PAX ᴇᴛ BELLUM Journal

PAX et BELLUM Journal

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Welcoming Words

Pax et Bellum Journal's Editorial Board would like to wish you very welcome to our third issue. The journal you are holding in your hands is an academic journal produced by students, publishing the work by other students within the field of Peace and Conflict Studies. The publishing takes place in the Department of Peace and Conflict Research in Uppsala University, but welcomes contributions from young academics from universities from all over the world.

The primary aim of the journal is to create a pathway for students to enter the academic world by giving them an opportunity to publish their work, and to take part in the peer review procedure. A second aim is that the work with the journal should be a journey and a learning process, as much for the authors who are giving us the honour to work with them and their papers, as well as for the members of our dear team. Last but not least, the third aim is to show the world how many brilliant minds are out there in these early stage academics within the field of Peace and Conflict Research.

This issue presents four papers. The first paper, authored by Mieke Molthof, conducts a theoretical analysis of the armed conflict between Russia and Georgia, in 2008, and investigates possible explanations for the war onset. In this sense, the study aims to contribute to the disentanglement of the puzzle of war causation. The second paper, written by Emil Petersson, also deals with war causation in the similar region, however shifting the focus towards war outbreak in the Donbas region in Ukraine. The paper uses two different theoretical approaches explaining conflict onset analysing empirical material. The third paper, written by Holly Langham, is a literature review, providing an analytical overview of 18 academic articles relating to intergroup reconciliation in post conflict societies with the focus on social mechanisms they invoke. The review seeks to submit a wide, analytical reflection on this concept and to identify the potential methodological and theoretical omissions for future researches. The fourth paper, written by David Randahl, is a quantitative study investigating the link between the number of refugees in a country and the incidence and magnitude of terrorist attacks in the same country, using panel data for 161 countries during the time period 2002-2012. The results show that there is little or no support for the hypothesis that countries hosting large numbers of refugees would be more prone to terrorism than countries that do not.

We want to thank all the authors who submitted their work, enabling us to make this third issue come to life. We also want to thank the peer reviewers and professors who kindly aid us throughout the process. The final thank is directed to the Department of Peace and Conflict Research for making the publishing of this paper possible. We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed producing it.

The Editorial Board

Introduction

Peace research is research on peace, for peace. It is a scientific enterprise to bring all the power of scientific scrutiny to try to understand why wars occur, and how they can be prevented, mitigated, and stopped. A scientific approach requires stringent definitions of core concepts, logical consistency with regard to the causal claims, empirical data and evidence, and applicable methods through which conclusions can be drawn. The core of peace and conflict research is thus the systematic study of organized violence and security in general, and, in particular, the study of the onset, dynamics, and termination of armed conflicts. Therefore, it is commendable with a new edition of the *Pax et Bellum Journal*, which aims to serve as a student-led forum for academic discussion and research in the field of peace and conflict studies.

Academic journals represent one of the most important forums for scholarly development. That scholarly ideas and arguments can be reviewed and examined in an orderly fashion and thereafter disseminated to a wider scholarly audience, is key for the advancement of peace and conflict research. Yet, the bar for participation in the international journals tend to become higher as the international competition increases. Therefore, student-led initiatives of the sort of the *Pax et Bellum Journal* play a crucial role, in creating a space for some of the most creative ideas and exciting studies emerging from the students of peace and conflict research.

Good research inspires others to dig deeper, go wider, and reach higher. The articles in this year's collection do not, of course, provide the ultimate answers to any of the key questions in our field, but they do raise a set of exciting issues that can open up avenues for further research. For example, on the causes of war, intergroup reconciliation, and the link (or not) between the presence of refugees and occurrence of terrorism. They also reveal some of the plurality in our scholarly field, utilizing case-studies (for example of Russia and Georgia, and of Ukraine), quantitative approaches (for example, cross-national), and theoretical overviews.

Therefore, it is with great pleasure and honor that I welcome you as a reader to the *Pax et Bellum Journal*. May this excellent initiative continue to thrive. And may this year's edition stimulate us all to continue making better research on peace, for the sake of peace.

Isak Svensson
Professor
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Unravelling The Puzzle Of War Causation: A Theoretical Analysis Of The 2008 Russian-Georgian War

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Author Biography

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Abstract

The war between Russia and Georgia emerged out of a territorial dispute that had been lingering for many years. The question arises why the dispute culminated into armed conflict in August 2008. The aim of this paper is to perform a theoretical analysis of the causes of the armed conflict, and investigate how the outbreak can best be explained. Deciphering the causal chain that leads to the outbreak of armed conflict is a complex undertaking. While traditional scientific research on war has been based to a great extent on correlational findings, the steps-to-war theory and the reputational theory seem to move beyond correlation by specifying a causal mechanism, thereby bringing us a step closer in unravelling the puzzle of war causation. The steps-to-war theory highlights how the presence of an arms race could make outbreak more likely through the mechanism of a security dilemma characterised by increasing insecurity, threat perceptions, and hostility. The reputational theory brings to light how concern for reputation could make the outbreak more likely by affecting the value of pro-active reputation building, thereby motiving the resort to force.

Introduction

As succinctly captured in the title of the book by Ronald Asmus (2010), the 2008 Russian-Georgian armed conflict was 'a little war that shook the world'. Despite the limited scale and duration of the military confrontation, it had a significant geopolitical impact. The events had serious ramifications for European security, and brought Russia and the United States to the brink of a new Cold War (Asmus, 2010). The Russian-Georgian war was an armed conflict[1] that lasted for five days and resulted in nearly thousand casualties. It started on August 8, when Russia sent ground troops into the territory of South Ossetia - Georgia's breakaway region that had become a *de facto* Russian protectorate in the early 1990s. It rapidly escalated and expanded into

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[1] Based on the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) classification, the armed conflict does not officially qualify as a 'war' (Themnn and Wallensteen, 2012), for it did not reach the threshold of 1000 battle-related deaths. Moreover, the UCDP records the episode as an intrastate conflict with foreign involvement - not as an interstate conflict. The reason for this is related to the coding of the incompatibility. Yet, in academic analyses the episode is commonly perceived as a war between Russia and Georgia.

other parts of Georgia, including the breakaway republic of Abkhazia. The war was brought to an end on August 12, when Russia announced the end of its military operations (Karagianis, 2013).

A dispute between the two countries had been lingering for many years. But why did it culminate into armed conflict in August 2008? Academic analysis of the war has primarily focused on the aftermath of the conflict, rather than on the antecedent chain of events. Notably, the origins of the war remain contested. In this light, it is of particular relevance to perform a theoretical analysis of the causes of this armed conflict, and investigate how the outbreak can best be explained. The aim of this article is to test and compare the explanatory power of two different theories. The first theory is based on Vasquez' steps-to-war thesis. This model provides an integrative theoretical interpretation that links multiple explanatory factors to war (Colaresi and Thompson, 2005). Over the last 15 years, it has become one of the most important theories in the causes-of-war literature (Sample, 2014). The second theory relates to Schelling's reputation argument. Reputation has historically been regarded as a key motive for fighting a war (Dafoe and Caught, 2013). Although Henry Kissinger famously advised his fellow policy-makers not to succumb to 'the fashionable debunking of prestige, honour and credibility' (1979: 228), the empirical evidence points to countless wars that seem to have been triggered (at least partly) by reputational concerns. During the Cold War alone, the United States and the Soviet Union fought at least three major conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan) and contributed to numerous proxy wars to defend their reputation and credibility (Tang, 2005).

The rationale for selecting the steps-to-war theory and the reputation building theory is based on several reasons. First of all, in contrast to much of the traditional causes-of-war literature (Dessler, 1991)[2], these two explanations seek to move beyond correlation by proposing a causal mechanism that helps to understand how a particular explanatory variable is related to the outbreak of war. Moreover, comparison of the two theories is facilitated by the fact that both explanations move away from traditional system-level theories and instead place primary emphasis on the interaction between the conflict parties - reflecting a growing academic interest in dyadic-level theories (Levy and Thompson, 2011). Finally, both theories are still relatively new in the field of international relations and require more testing. The literature on international relations is still divided on the extent to which, and how, reputation affects the likelihood of inter-state and intra-state war. As noted by Tingley and Walter, '[r]eputation building is one of the most talked-about, yet least understood strategic phenomenon in international relations' (2011: 343). While the steps-to-war theory has received considerable empirical support for the posited correlational relationships on the basis of aggregate data analysis, key questions remain concerning the underlying theoretical mechanism (Sample, 2014). Examination of a historical case study would help to illuminate the potential explanatory power of this theory by tracing out the causal path by which the delineated steps are predicted to result in war.

The article is structured as follows. In the first section, the two theories mentioned above will be introduced and explained. The second section outlines the research design and discusses the operationalization of the variables. In the third section, the two theories will be applied to the case study and their explanatory power will be compared. Finally, a conclusion will be drawn by reflecting upon the main findings of this study and suggesting potential avenues for further research.

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[2] David Dessler found that 'the modern scientific study of war relies primarily on correlational studies aimed to uncover the recurring patterns of actions, events, and conditions associated with interstate conflict' (1999: 337).

Theories

Steps-to-war theory

The steps-to-war theory (Vasquez, 1993) regards the outbreak of war as a process whereby the claims and practices of states make war more likely by increasing the chance that a situation escalates through a conflict spiral. The model suggests that the process that leads to war typically starts with states contesting a critical issue, such as territory. Territorial issues are particularly war-prone because of their salient and intractable nature. Whether disagreement over a territorial issue leads to war, however, depends on how the issue is handled, i.e., on the foreign policy practices of a state. Vasquez's argument is that policy-makers have traditionally learned to rely on realist prescriptions for how to handle interstate disputes (Colaresi and Thompson, 2005). Each of these realpolitik strategies - including alliance building, arms races, and rivalry - heightens hostility and increases the intractability of the issue over which states have a disagreement. In this regard, having a dispute over a territorial issue represents a first step to war, and the subsequent adoption of power politics tactics can be considered as additional steps to war. The likelihood of an outbreak of war progressively grows as each of these steps becomes present. What is important in the steps-to-war theory is not the order of the steps, but that they mutually reinforce each other (Vasquez, 2004).

