of scarce resources.”
- Conflict is a situation in which “actors use **conflict behavior** against each other to attain **incompatible goals** and/or express their hostility”.
- In general, conflict is understood in terms of aspirations of conflicting parties to achieve incompatible goals simultaneously.

The concept of conflict

- What is “conflict behavior”?
- The definition suggests that conflict behavior is any behavior that helps the party to achieve its goal that is incompatible with that of the opponent or that expresses its hostility towards him.
- Rational action is based on careful deliberation, judgment and valuing a set of all relevant alternatives, assessing their outcomes correctly, evaluation in accordance with own values and then choosing the action that was the best. Contrary to that, non-rational actions are quick, impulsive and driven by emotions.

The concept of conflict

- Conflict action - conflict behavior.
- If the actions of conflict party are guided by ***rational considerations***, then we speak about **conflict action**. When we assume that they may be rational or ***non-rational***, we use the term **conflict “behavior.”**

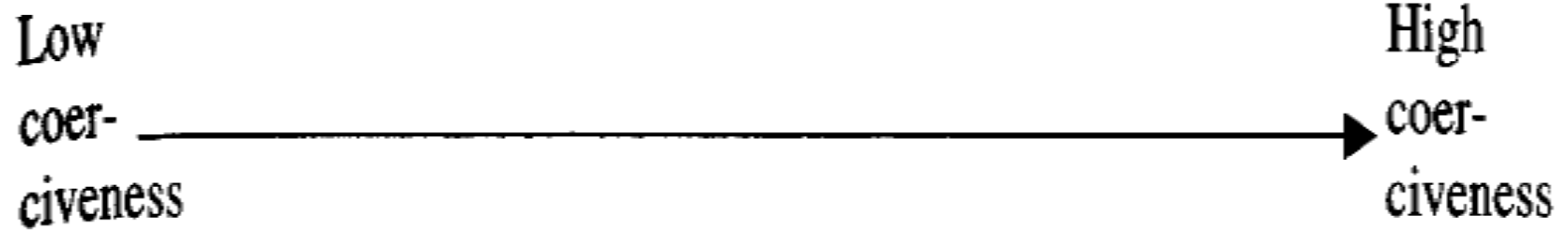
The concept of conflict

- “coercive” - “non-coercive” action/behavior:
- **Coercive action** forces the opponent side to what they do not wish to do, by threatening to inflict injury or by actually inflicting it.
- Distinguish between physical violence and symbolic injury.
- Severe physical violence, can be violent, in sense of hurting or killing the opponents, or destroy their property. It could also have non-violent character, such as depriving opponents of resources they need. Symbolic injury, in the other hand, weakens the opponent by inducing fear, shame, or guilt.
- Not all conflict actions involve coercion.

The concept of conflict

□ “Conflict behavior”

- an umbrella term that covers many diverse types of behavior. It can involve rational or non-rational conflict actions and expressions of hostilities and a range of behavior that is highly coercive as well as to behavior that is fully cooperative.



“Pure” cooperation Promising a reward Trying to persuade Threat of coercion Nonviolent coercion Violent coercion

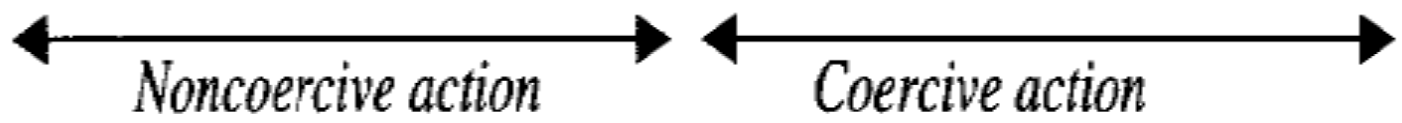


Figure 2.1. Coerciveness of Conflict Action

The concept of Conflict

- 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.

The concept of conflict

- Donald 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.”

Towards conceptual clarity

- Peter Wallensteen:
- 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).

The concept of conflict

- 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 2009: 15).

Typology according to actors

- (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 and with intervention from an outside state (Havard, Wilhelmsen, Gleditsch 2004: 11).

Typology according to actors

- **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).

Typology according to actors

- Emergence of new ***non-state actors***
- 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.

Typology according to actors

- 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.

Conflict typology by Process—Violence Intensity

- **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 (**HIIK**), aiming to grasp armed conflict from non-violent, latent conflict to violent war phases.

Conflict typology by Process—Violence Intensity

- 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.

Conflict typology by Process—Violence Intensity

- According to The Uppsala Conflict Data Program:
- **Minor armed conflicts** - conflicts with more than 25 deaths but fewer than 1000 for the year and for the duration of the conflict.
- **Intermediate armed conflicts** - conflicts with more than 25 deaths and fewer than 1000 for a year, but more than 1000 for the duration of the conflict.
- **Wars** - conflicts with more than 1000 battle-related deaths in one year.

Conflict typology by Process—Violence Intensity

- Hedley 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 1977: 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).
- As the most well-known definition by famous military theorist Carl von Clausewitz claims “**war is merely the continuation of policy by other means**” (Clausewitz 2008).