The steps-to-war model maintains that power politics practices plunge states into a security dilemma that increases insecurity, threat perception, and hostility each time one of these tactics is utilised (Vasquez, 2009). A security dilemma can be defined as a phenomenon whereby 'one state's gain in security inadvertently threatens others' (Jervis, 1978: 170). One state's attempt to increase its security might lead other states to feel less secure and to take actions to increase their own security, thereby triggering another round of insecurity (Senese and Vasquez, 2005). The security dilemma (and the associated insecurity, threat perception, and hostility) can be regarded as the causal mechanism between the dependent variable (outbreak of war) and the independent variables (the risk factors: territorial dispute or the power politics practices). The mechanism is a developmental process among the different steps, whereby each step affects decision-makers' perceptions (Sample, 2014).

Although the presence of a territorial dispute and enduring rivalry are important risk factors, these factors rarely change over time. They are therefore usually not sufficient to specify when a war is likely break out. The practices of alliance making and arms races are more variable. Yet, as noted by Vasquez, '[o]f the various factors that increase the probability of war, outside politically relevant alliances seem to have the weakest impact' (2004: 1). Therefore, the primary focus in this paper is on the arms race factor. An arms race can be defined as 'an interactive competition between two rival states using the strength of their armed forces' (Gibler, Rider, and Hutchison, 2005: 137). Arms races give rise to a security dilemma whereby one state's build-up makes another state less secure, which provides an incentive for the target state to build up its own military. As mutual military build-ups increase threat perception and hostility on both sides, it becomes increasingly likely that a dispute will escalate to war (Senese and Vasquez, 2005).

Based on the theoretical deliberations outlined above, the following hypothesis can be inferred: *(H1) An armed conflict is more likely to break out in the presence of an arms race.*

Reputational theory

Traditionally, reputation has been considered as one of the key reasons for going to war. Thucydides posited that honour is one of the three reasons why wars are fought (Kagan, 1995). Hobbes identified glory, which 'makes men invade for reputation' (1651/1985: 185), as one of the primary causes of dispute. Morgenthau argued that the promotion of a nation's prestige 'its reputation for power' (1948: 93) is critical to foreign policy success. The modern study of reputation emerged against the background of the Cold War. It developed out of the literature on deterrence, linked most notably with Schelling's assertion that failure to stand firm against the Soviet threat in one region would embolden the Russians to engage in aggressive acts elsewhere (Weisiger Yarhi-Milo, 2015).

Schelling's argument is based on the premise that a state's actions are interdependent, and that reputations are built through past actions. A state's behaviour in one dispute 'commits' it to similar actions in another dispute. In this way, a state can demonstrate its resolve (Schelling, 1960; 1966). Reputation for resolve, then, refers to others' estimates of a state's willingness to resort to force, based upon observations of its past behaviour. If a state conceded in a crisis, this suggests to other states that it does not have a high resolve, and hence that is likely to acquiesce to its opponent's demands in similar disputes. In contrast, a state with a reputation for resolute behaviour will be expected to be more likely to forcefully stand up (Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015).

Although there is disagreement amongst scholars about whether states actually pay attention to other states' reputation, there tends to be agreement upon the significance of reputation in one important sense: whether or not states' reputations affect the calculations of other states, states tend to care about their own (Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth, 2014). States that are concerned with their reputation are more likely to initiate a war in order to build a reputation for resolve (Clare and Danilovic, 2012). A state's concern for reputation makes that state more willing to send a costly signal (in the form of resorting to the use of force) that demonstrates its resolve. The causal mechanism that links the dependent variable (outbreak of war) with the independent variable (concern for reputation) is pro-active reputation building.

A critical question to ask is when (i.e. under which circumstances) states find it worthwhile to fight for their reputation. The value of pro-actively building a reputation depends on a state's expectations about future challenges. This in turn depends on the state's 'current' reputation and on the potential opponents they face. States that have backed down in previous crises are more prone to be challenged subsequently. Secondly, states that have outstanding disputes with other states are more likely to be challenged at a certain stage. Under these circumstances it becomes particularly attractive for a state to fight for a strong reputation that can serve to deter the expected future challenges (Clare and Danilovic, 2010).

Based on the theoretical deliberations outlined above, the following hypothesis can be inferred: *(H2) An armed conflict is more likely to break out when a state is concerned with its reputation.*

Research design

Operationalization

<u>Dependent variable:</u> The outcome that is to be explained in this case study is the outbreak of armed conflict. The UCDP's threshold of 25 battle-related deaths will be used as an indicator for the outbreak of the armed conflict (Themnér and Wallensteen, 2012).

Independent variable for the steps-to-war theory: The independent variable for the steps-to-war theory is the presence of an arms race. The presence of an arms race can be identified on the basis of Horn's (1987) operational definition for mutual military build-ups. An arms race is present if we observe: 1) an increase in both states' military expenditures during the time period directly preceding the outbreak of the armed conflict, and 2) that the growth of their military expenditures in the second half of that period is higher than in the first half. Following Colaresi and Thompson (2005), a six-year time frame will be used for delimiting the period preceding the outbreak. In a study by Richardson (1960), it has been found that a shorter time-period could capture incidental or short-lived clashes that never amount to war; an arms race of six years or longer suggests enduring rivalry (Sample, 1997). The data will be taken from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database.

Independent variable for the reputational theory: The independent variable for the reputational theory is concern for reputation. In the previous section, it was already mentioned that a state can be expected to have a concern for reputation if it expects future challenges, which depends in turn on the state's 'current' reputation and on whether it has any potential opponents that could pose a future challenge. States that have a reputation for irresoluteness and that face rivals are likely to be challenged in the future, and hence should have a concern for reputation.

1) *Reputation for weak resolve.* A state's 'current' reputation can be derived from its behaviour in its most recent dispute. A state can be considered as having a reputation for weak resolve if we observe that, in its most recent dispute, it did not follow up on its threat (Clare and Danilovic, 2010). This indicator will be established on the basis a qualitative analysis of historical sources.

2) *Presence of rivals.* In order to assess whether a state has rivals (i.e. potential opponents with that could pose a future challenge), Thompson's criteria for 'strategic rivalries' will be employed: 'the actors in question must regard each other as (a) competitors, (b) the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarised, and (c) enemies' (2001: 560). Following those criteria, a state's rivals will be identified on the basis of historical accounts and policy statements.

Based on these conceptualisations, we can postulate that a state is concerned with its reputation if we observe that 1) it did not follow up on its threat in its most recent dispute and/or 2) it has at least one rival.

Sources

The sources used in this study are a combination of primary and secondary data, including official policy statements, statistics from SIPRI, academic journal articles, and historical accounts. It should be noted that the statements and accounts might be subjective and therefore possibly confounding. Policymakers sometimes have reason to misrepresent true motives, and media accounts or academic analyses may be selective or biased when the situation is (unconsciously) viewed through a coloured lens (i.e. in terms of the Russia-West divide). However, by employing a wide variety of sources and by paying close attention to the broader context within which the conflict took place, potential bias will be minimised.

Case study and analysis

The Russian-Georgian armed conflict is believed to be a particularly useful case for testing causes-of-war theories. The puzzle underlying the outbreak of this war reflects the critical

question of why some conflicts turn violent whilst others remain lingering. The case is therefore especially useful for examining two theories that both seek to address the proximate causes of war. Moreover, this case study may provide relevant insights into the recent conflict in Ukraine by illuminating some of the driving forces behind Russian conduct in the former Soviet sphere. More broadly, as there seems to be a constant potential for violence in the region, the case study could shed important light on the relationship between Russia and its near abroad.

The dependent variable, the outbreak of the armed conflict, refers in this case study to the start of outright fighting on 8 August 2008, the date when the dispute between Russia and Georgia escalated to open combat and reached the UCDP threshold of 25 battle-related deaths (Tsygankov and Tarver-Wahlquist, 2009). While the primary focus of the case study analysis is the start of the fighting, the outbreak of the armed conflict will be explored within a broader timeframe of March-August 2008, as the dispute had already started to escalate in March before it descended into open combat in August (Ibid.).

Application of steps-to-war theory

The steps-to-war hypothesis would suggest that the outbreak of the armed conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 was caused by the military build-ups in the period preceding the start of the war. The arms race inadvertently contributed to a security dilemma that triggered a hostile spiral that made the escalation to armed conflict increasingly likely. As noted by Tsygankov and Tarver-Wahlquist, 'as Russia and Georgia were moving into the summer of 2008, it was becoming increasingly difficult to prevent their military confrontation' (2009: 323). Relations between Russia and Georgia were already characterised by a territorial dispute (over the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia) and rivalry (a history of repeated confrontation) (Maness and Valeriano, 2008). The arms race may well have been the last step that pushed both states to war.

As can be seen in Table 1, both Russia and Georgia were building up their militaries in the years directly preceding the outbreak of the armed conflict. Looking at the six-year time period before the starting year, we can observe that 1) both states military expenditure increased, and 2) the growth of their military expenditures in the second half of that period (2005-2007) was higher than in the first half (2002-2004)[3]. It should however be noted that the difference in absolute terms between Russia's military expenditures and Georgia's military expenditures is massive, which arguably makes it unlikely that Russia could have perceived the military build-up of Georgia as a serious threat. It might therefore be questioned whether the arms race thesis can be adequately applied to a mixed case (major state - minor state) like the Russia-Georgia dispute. Yet, two factors justify the application. First, Georgia's military build-up was directed at South Ossetia and Abkhazia rather than at Russia. Thus, even though Georgia's build-up did not pose a threat to Russia's own territory, it might have been perceived as a threat to its interests in the Caucasus. Second, even though Georgia is a minor state, its military was receiving support from a major state, namely the United States (Tsygankov and Tarver-Wahlquist, 2009).

In light of the factors mentioned in the preceding section, it is relevant to look at the broader context in which the crisis evolved. The mutual growth in expenditures was

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[3] For Georgia: 237% increase in the second half period (2005-2007) compared to 63% in the first half period (2002-2004). For Russia: 19% increase in the second half period (2005-2007) compared to 11% in the first half period (2002-2004).

accompanied by an increase in military posturing on both sides. Russia's military manoeuvres substantially increased in the spring and early summer of 2008. Most importantly, in April, Russia sent more than thousand additional troops to the republic of Abkhazia, and from mid-July it started grand-scale military exercises in North Ossetia. These Russian manoeuvres coincided with joint US-Georgian military exercises at an air base near Tbilisi. In August 2008, Georgia ordered troops into the region of South Ossetia, which triggered a Russian reaction that represented the start of the armed confrontation (Cheterian, 2008; German, 2009).

The arms race, accompanied by military exercises and third-party military support, produced a spiral to war that made it increasingly difficult to settle the territorial dispute by peaceful means. As mentioned, the steps-to-war theory posits that the practice of military build-ups contributes to a security dilemma characterised by increased insecurity, threat perception, and hostility (Senese and Vasquez, 2005). Neither side may have wanted war, but each was afraid of the other's hostile intentions and was even convinced that the other side wanted war. From the perspective of Georgia, Russia seemed to be organizing a military occupation of South Ossetia (Welt, 2010). From the perspective of Russia, Georgia's pursuit of a massive military build-up suggested that Georgia was intent on settling the dispute by force.

Table 1: Military expenditures (in constant 2010 US$ millions)

Year	Georgia	Change (%)	Russia	Change (%)
2002	71.7	42.9	35,770	11.1
2003	83.9	17.0	38,064	6.4
2004	117	39.7	39,599	4.0
2005	311	165.5	43,190	9.1
2006	529	69.6	47,264	9.4
2007	1,047	98.3	51,275	8.5

Source: SIPRI (http://milexdata.sipri.org)

Application of reputational theory

The reputational hypothesis suggests that the outbreak of the armed conflict can be explained by Russia's concern for reputation, which gave it an incentive to send a signal for resolve in order to deter expected future challenges - including not only from Georgia, but also from the United States and other former Soviet satellites.

During the period preceding the armed conflict of August 2008, Russia had gained a reputation for weak resolve. Russia's past irresolute behaviour can be derived from its actions in its most recent crisis with Georgia over the territorial status of the breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Akhazia. In 2004, the issue had sparked a crisis between Russia and Georgia in the form of a war of words. While the Russian Foreign Ministry had released a statement warning that Georgia's actions in the breakaway republics would have serious negative consequences, it did not carry through with its threats (German, 2009). It can be expected that Georgia, having observed Russia's irresolute behaviour, would less easily acquiesce to Moscow's demands in subsequent crises. This became particularly clear in 2008 following Kosovo's declaration of

independence and NATO's statement that allowed Georgia to pursue membership. The Kremlin threatened Georgia many times that it would not tolerate any moves towards the West, and that the territorial issue with South Ossetia and Abkhazia could only be resolved if Georgia would acquiesce to Russia's demands, yet, Tsibili refused to bow to Russian pressure (Asmus, 2010). Inferring from Russia's past irresolute behaviour, the Georgian government might have believed that Moscow would not follow up on its threats. For Moscow to signal more accurately, it had to take a costly action that would restore its reputation for resolve and add credibility to its threats.

Next to the fact that Russia had gained a weak reputation, it also faced numerous rivals. Russia not only had reason to deter Georgia, but also other former Soviet nations with whom it had outstanding disputes. Moscow may have been afraid that other former satellite states could be emboldened if it would let the Georgian government overpower the pro-Russian separatists. Perhaps more importantly, Russia seemed to feel threatened by NATO's expansion into its perceived 'sphere of influence'. This was made clear by the statement of Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in April 2008 that Russia would 'do everything possible to prevent the accession of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO' (Smith, 2009: 127). The Russian leadership repeatedly emphasised its vital interests in the Caucasus and expressed its concerns about Georgia's strengthening relationship with the West (Tsygankov, 2009). During a press conference, president Vladimir Putin stated: 'We view the appearance of a powerful military bloc on our borders, a bloc whose members are subject in part to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, as a direct threat to the security of our country' (4 April 2008). Moreover, public opinion polls suggest that a majority of the Russians viewed NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia as a threat to national security (Tsygankov, 2009). It appears that Russia also wanted to deter its major strategic rival, the United States. Russia felt increasingly challenged by the growing presence of the US military in the Caucasus (Rahman, 2009). Washington's decision to build a missile defence system in the Czech Republic and Poland added to Russia's sense of insecurity and encirclement (Cheterian, 2009). The joint military exercise between the United States and Georgia in July 2008 is likely to have confirmed the Kremlin's concerns about the sincerity of US military support and the challenge this could present to Russia's security interests in its near abroad (Ellison, 2011). This gave Russia even more reason to act resolutely - to send a signal not only to Georgia and other former Soviet states, but also to the Americans and the West more generally. It seemed time for Moscow to restore its reputation in order to deter the expected challenges.

Comparison

On the basis of the analysis, it can be concluded that both hypotheses are supported by the case of the 2008 Russian-Georgian war. Each theory can account for why armed conflict became increasingly likely in the months preceding the start of the actual fighting. The steps-to-war theory highlights how the arms race might have produced a security dilemma that made the outbreak of the armed conflict increasingly inevitable. The reputational theory points to how concern for reputation made it increasingly valuable for Russia to resort to force in order to deter the expected future challenges. Yet, even though both theories provide a rather plausible explanation for why the long-standing dispute was likely to escalate into war, the reputational theory is arguably more convincing in terms of explaining the decision to fight. While the steps-to-war theory sees the outbreak of the armed conflict as the culmination of a process that has spun out of control (as an unintended escalatory spiral), the reputational theory views the outbreak more as the product of a deliberate choice. The steps-to-war model does not entirely

specify agency, and consequently does not make clear who makes the decision to start fighting and why (Slantchev, 2008). On the other hand, it might be argued that the steps-to-war theory provides a more comprehensive account than reputational theory. While the case study of the Russia-Georgia war was used to highlight one causal factor in particular (i.e. arms race), the steps-to-war theory is able to capture multiple explanatory factors simultaneously and interactively (Colaresi and Thompson, 2005). Moreover, the steps-to-war theory looks at the interaction between both sides of the conflict. In contrast, the reputation-building logic focuses mainly on the initiator and does not clearly specify the role of the rival(s) to which a state seeks to demonstrate resolve. It could therefore be argued that the reputational theory does not really help to explain Georgia's behaviour in the conflict and its possible contribution to the outbreak of the war.

By contrasting the two theories, it becomes clear that each theory has comparative strengths and weaknesses. The study illustrates how well each model can help to understand how a long-standing dispute eventually turns violent. The specific case of the Russian-Georgian war has been well suited for this task, since both theories' explanatory factors (mutual military build-ups and reputational concerns) conceivably played a role in the antecedent events. It should be noted, however, that the extent to which the findings of this study can be generalised is limited. Even though the steps-to-war model seems to apply very well to Russian foreign policy, the theory might be less useful in cases where a state's external relations are less dominated by realpolitik. Moreover, in the case of a regime or policy dispute instead of a territorial dispute, the path to war may be different from the one predicted by the steps-to-war theory. Similarly, although proponents of the reputation building argument do not contend that reputation is all-important, the model will nevertheless not be very helpful in cases where reputation only plays a very limited role in policy-makers' minds.

Conclusion

Deciphering the causal chain that leads to the outbreak of armed conflict is a complex undertaking. While modern scientific research on war primarily focuses on correlational findings, the steps-to-war theory and the reputational theory seem to move beyond correlation by specifying a causal mechanism that provides a link between the independent and the dependent variable. This can help to distinguish genuine causality from coincidental association. The two theories may therefore bring us a step closer in unravelling the puzzle of war causation. The case study of the 2008 Russian-Georgian armed conflict suggests that each theory has considerable explanatory power. By zooming in on the chain of events, the case study sheds light on how the explanatory factors are expected to lead to the outbreak of war. The steps-to-war theory highlights how the presence of an arms race could make outbreak more likely through the mechanism of a security dilemma characterised by increasing insecurity, threat perceptions, and hostility. The reputational theory brings to light how concern for reputation could make the outbreak more likely by affecting the value of pro-active reputation building, thereby motiving the resort to force.

Nevertheless, it seems that there is still a lot of room for refinement, as many important research questions have been left unexplored. With regard to potential avenues for further research, it could be fruitful to explore the question of generalisation. The steps-to-war theory was originally formulated based on findings related to the pre-1945 era of classic international politics; the model might have less relevance in today's world. The reputation literature tends to

assume that the effects of reputation are generalizable, but some studies (e.g. Guisinger and Smith, 2002) have pointed out that reputation could be state - or leader - specific. With respect to operationalization, researchers would be well advised to look at the broader context when measuring the independent variables.