Conflict typology by Process—Violence Intensity

- The concept of war has been based on two primary criteria: (1) a certain magnitude of battle related fatalities (initially including 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 differentiate war from other types of conflict (Singer, Small 1972: 8).

Conflict dynamics

- Latent conflict,
- Manifestation of the conflict,
- Escalation,
- Dead-point,
- De-escalation,
- Resolution and
- Post conflict arrangement of relations (peace building).

Conflict dynamics

- During the phase of latent conflict divergence of interests are perceived, but the actors are unwilling or unable to clearly articulate the existence of conflict.
- During the manifestation of the conflict at least one of the actors articulates its incompatible interests and intention to protect them at the expense of other party.
- During the escalation of the conflict both conflict parties try to achieve their goals. This phase has four sub-phases: 1. Discussion, 2. Polarization, 3. Isolation and 4. Destruction.

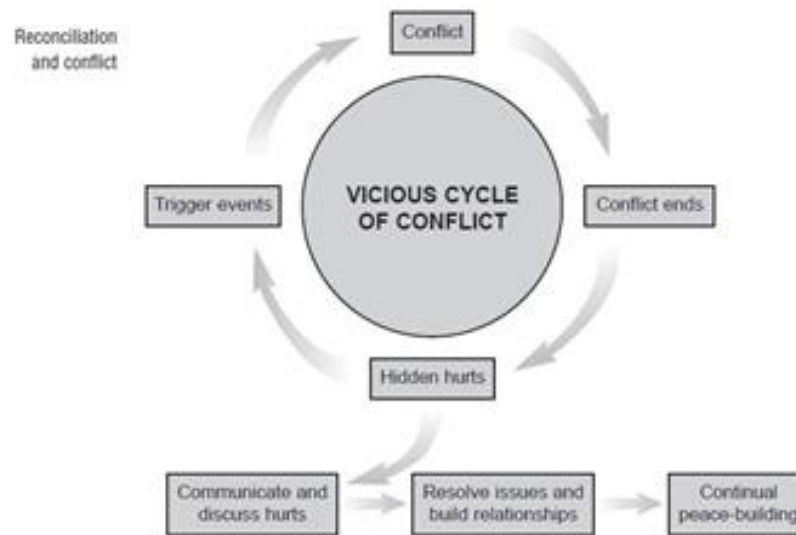
Conflict dynamics

- Dead-point is a situation when neither conflict party is able to end conflict in his favor.
- De-escalation –decreasing the destructive power of conflict, a greater willingness to search compromise solutions.
- Resolution and post conflict arrangement, peace building restore relation between the parties, the objective is to restore cooperation and peace.

Phases of violent conflict



Frozen conflict



Competing goals: typology of issues at stake in armed conflicts

- Academic research focuses on such aspects as **religion, ideology, language, ethnicity, resources and markets, dominance, equality, and territory.**
- (1) ethnic conflict, (2) conflict over political arrangements, (3) ideological, (4) economic, and (5) territorial cross-border conflict.

Competing goals: typology of issues at stake in armed conflicts

- Each conflict differs on a range of dimension 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?*

A typology of Internal Armed Conflict

FIGURE 1
A TYPOLOGY OF INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT

		THE STATE	
		Uncontested	Contested
THE RULE	Idea	IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT (1)	RESOURCE CONFLICT (3)
	Individual	LEADERSHIP CONFLICT (2)	ETHNIC CONFLICT (4)

Ethnic conflict

- 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.

Conflict over political arrangements

- 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.

Ideological confrontation

- Religion can turn into 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.

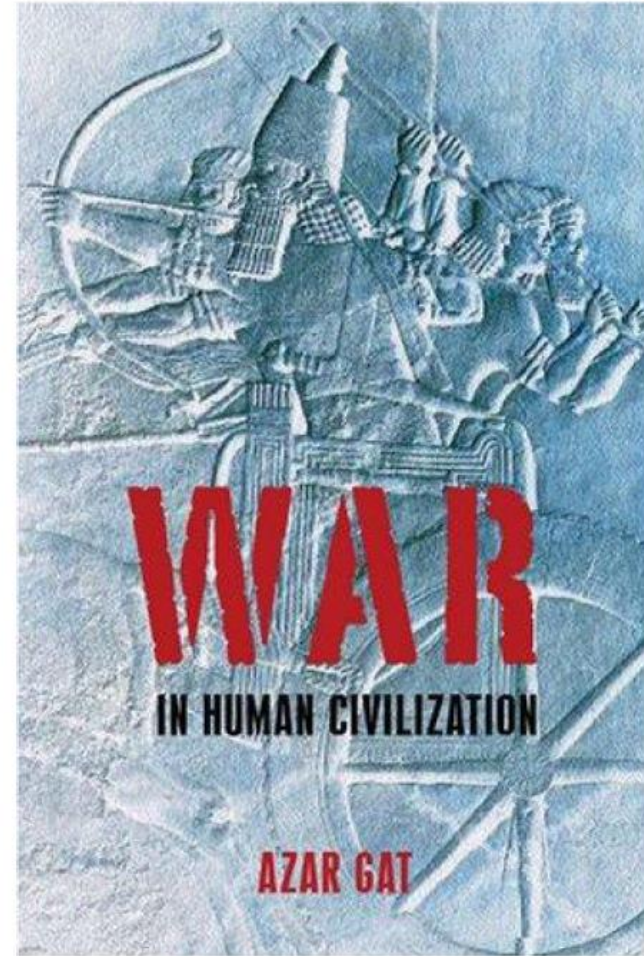
Economic conflict

- 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.