As the Russia-Georgia case has demonstrated, it is not only important to look at the military build-ups of the dyad states, but also of the actors that provide military third-party support (especially in mixed-dyad disputes). Moreover, it seems valuable to pay attention to military posturing next to military expenditures, since such provocations are likely to add extra fuel to the spiral of hostility. When measuring the reputational variable, it is also relevant to keep in mind that leaders might misrepresent true motives. The apparent ubiquity of concern for reputation makes it difficult to infer its true causal effect (Dafoe and Caughhey, 2013). It would therefore be beneficial to develop more accurate indicators of reputational concern.

Finally, more research is needed to address persistent concerns about potential endogeneity in the steps-to-war model. The relationships suggested by the steps-to-war thesis may be explained in two other ways that suggest a different causal mechanism than the one posited by the model. First, each step might simply be the consequence rather than the cause of a state's decision to go to war. Having made the choice for war, states build up their militaries and make alliances as a means of preparing for the anticipated war. Second, rivalry - because of its highly conflictual nature - might be the real underlying cause of war. According to this interpretation, rivalry is not merely a single step in a step-by-step process of increasing probability of war, but rather the factor that causes all the other steps (Sample, 2014). Addressing the question of endogeneity for the steps-of-war theory requires moving beyond validating key relationships towards investigating their sequence or timing.

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Horizontal Inequality and Information Failure: Analysing Ukraine's Civil War

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Abstract
W*hy did armed separatist conflict erupt in Ukraine's Donbas region? This paper uses the events in Ukraine that took place between Viktor Yanukovych's ousting on February 22 and the onset of armed conflict on May 2 in order to evaluate two theories of conflict onset. The first theory stipulates that 'ethnic entrepreneurs' to provoked armed conflict can exploit a rapid deterioration in an ethnic group's political and cultural status. The second theory predicts that a weak government cannot signal its commitment to resists secession short of using violence, given that it faces more than one potential challenger. Based on the analysis of the Donbas conflict, it is possible to conclude that both theories receive some empirical support. This paper also shifts the focus to Ukraine's domestic actors and their agency in a conflict largely given attention for its international dimensions.*

Introduction
In the spring of 2014, civil war erupted in Ukraine's Donbas region. This civil war was unexpected in that the risk of ethnic rebellion among the Russian minority in the country was deemed 'moderate' before the events in 2014 (MAR, 2006). The purpose of this paper is to test to what extent two theories can explain the onset of armed separatist conflict in Ukraine in 2014. The first theory argues that ethnic entrepreneurs can utilize a sudden negative shift in horizontal inequality to provoke violent conflict. The second theory claims that governmental weakness is positively related to armed conflict, since a weak government cannot credibly signal resolve without using violence when it is faced with more than one potential challenger. The timeframe of this analysis covers the months between the Maidan Revolution and ousting of Viktor Yanukovych on 22 February 2014, and 2 May 2014 when the separatist conflict in the Donbas region reached 25 battle-related deaths.

The violent conflict in the Donbas region (referred to as *Novorossiya* by the separatists) was the culmination of a turbulent spring in Ukraine, which included a violent revolution and the Russian annexation of the Crimea (UCDP, 2015b). The conflict began when several of the *oblasts* in eastern Ukraine declared their intent to secede. This was deemed unacceptable by Ukraine's interim government, which responded with an 'anti-terror operation' to subdue the separatists. Fighting quickly escalated as heavily armed separatists-- allegedly with support from Russian

troops-- met the government offensive. More than 4,000 battle-related deaths have been recorded in eastern Ukraine since fighting began (UCDP, 2015b). Analysts at the International Crisis Group (ICG) estimate the death toll to be even higher; approximately 10,000 since fighting began (ICG, 2016). This paper will place the interim government led by President Oleksandr Turchynov and the Russian minority in the Donbas region as the primary actors in the onset of this conflict, providing a domestic perspective on a civil war mostly given attention for its effect on the relationship between 'the West' and Russia.

Theory

The concept 'horizontal inequality' refers to inequalities between groups along, for example, socio-economic, political, or cultural dimensions (Brown and Langer, 2010). This paper is limited to the two latter dimensions because they are more likely to undergo rapid change and thus suddenly alter the horizontal status of a group; socio-economic inequality is more likely to develop and persist over a long period of time. Two other important assumptions regarding horizontal inequality are that objective and perceived inequality does not have to coincide, and that both relatively deprived and relatively well-endowed groups can cause instability and violence (Brown and Langer, 2010). Gurr (2011) similarly argues that it is subjective perception, not objective deprivation that matters. Opportunistic politicians can then take the role of 'ethnic entrepreneurs' and use the horizontal inequality to mobilize political support (Brown and Langer, 2010: 30). The main tenant of this argument is that the very existence of perceived inequality is enough for ethnic entrepreneurs to instigate violence.

Similarly, Ohlson (2008) argues that a background reason for conflict is the so-called 'legitimacy gap', which is the discrepancy between an individual's (vertical) or group's (horizontal) expected and actual performance. A proximate reason for violent conflict is however when such a gap increases rapidly, that is, when the stability of the existing system is disrupted via a general shock or event that affects a specific group (Ohlson, 2008). Similarly, Gurr (2007) concludes that minority groups can be aggrieved by state expansion that infringes on their special interests. Other research thus indicates that not only inequality, but rather a sudden negative shift in relative inequality can lead to violence.

By combining the concepts of horizontal inequality, (horizontal) legitimacy gap, and ethnic entrepreneurship, it is possible to elaborate a more complete causal story of inequality and conflict. It is argued here that the mere existence of horizontal inequality and ethnic entrepreneurs, as argued by Brown and Langer's (2010), is insufficient in explaining *when* violent conflict erupts. The concept of a sudden negative shift in a legitimacy gap can however provide understanding of when ethnic entrepreneurs can turn intergroup relations violent. Hence, conflict is not only a result of ethnic entrepreneurs exploiting static inequality, but rather a shift in the existing discriminatory balance between groups in a state, regardless of whether a group is favoured or deprived. Brown and Langer (2010) do argue that sharp economic decline is positively related to violent group mobilization, which makes it theoretically feasible to apply such logic to political and cultural factors as well.

In sum, the purpose of adding the sudden widening of horizontal inequality is to complete the causal connection to the onset of violent conflict. Ethnic entrepreneurs can utilize horizontal inequality as a means for violent mobilization when the political and cultural rights of an ethnic group are subjected to a sudden negative shift. The first hypothesis can thus be formulated: *(H1)*

a sudden negative shift in horizontal inequality of a minority group is positively related to the onset of armed separatist conflict.

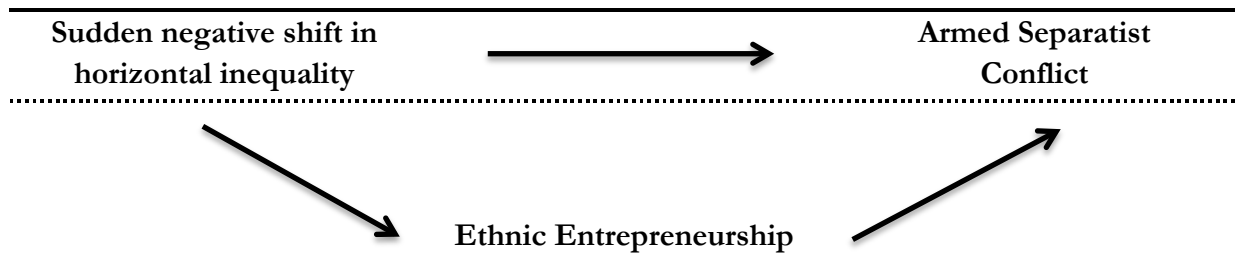|		
Sudden negative shift in horizontal inequality	$\longrightarrow$	**Armed Separatist Conflict**
	Ethnic Entrepreneurship	

Figure 1. Horizontal Inequality: Armed Separatist Conflict

The second theory applied in this paper is derived from the rationalist bargaining theory of war. This strand of conflict theory argues that armed conflict is an *ex-post* inefficient outcome of a process in which two actors decide on the division of a contested utility, like territory or government power (Fearon, 1995). Armed conflict arises when the actors disagree on their relative power and how much of the contested utility each actor is entitled to according to this distribution of power. The two main mechanisms leading to violence are information failures and commitment problems, which inhibits the striking of an *ex-ante* bargain (Fearon, 1995). Walter (2009) elaborates on the role of bargaining in a civil context, and two types of possible information failures that can lead to onset of civil conflict: uncertainty regarding rebel financing, and uncertainty regarding government resolve. The focus in this paper will be placed on the latter: how governmental inability to signal resolve to a group challenging it leads to a civil war.

Walter (2009) argues that there are two types of governments: committed ones that are willing to fight in order to protect the status quo, and uncommitted ones that are willing to make concessions. Only the government has complete information regarding its resolve, but all governments have incentives to appear committed to deter future challenges from other actors by using costly signals (Walter, 2009). However, this means that an uncommitted government has incentives to misrepresent its own resolve, in hope of making the challenger back down in an early stage of the confrontation. The most critical factor is that the bargaining process is also intended to address an audience, as well as the primary challenger. This thus means that an uncommitted government has incentives to use violence against the first challenger it faces, in order to deter other potential challengers (Walter, 2009).

Walter (2009: 250) argues that an uncommitted government is identified by 'numerous factors', like tenuous popular support. Since Fearon (1995) argues that power is central to bargaining, it is argued here that governmental strength could be one of these numerous factors left unspecified by Walter (2009). Strength is defined as the ability to execute policy, control corruption, effectively administrate public business, and enforce law (Fukuyama, 2004). In this paper, corruption is excluded because it is less visible to a challenger, and thus does not contribute to readily observable power. Hence, it is theorized here that a challenger is less likely to think that a strong government is misrepresenting information on resolve, since it is simply more powerful. The addition of government strength makes theoretical sense given that Walter (2009) writes about challengers questioning the status quo of a state. A strong government should in theory be more able to resist secessionist attempts, since it can uphold law and execute new policy that prevents the breakup of the state.

The independent variable is thus government weakness, an aggregation of tenuous popular support and low strength. It inhibits a government's ability to signal resolve to a domestic challenger, and is causally linked to the onset of armed conflicts via information failure. This means that when a government is weak (uncommitted), the challenger is likely to disregard the costly signals sent by the government as misrepresentations. Since war is *ex-post* inefficient, it should be possible to observe attempts by the government to use signals other than violence prior to conflict onset. However, since the challenger has reason to believe that the weak government is misrepresenting its resolve, it will disregard all signals less costly than actual violence. As a result, the government will resort to force in order to signal its resolve, as it is still better to fight the primary challenger than risking more challenges from the audience of potential ones. Hence, a 'weak' government will find itself fighting a war it did not want, because it could not credibly signal its resolve. The second hypothesis is thus formulated: *(H2) in face of more than one challenger, government weakness is positively related to the onset of armed separatist conflict.*
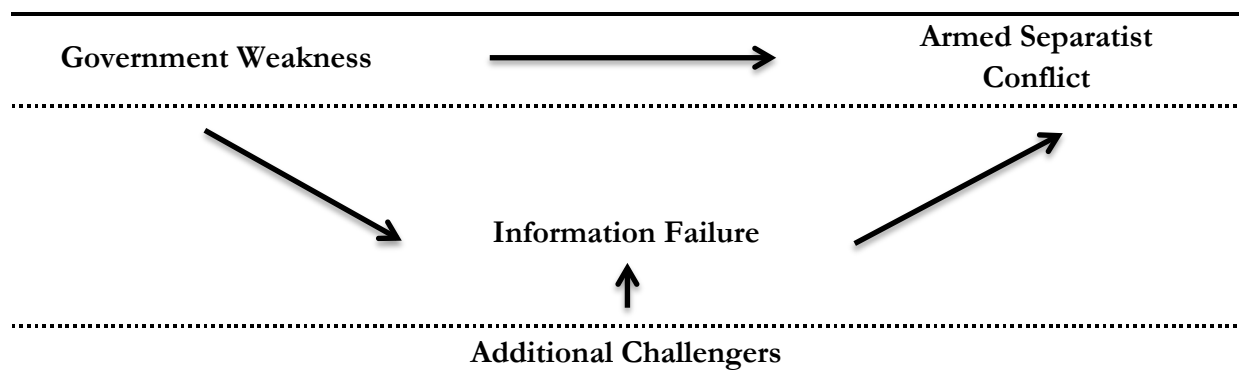

Figure 2. Government Weakness: Armed Separatist Conflict

Research Design

The case selected in this paper is the separatist conflict that erupted in Ukraine's Donbas region in 2014. This case is interesting to analyse because it has been given much attention for its international dimensions, such as the clash of interests between the European Union and Russia. However, it also serves a more methodological purpose to analyse the violence in the Donbas region. Before the events in late 2014 and early 2014, the Minorities at Risk project (MAR) considered the risk of armed rebellion among Ukraine's Russian minority as moderate. (MAR, 2006). Hence, the Donbas region can serve as a least (or at least 'less') likely case of armed conflict. This means that if the theories presented above hold true in this case, they are likely to also carry explanatory power in cases where the risk of ethnic rebellion is higher. Choosing the conflict in the Donbas region is thus a way to strengthen any findings in support of the theories evaluated here. The dependent variable of this paper is 'the onset of armed separatist conflict', operationalized according to the UCDP (2015,a) definition of armed conflict: *(Op1) the date when the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, reaches at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year.*

Stewart and Brown (2007) suggest that political horizontal inequality can be indicated by access to the presidency or government, and that cultural horizontal inequality can include linguistic discrimination. Based on this, the first independent variable 'sudden negative shift in horizon-

tal inequality' is operationalized as: *(Op2) the ascension of a president or government hostile to the ethnic minority group, or new policy/law that discriminates against the language of the group.* The analysis of this variable will thus be focused on finding changes in the political/cultural status of a group by first establishing the old balance of discrimination. It is also important to note that 'group' refers to an ethnic group in this paper, as defined by the Minorities at Risk project. If the mechanism ethnic entrepreneurship is present, it should be possible to observe how group elites attempted to mobilize support by referring to the sudden negative shift of the group's political and cultural status.

The second independent variable of this paper is 'governmental weakness', indicated by level of popular support, general ability to govern the state, and law enforcement ability. The effectiveness of the available security forces is used as a proxy for law enforcement. Government weakness is thus operationalized as: *(Op3) a support base representing less than half the electorate/population, acts of apparent incompetence by the government, and insubordination from and/or inability of the security forces to carry out orders.* If the mechanism information failure is present in the case, it should be possible to observe costly signals (short of going to war) from the government prior to the onset of conflict. Fearon (1995) provides suggestions for such signals: mobilization of troops, signing of alliances, building weapons, and creating domestic political costs via public statements. The second theory also has a vital scope condition: the presence of 'possible' challengers. An audience of potential challengers will be considered present when: *(Op4) more parties than the primary secessionist group/region has indicated the possibility that it might pursue secession in the future.*

The sources used in this paper are a mix of reports from the International Crisis Group (ICG) and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), descriptive academic articles on Ukrainian politics and history, and news items. Particular care has been taken to avoid using the interpretations of other researchers from the academic articles, but rather using the facts they present. Given the sensitive nature of information in civil wars, no Ukrainian (or Russian) news sources have been used. Rather, in order to minimize misrepresented or biased reports, news items have been drawn from the well-established news agency Reuters. There is therefore no reason to suspect that the source material used in this paper suffers from any severe bias or inaccuracy.

Analysis

UCDP identifies three separate dyads in the Ukrainian separatist civil war: Ukraine-Donetsk, Ukraine-Lugansk, and Ukraine-Novorossiya (which replaced the other two dyads on 16 September 2014). Concerning the dependent variable 'onset of armed separatist conflict', the Donetsk and Lugansk incompatibilities over territory reached the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths on 2 May and 14 June 2014 respectively (UCDP, 2015b; 2015c). The 'onset of armed separatist conflict' is thus considered confirmed in this case as of 2 May 2014, providing the distal limit of the timeframe of this paper.

Sudden Increase of Horizontal Inequality and Ethnic Entrepreneurship

Russians in Ukraine are classified as an ethnic national minority group, and their highest geographic concentration can be found in the eastern Ukraine. According to the Minorities at Risk project, the Russian minority has upheld considerable political mobilization since independence from the Soviet Union, and they have been subjected to 'considerable' societal discrimination but not severe repression (MAR, 2006).

Before the 2010 election, Viktor Yanukovych's 'Party of Regions' established itself as the representative of the Russophone east Ukraine. Promises of decentralization and language protection won his party 78.5 percent of the votes in eastern Ukraine, making Donetsk and Lugansk the strongest support base for the Party of Regions (Kudelia, 2014; Kuzio, 2011). The Party of Regions achieved this by encouraging 'negative voting', which the party claimed would keep 'nationalists' from western Ukraine away from power. Yanukovych then sets up a cabinet with politicians from the Donetsk area, and the ministers maintained the practice of referring to west Ukrainian nationalists as Nazis; he also centralized political power in the presidency (Kuzio, 2011; Kudelia, 2014). It is argued here that this created high stakes in Yanukovych's presidency for the Russian minority in the Donbas region.

Based on this, it is possible to conclude that Yanukovych's ousting on 22 February 2014 was indeed part of a 'sudden negative shift' for the Russians in eastern Ukraine. A prevalent perception in the Donbas region was for example that the government had been illegally ousted by far-right nationalists from western Ukraine (Charap, 2014). Given the political polarization in Ukraine, this meant that the eastern parts of the country found itself ruled by an interim government composed of Nazis and malevolent nationalists. This perception was reinforced when Right Sector (an ultranationalist party) leader Dimitro Yarosh announced that he would run for president (ICG, 2014). The Russian-speaking population of eastern Ukraine had thus lost a president and a cabinet that at least nominally represented their interests. Yanukovych, who they had given 78.5 percent of their votes, was ousted by the 'Ukrainian nationalists' that many Russians had voted against.

The loss of Yanukovych and the ascension of Oleksandr Turchynov thus suddenly and negatively increased the political legitimacy gap of the Russian minority. Historically, Yanukovych's presidency had been of vital psychological importance to the Russian minority; when he lost the elections in 2004, this was a psychological shock for the population of Donetsk *oblast* (Kuzio, 2011). Hence, it is likely that losing Yanukovych in 2014 would be at least equally traumatic, making the appointment of Turchynov a 'sudden negative shift' for the Russians minority.

For the Russians in Ukraine, language is one of the most important indicators of identity and it has been a historically contentious issue; Donbas is the region where most people state Russian as their first language (Fournier, 2002; MAR, 2006). The Ukrainian constitution favours Ukrainian, but admits the protection of Russian as long as it can be classified as a minority group language. Language has historically produced a sense of exclusion, and more extreme narratives include that 'Ukranisation' is as an attempt to 'liquidate the Russian language and culture' (Fournier, 2002:428). This concern became acute soon after Yanukovych's ousting. The new ruling parliamentary coalition spearheaded by Svoboda (a far-right party) and parts of the Batkivshchina party voted to repeal the '2012 Law on Languages', which would effectively have removed the protection of the Russian language. Even if President Turchynov refused to sign the repeal motion, this was interpreted by the Russian minority as an indicator of ultra-nationalist tendencies of the new government (ICG, 2014).