- **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).
- **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.

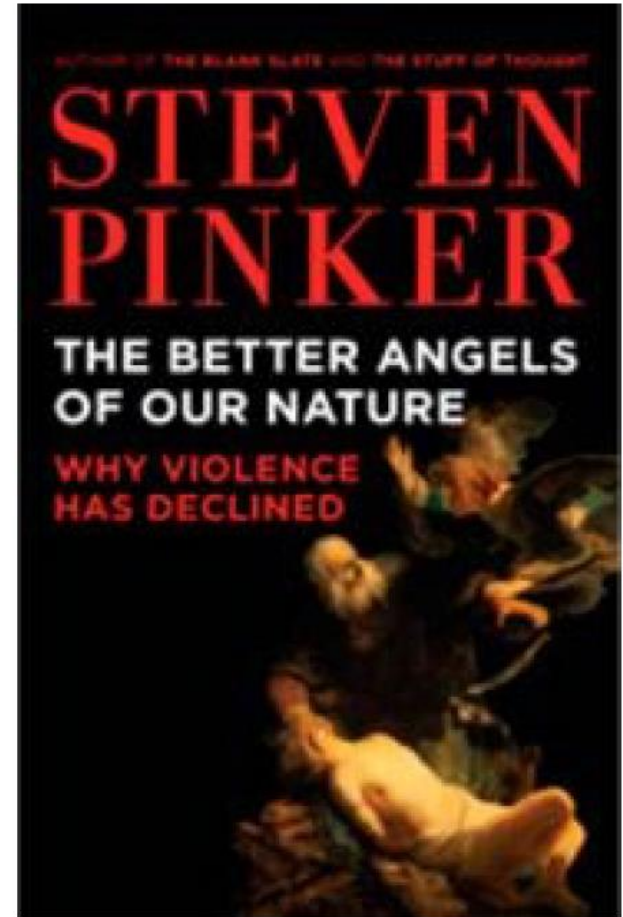
Is war declining?

- War is declining!
 - ① The central role of the state
 - Monopoly of violence
 - Internal peace
 - Reduced exposure to interstate war
 - ② World Wars 1 and 2 sharply diverge from the trend
 - Normann Angell (1911)
The Great Illusion
 - ③ Key reason
 - Peace has become more profitable
 - War has not become more lethal



Our better angels

- Identifies the same trend.
 - ① Explanations
 - The Leviathan (again!)
 - Trade and commerce (the profitability of peace again)
 - Feminization: increases respect for interests and values of women
 - Cosmopolitanism: makes it easier to identify with 'others'
 - Rise of reason and rationality
 - ② Fewer people are growing up in violent societies where they are taught that violence is acceptable, a way of life



Challenges in conflict research

- It is critically significant to think about the **dialog between the conceptual and operational level** of our analysis.
- The problem remains **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.
- 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.

Conflict research

- Study of each conflict requires the research of:
- 1. Background of the conflict (history of mutual relations),
- 2. Type of actors,
- 3. Character and nature of involved parties,
- 4. Reasons of conflict and
- 5. Context (the role of external actor).

Useful Sources in Conflict Research

News databases

- BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk)
- Factiva (www.factiva.com)
- Open Source Center (www.opensource.gov)
- Keesing's Record of World Event (www.keesings.com)
- LexisNexis (academic.lexisnexis.com)

Reports issues by specialized NGOs and IGOs

- Global Witness (www.globalwitness.org)
- Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
- International Crisis Group (www.crisisgroup.org)
- Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
-

Useful Sources in Conflict Research

Surveys

- Afrobarometer (www.afrobarometer.org)
- Households in Conflict Network – HiCV (www.hinc.org)
- World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

General country information

- World Development Indicators (data.worldbank.org)
- UN Data (data.un.org)
- The Quality of Government Institute, Goteborg University (www.qog.pol.gu.se)
- Gapminder (www.gapminder.org)

Conflict data programs

- Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland (www.cidcm.umd.edu)
- Correlated of War (www.correlatesofwar.org)
- Uppsala Conflict Data Program (www.ucdp.uu.se)

Literature:

- Bartos, O. J., Wehr, P. (2002): *Using Conflict Theory*, Cambridge University Press.
- Tesar, F. (2007): *Etnické konflikty*, Praha, Portal.
- Waisová, Šárka (2005): *Řešení konfliktů v mezinárodních vztazích*. Praha: Portál.
- Wallensteen, P. (2007): *Understanding Conflict Resolution, War, Peace and Global System*, SAGE, London.
- Wolff, S. (2006): *Ethnic Conflict A Global Perspective*, Oxford University Press.