To conclude, it is possible to observe both indicators used to measure 'sudden negative shift in horizontal inequality' for the Russian minority. There is little doubt that the group had reason to perceive the loss of status within the state structure, even if objective discrimination was limited. Regarding the causal mechanism 'ethnic entrepreneurship', the findings are however contradictory. The existing political elite in the Donbas region, mainly leaders from the Party of Regions, openly spoke against civil unrest, emphasizing instead peaceful conflict resolution. Provo-

cation against the 'illegitimate' and 'fascist' government in Kyiv mostly came from new actors that aspired to become the new elite (ICG, 2014). Also, Russia appears to have played a central role in the ethnic entrepreneurship, as it for example was first with labelling the Ukrainian interim government as fascist (UCDP, 2015b; ICG, 2014).

Russian involvement in the organization of the separatist leadership is made more obvious by the presence of people, like Vladislav Surkov in Donetsk. Surkov exerted substantial political control in Donetsk as *kurator*, that is, a direct representative of the Russian presidential administration; the first prime minister of Donetsk, Alexander Boroday even, referred to him as 'our man in the Kremlin' on 2 June 2014 (ICG, 2016:12). While this statement technically was made after the distal time limit of this analysis, it still indicates that local elites in the Donbas region did not act independently of Moscow. Furthermore, throughout April, the separatist leaders felt a growing uncertainty regarding the continued support from Russia, which also indicates that the separatist elites were not acting on their own accord (ICG, 2016). The elites that emerged in Lugansk and Donetsk came from a wide variety of backgrounds and all had different agendas that ranged from grievance to greed. Their ability to lead the separatist territories was initially limited; only Andrei Purgin (founder of the Donetsk Republic Party) had any previous political experience. The emerging elites had to rely on Russian support (via the *kurators*) in order to govern the separatist territories (ICG, 2016).

As such, the ethnic entrepreneurship in eastern Ukraine was to a large extent exogenous. The inflammatory narratives used against the 'fascist' Ukrainians originated in Russia, and while the separatist leaders were from eastern Ukraine, they relied on Russian support. Turning the perceived deterioration of the political and cultural rights for the Russian minority into a sustainable political and military separatist movement was done with external help, and it served external (that is, Russian) purposes. For example, Russia hoped that the separatist cause could spread outside of Donetsk and Lugansk in the months after Yanukovych's ousting in order to increase its leverage on Ukraine and restore what Moscow perceived as a disrupted balance of power in the region (ICG, 2016). Evidence thus indicates that Russia actively fuelled the separatist sentiments by supporting the local elites in eastern Ukraine. However, the elites were local actors, and not Russians. This creates a complex analytical situation, as the success of the ethnic entrepreneurship was conditioned by an exogenous factor, that is, the support from Moscow. Hence, while the process of turning the sudden negative shift for the Russian-speaking minority into action was conducted by domestic actors, strong exogenous forces contributed to the success of this enterprise.

Government Weakness and Information Failure

After the Maidan Revolution, ten 'People's Republics' were proclaimed in eastern Ukraine, including the ones in Donetsk and Lugansk. While only these two turned into violent separatism, Ukrainian security and government specialists made the assessment that the uprising could spread (ICG, 2014). Violent protests erupted in several *oblasts* other than Donetsk and Lugansk. For example, in mid-March, security forces clashed with pro-Russian protesters in Kharkiv (Macdonald and Kushch, 2014). Perhaps the most notable violent incident outside of the Donbas region occurred in Odessa, where 42 people were killed in clashes between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian protestors on 2 May (Jelenek and Tsvetkova, 2014). Later, Kyiv blamed these clashes on foreign, Russian, and Transnistrian 'saboteurs' that sought to instigate unrest also in this Black Sea port city (Piper, 2014). It is thus clear that the government in Kyiv faced potential

separatist movements in other places than Donetsk and Lugansk, such as the major cities of Kharkiv and Odessa. As such, the government in Kyiv faced at least two other potential separatist movements, which could have motivated the need to signal its resolve not to allow the secession of Donetsk and Lugansk.

There is contradictory evidence regarding the popular support of the interim government that succeeded that of Yanukovych. Firstly, half of the ministers came from the four westernmost regions, which translates into only 12 percent of the electorate, compared to the almost 50 percent composing eastern Ukraine that supported Yanukovych (Charap, 2014). Furthermore, many Ukrainians considered the acting president illegal; in Donetsk and Lugansk, 70 percent of the population held this view (Charap, 2014; ICG, 2014). However, several of the government's most important supporting actors were against making concessions to the separatists; among these were the Euromaidan activists, the nationalist Right Sector, and the electoral base in the centre and west of the country (Charap, 2014). This implies that while the interim government lacked broad popular support, it still had several important supporting actors that would favour a more hardline approach against the separatists. If anything, such supporters should have increased the government's ability to signal resolve. However, it is clear that the interim government lacked support in eastern Ukraine.

It is possible to find signs of government inability to effectively govern the country. ICG (2014:i) concludes that Ukraine's provisional government 'has not asserted itself coherently… it appears incapable of keeping order in much of the southeast'. Furthermore, the government 'barely functions, [it] consists mostly of veterans of a discredited political system and new faces with little or no government experience' (ICG, 2014:i). Local officials also complained about the absence of guidance from the interim government, which appeared to be in disarray (ICG, 2014). The acting Minister of Defense Ihor Tenyukh was even sacked for incompetence after commenting on the poor state of Ukraine's military (ICG, 2014; Liffey, 2014). While this evidence is not conclusive, it does indicate that the Ukrainian government may have lacked the competence necessary to govern the country, making it appear weak. The sacking of the defence minister also points towards that the government was aware of its weakness and tried to hide it, something that can be seen as misrepresenting information on resolve.

The Ukrainian interim government also faced considerable deficiencies when it came to its security forces. For example, the Donbas police was indifferent and demoralized, and most police commanders were highly unreliable; police officers in Donetsk even defected to the separatist side (ICG, 2014; UCDP, 2015b). The police in Donetsk also refused to participate in the ineffective and disoriented counter-terrorist operation in April, and did not prevent the occupation of the regional TV centre (ICG, 2014). President Turchynov admitted that the law enforcement services in the east did not follow orders, and referred to these incidents as treachery and cowardice (ICG, 2014). To summarize, the government had significant issues with insubordination and inefficiency within the security forces, particularly in the east. It is thus possible to observe all three indicators of governmental weakness in Ukraine.

There were also several costly signals sent by the government prior to the onset of armed conflict on 2 May 2014. For example, on 11 March, president Turchynov announced the formation of a new national guard to protect Ukrainian citizens from 'internal and external aggression' (Popeski, 2014). This was followed by the approval of the parliament to mobilize 40,000 reservists on 17 March (Balmforth and Stamp, 2014). Both these actions approximate the costly signal 'mobilization'. On 13 April, Turchynov made a televised address that the separatists in the

Donbas region had until the morning of 14 April to stand down, or face a 'full-scale anti-terrorist operation' (Humphries, 2014). This can be interpreted as the creation of a domestic political cost. However, none of these signals led to the separatists backing down (Lawson, 2014). This shows how costly signals came from the government before 2 May, but that the separatist dismissed these, which in turn led to the violent escalation.

Discussion

To summarize, both hypotheses receive support in the analysis. Both a sudden negative shift in the political and cultural horizontal inequality of the Russian minority, and the weakness of the interim government are positively related to the onset of armed separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine. However, the theory on governmental weakness appears to better reflect the empirical reality in Ukraine. This mainly stems from a validity issue that arose in the measurement of horizontal inequality. Ethnic and linguistic division in Ukraine does not match perfectly, since many ethnic Ukrainians are bilingual and speak Russian as well (Barrington and Herron, 2004). This is problematic, since the analysis in this paper assumes that language can be used to assess intergroup discrimination. Discrimination was thus not exclusive, but could also affect those ethnic Ukrainians that speak Russian. Hence, it is possible that the sudden negative shift measured here did not affect one ethnic group only. The Russian language actually cuts across ethnic identity, which could reduce its importance as an indicator of social cleavage. Also, the success of ethnic entrepreneurship appears to have been conditioned by exogenous forces (the Russian support), casting doubt on this theory as a domestic explanation of the conflict.

The more ambiguous treatment of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics as challengers may in fact end up being more accurate, as it does not presuppose a homogenous identity of the group contesting the government. The complex nature of ethnicity and language in Ukraine makes it more logical to treat the separatist territories as political units, and not as a territory inhabited by one particular ethnic group. Hence, 'governmental weakness' is the stronger domestic explanation of conflict, as it does not hinge on coinciding linguistic and ethnic cleavages.

The main deficiency of the theory on governmental weakness is that it does not credibly account for the perceptions of the challenger, that is, whether the separatists really saw the government as weak and the signals as misrepresentations. It is thus hard to claim anything other than that the theory on government weakness can identify government characteristics that are theoretically conductive to an information failure; what the separatists actually perceived is beyond its scope. This analysis also revealed that it might not be government weakness in general that matters, but rather weakness in the potential separatist region. Empirical evidence gathered here suggests that low popular support and security force insubordination were particularly acute in the Donbas region, perhaps not so much at the national level. This empirical variation was not expected in the theory. This presents a reliability issue, since measurement of governmental weakness can vary drastically depending on the level of analysis (national or regional); what level should be used is not specified in the theory. It also presents a validity issue, since it is possible to argue that lack of government presence in the potential separatist region, *not* general weakness, matters. If this is the case, this theory is only an unnecessarily complex version of state weakness and conflict theory (see for example Bates, 2008).

The main alternative explanation for the onset of separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine is the most obvious one: the alleged Russian military support. Most sources agree that at the very least,

Russia supplied considerable amounts of military supplies to the separatists in Donetsk and Lugansk (see for example UCDP, 2015b). From a theoretical perspective, this does however not falsify the two domestic explanations forwarded in this paper. Perhaps, one way to analyse the Russian support could be by framing it as the second information failure forwarded by Walter (2009), 'uncertainty regarding rebel financing'. It could very well be that the Ukrainian government was drawn into an armed conflict with an adversary far stronger than it expected, given that it had incomplete information regarding how much resources the separatists had, or would receive from Russia.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to analyse how a sudden negative shift in horizontal inequality and government weakness could condition the onset of armed separatist conflict. By applying the theories to the onset of civil war in Ukraine's Donbas region in 2014, it is possible to conclude that neither theory should be refuted. While both theories fail to capture all vital aspects of the Ukrainian case, both provide enough explanatory power to highlight the importance of domestic factors. Even if the causal mechanism of ethnic entrepreneurship seems to have been exogenous to some extent, it is still possible to identify a sudden negative shift in the political/cultural status of the Russian minority between 22 February and 2 May 2014.

Furthermore, the Ukrainian interim government had hardline supporting actors, but it still relied on a narrow support base and suffered from serious deficiencies in its law enforcement. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that Turchynov's government lacked the competence necessary to rule the country. As a result, it was unable to credibly signal its resolve without using violence against Donetsk and Lugansk, something it had reason to do given the existence of an audience of potential challengers, such as the pro-Russian protesters in Odessa and Kharkiv. This paper has thus contributed to expand the knowledge on when horizontal inequality leads to violence, and what characteristics of a government reduces its ability to credibly signal resolve, given that it faces more than one potential separatist challenger.

Both theories do however require refinement in order to maximize their explanatory power, for example what type of government weakness that matters the most. Despite this, both theories are capable of shedding light on why civil war erupted in the Donbas region. When combined, the two theories can provide a good narrative of why the Russian minority chose to challenge the government, and why the ineptitude of the interim government allowed the confrontation to spiral into full-scale civil war. Still, it is hard to complete the explanation without taking Russia into account. As shown above, the information failure explanation would be even stronger if the uncertainty regarding Russian support of the rebels were added. Similarly, the causal link between horizontal inequality and civil war is hard to complete without external (Russian) interference in this case. But in the end, the outbreak of civil war in Ukraine *can* be explained by looking at domestic factors, which implies that the Ukrainian interim government and the separatists were agents in their own fate.

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The Social Mechanisms of Intergroup Reconciliation: A Review

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Abstract

T his literature review aims to provide an analytical overview of recent academic research regarding intergroup reconciliation in post conflict societies. Observing that the vast majority of such studies focus on evaluating the 'tools' of reconciliation (e.g. transitional justice and nation building projects) in terms of their impact and outcomes, this review focuses instead on the social mechanisms they are theorised to invoke. In other words, attention is shifted away from causal statements connecting independent and dependent variables, to full theoretical causal explanations. In reviewing 18 peer-reviewed articles three categories of social mechanisms are conceptualised, providing an alternative approach through which to structure and analyse the wider academic field. A broader review of current academic trends and gaps accompanies this, highlighting a reliance on certain underlying theoretical assumptions, descriptive-based methodologies, as well as pointing towards an overall need for greater focus on the social mechanisms of intergroup reconciliation in future research.

Introduction

Post conflict reconciliation is an incredibly rich and diverse academic and empirical concept, incorporating theoretical perspectives from a variety of different disciplines within the social sciences. However, a noted side effect in being such an interdisciplinary field relates to the lack of broad consensus and conceptual clarity in our understandings of what reconciliation entails – in essence, the socio-psychological 'cogs' that underline its complex long term processes. This review therefore aims to take a step back and address this lack of clarity by providing a broad, analytical reflection on the current state of the field, putting forward a temporal based delineation of social mechanisms theorised in recent literature, as well as identifying possible theoretical and methodological 'gaps' and shortcomings that could guide future research.

Greater understanding of the processes and conditions for reconciliation of post conflict societies is undeniably of great importance, as its success provides solid foundations for sustainable peace[1] in the context of the recent increase in the number of armed conflicts (Pettersson and Wallensteen, 2015). Thus far, many scholars have tended to focus their attention

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[1] See for e.g. Long and Brecke (2003), who find a correlation between reconciliation 'events' and durable peace for both interstate and intrastate conflicts

largely on evaluating the common, tangible 'tools' of reconciliation – for instance, trials, truth commissions and dialogue programmes – in terms of their impact on post-conflict societies. However, this dominant approach has brought with it two drawbacks: firstly, the field being dispersed into discrete, empirically grounded categories, with theoretical linkages between these various types of tools rarely being made; second, the prevalence of 'black box' theory that focuses mostly on intervention and outcome as opposed to the underlying mechanisms mediating the effect. This review therefore hopes to provide a broader theoretical perspective and draw out more insightful trends by anchoring its analysis in the social mechanism of reconciliation – in other words, how the tools of reconciliation lead to the end goal for which they are designed[2].

In analysing these articles, three categories of social mechanisms emerge. These categorisations are clearly interlinked, as shown through the number of articles that fall under more than one category due to their theoretical complexity and integrated approaches. However, these categories are discrete in terms of their general temporal foci: (1) addressing and redressing past traumatic narratives, (2) developing present day societal cooperation and trust, and (3) creating new future identities for self and others.

Following this introduction, a short methods section briefly outlines the scope criteria and procedures used to gather material for this review. The review itself is then divided into two main sections: the first is dedicated to analysing and fleshing out the three conceptual categorisations identified above, whilst the second goes broader in its analysis of the literature as a whole in order to identify general trends and gaps. A short discussion then concludes the review.

Methods

As a literature review, this paper aims to provide a critical overview of a dense academic field. In order to effectively position itself and define scope conditions for its findings, a number of criteria were introduced for the retrieval of articles.

Firstly, in light of the multiple levels of analysis possible within the field of reconciliation, this review shall be centred on intergroup reconciliation in intrastate contexts. This approach grounds theory in social as opposed to political process, in spatial contexts where previously opposing forces are expected to coexist peacefully[3]. Secondly, for simplicity, related fields such as reintegration processes of ex-combatants are excluded from the scope of this review in order to keep focus on civilian populations. Finally, focus shall be kept firmly on evaluating the current state of the field by including peer-reviewed articles published only within the past five years. This is in consideration of the vast amount of literature available on the broad topic of reconciliation, whilst also capitalising on the benefits of cumulative knowledge.

As a result of these above criteria, 18 peer-reviewed articles from 2010-2015 were selected for this review and deemed to employ enough variety in theory and methodology in order broadly represent the wider field. Articles were retrieved using keyword searches from two

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[2] A mechanism is understood for the purposes of this review in terms of Hedstrom and Swedberg's (1998) definition, that being: "…on the occurrence of the cause or input, I, it generates the effect or outcome, O" (25). In this paper, I is seen as the implemented tool (eg. trial, truth commission) while O is seen broadly as successful intergroup reconciliation.

[3] In one exception, an article focusing on interpersonal reconciliation between victim and perpetrator (Seu and Cameron, 2013) has been included as its theory has implications judged to be transferrable to intergroup scenarios.

major academic databases: International Bibliography of the Social Sciences and Web of Science4. A shortlist of relevant articles was compiled and also triangulated with the archives of prominent journals to ensure the final selection included high-impact, well-cited articles5. Whilst the lack of systematization in the gathering of articles is acknowledged as a flaw of this study, the resulting even spread of methodologies, topics and contributions of the chosen articles arguably provides a more expansive overview of the current field.

The Social Mechanisms of Intergroup Reconciliation

This section analyses the selected literature and provides conceptual categorization according to temporal focus of the social mechanism. Within each of these main groupings, sub-categories have been created where possible to provide clarity between different underlying concepts. Where social mechanisms are not explicit or evident within a theory, attempts at identifying implicit similarities and divergences with other theories have been made. A table summarizing all 18 articles reviewed can be found in Appendix 1. Broader identification of general trends and gaps can be found in Section 2.

Addressing and Redressing Past Trauma and Narratives

The most dominant subfield within reconciliation literature revolves around the core social mechanisms of exacting justice and establishing truth. These two pathways to reconciliation, rooted in reflection and engagement with the past, are typically embodied in the various tools and processes that largely fall under the conceptual umbrella of 'transitional justice'. Much research within this field focuses on evaluating these transitional justice tools and their impacts on post conflict societies, keeping analysis rather empirically based in nature and therefore neglecting the theoretical development of the social mechanisms involved. However, more socio-psychological approaches tend to view the concept more broadly, developing more complex theories based on the idea of societal narratives and their role in creating consensus over the past.

Justice: Despite the saturation of literature evaluating various tools of retributive justice, the concept of achieving justice itself is surprisingly undertheorised as a social mechanism. This could be due to the critical view taken by many scholars relating to these tools; in establishing the obstacles that prevent justice from being exacted in such cases, little understanding is actually gained of how it can theoretically be achieved, or how it may relate to the outcome of reconciliation more generally. For instance, Subotic (2011) argues that current forms of transitional justice and its individualisation of guilt allows societies and states to hide behind 'bad eggs', thus not taking full accountability for crimes committed during conflict. She further argues that in order to combat this and to adequately debunk perpetrator ideologies and denial, accountability should also be targeted at a societal level. Although the study provides a

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4 Multiple database searches were conducted in the initial stages using different combinations of broad and topic-specific keywords to capture a diverse range of literature, e.g. "post-conflict", "groups", "reconciliation", "relations", "transitional justice", "memory". A shortlist of around 30 articles was subsequently narrowed down to 18, firstly by eliminating articles not relevant to the aim of the review, secondly by prioritizing prestige (see footnote 5), thirdly to ensure an equal distribution of methodologies and aspect (or 'tool') of reconciliation in focus.
5 Articles were considered to be high-impact on account of two triangulation checks: firstly, by checking the journals' impact and citation scores in the ISI Web of Knowledge Journal Citation Reports, secondly by conducting the same keyword searches in the online archives of three journals judged by the author to be prestigious in the relevant field – Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Conflict Resolution and International Journal of Transitional Justice.

convincing example of the consequences of such failed justice through the case of Serbia, the inherent argument lacks somewhat in depth. She not only fails to adequately explain the supposed link between societal accountability and societal reconciliation, but also fails to fully differentiate her theory from the so-called 'queasy and uncomfortable' concept of collective guilt (Subotic, 2011: 160) and discuss or counter the possible negative implications of such a notion[6]. Aiken (2010: 181) similarly highlights an important empirical obstacle to justice, arguing that assigning accountability too quickly post conflict can be counterproductive, obstructed by 'double victimhood' mentalities that lead to both sides expecting the other to take responsibility. However, little theory is developed regarding how well-timed initiatives may generate a sense of justice, and subsequently more successful reconciliation.

An interesting critique that can be levied at both of the above articles is their normative assumption that justice is a social mechanism inherently necessary for post conflict society. Adhikari et al (2012: 184) use this critique as a starting point for their research into a reparations programme in Nepal, arguing that there is currently insufficient understanding on a more individual level as to why some victims may be motivated to seek justice for past traumas, while others are evidently not. In addition to discovering that conflict related grievances such as displacement increased the likelihood of applying for compensation, they also suggest that individuals perform cost/benefit analyses regarding the possible social 'risks' involved. The implication from this study is that justice may not be a social mechanism prioritised by all in post conflict societies, and may be mediated by societal and pragmatic constraints; a conclusion echoed by Samii (2013) in his study on Burundi and local support for transitional justice. However, Adhikari et al's (2012) conclusions are slightly undermined by a number of methodological flaws: a failure to control for awareness of opportunities for compensation, as well as undertheorised causal links between risk and its operational indicators of individual wealth and political affiliation. Nevertheless, such an investigation provides an important starting point for further research. By seeking to establish individual and group level motivations for compensation, we can gain a greater understanding of both the socio-psychological processes involved in the achievement of justice and its wider connection as a social mechanism to an outcome of reconciliation.

<u>Truth:</u> Establishing 'truth' – here used as a catch-all term for both societal conflict related narratives as well as the act of bearing witness – is by comparison a far better theorised social mechanism of reconciliation and is a common feature of broader integrated theories and models. Many scholars engaging with this aspect of reconciliation base their work on that of Daniel Bar-Tal, who over the years has developed a comprehensive framework detailing the various socio-psychological stages in transforming collective narratives.

This school of thought sees conflict supportive narratives as social constructs devised in order to help individuals and communities process, legitimise and adapt to conflict situations. It is argued that an important aspect of societal reconciliation involves the deconstruction of these narratives and a transformation from an ethos of conflict to an ethos of peace (Bar-Tal, Oren and Nets-Zehngut, 2014: 669). This involves changes in beliefs and attitudes towards the conflict

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[6] Whilst group-level awareness and regret for past wrongs has been positively correlated elsewhere with reconciliation, it is also suggested that repeated reminders of collective shame could stall this effect long-term as perpetrators may start to feel that they are inherently 'bad', with little motivation therefore to reform behaviour (Noor, Brown, and Prentice 2008)

at both an individual and societal level, with a key step involving the accepted legitimacy of the rival perspective and a more balanced appraisal regarding own narratives (Bar-Tal, Oren and Nets-Zehngut, 2014: 670–671). The importance of this process as a social mechanism for reconciliation has been established through comparative research. Hall (2014) for instance observes that migrants and refugees with overall more peaceful attitudes and nuanced narratives compared to those who remained in the conflict environment can be explained by the former group's physical distance from a conflict of ethos. Thus, not only does Bar-Tal's theory of collective narratives serve as a solid social mechanism for other studies to build upon, but its salience in links to reconciliation have also been tentatively supported empirically.

A handful of studies explain a lack of successful reconciliation through the absence of overarching, peace based narratives. For instance, Clark (2010: 144) argues that reconciliation in Rwanda is obstructed by the lack of consensus over why the genocide happened. Similarly, Moll (2013: 930) provides an extensive overview of the 'deadlocked memory landscape' of Bosnia-Herzegovina, describing it as being 'paralysed' by competing, persistent ethnonational narratives. Although more a theory of conflict mobilisation, Dragojevic's (2013) study demonstrates how family memories of past conflict can persist across generations and jeopardise reconciliation by increasing susceptibility to re-emerging hostilities. These all provide counterfactual theoretical and empirical evidence to support Bar-Tal's framework.

However, a number of interesting counter developments to this literature on truth and narratives have been the attempts to move beyond an idea of homogenous, cross-group narratives as being key to successful reconciliation. Tending to focus more on a local level, these studies look at how divergent narratives can co-exist peacefully and sustainably in post-conflict societies. Brown (2012: 465) concludes his study of localised memory in Northern Ireland by arguing for an agonistic approach to reconciliation by promoting the engagement of different narratives as opposed to enforcing one 'truth' on a society. This is based on his vignette case studies of everyday, divergent memory sharing the same physical space, facilitating rather than hindering cross-communal engagement, and allowing similarities grounded in a shared sense of humanity to arise. This ability to retain divergent narratives is also incorporated into Seu and Cameron's (2013) model of Empathic Mutual Positioning, a reconciliatory process that is based on the mechanism of developing joint meaning and empathy whilst also retaining one's own positions. These two studies essentially posit that the development of a consensual understanding in itself is not necessarily as vital as other scholars suggest, contesting instead that the cathartic aspects of such 'truth-telling' – such as the ability to be heard, be understood, be respected - could be more relevant for reconciliation in developing understandings of past traumas.

Developing Societal Cooperation
The second category of social mechanisms has a more present temporal focus. Linked mostly to the ideals of dialogue and contact theory, they revolve around three core, interlinked and interacting concepts - the socio-emotional element of building trust, the pragmatic need for survival, as well as confidence in reciprocal gains and gestures. These mechanisms are often perceived as being necessary precursors to the more reflective and past oriented processes detailed above, with the rebuilding of positive, functional relations seen as contributing to more solid foundations for the more sensitive undertakings related to addressing the past (Aiken, 2010: 187).

Trust: Consensus within the literature reviewed seems to show that trust plays an important role as a mechanism of reconciliatory attitudes and behaviours. For instance, Kenworthy et al (2015) and Svensson and Brounéus (2013) both use innovative research designs to respectively link cross-group friendship and interethnic dialogue as independent variables with the development of trust between former adversaries. The latter study, taking the form of a field experiment involving participants of a dialogue programme, finds a subsequent small but significant positive effect on attitudes of trust in comparison to a control group (571). Kenworthy et al's extensive study goes further, incorporating both a longitudinal analysis as well as two cross sectional surveys, with the findings that an increase in trust was a powerful mediator for increased positive behaviour as well as attitudes towards other groups, and reduced negative behaviours such as confrontation and avoidance. Both of these studies' significant findings are moreover accompanied by strong theoretical underpinnings, with Kenworthy et al's explicit order of their mechanisms, while Svensson and Brounéus provide breadth in their operationalisation of indicators.

However, in contrast to Kenworthy et al's more substantive results, Svensson and Brounéus' findings are notable in their relative lack of conviction. They suggest that an explanation for the weak effect, expressed only in attitudes rather than reconciliatory behaviour, could be due to a lagged effect or issues with research design (Svensson and Brounéus, 2013: 571). Beyond these explanations provided by the authors, an additional factor makes this weaker result even more surprising. The population of their study is composed of university students, and although individual selection effects are well controlled within the experiment, the fact that their hypotheses find only partial support amongst this arguably more aware and open-minded demographic suggests difficulties in generalising to a wider population. Nevertheless, the fact both studies come to the same conclusion regarding the impact of trust on positive intergroup relations overall suggests that these differences in substantive effect have more to say regarding research design and choice of independent variables, as opposed to the existence of the mechanism's role.

Pragmatism: A rather contrasting social mechanism linked to the development of co-operative relations is related to pragmatic, rational necessity. A couple of studies (Adhikari, Hansen and Powers 2012: Samii, 2013) included in this review include cost/benefit models in explaining the socio-psychological processes of reconciliation. Eastmond and Selimovic (2012) build on this approach by centering the concept of pragmatism at the center of their theory. They contradict traditional discourse by positing that silence can be a constructive tool in the rebuilding of post conflict societies, deployed as a respectful means to facilitate important intergroup relations, avoid disruption and place societal focus on a constructive future. Their focus on everyday, localized interactions provides a rich, ethnographic context for theory generation. Whilst arguably a difficult theory to disprove, due to its unobservable, non-isolatable characteristics, this study of silence and its accompanying pragmatic mechanisms of co-operation and survival nevertheless provide an interesting, more rational conception of the complex human factors involved in reconciliation literature.

Reciprocity: The third social mechanism in this category involves the notion of reciprocity, and the idea that both sides are committed and aware of each other's commitment to reconciliation. Arguably an intrinsic, assumed aspect of many theories within the field, drawing on classic concepts of the security dilemma, it is therefore surprising that only two studies under

review here touch upon it explicitly. Seu and Cameron (2013: 273) describe reciprocal 'intentionality' and benevolent commitment of opposing sides as being the driving force behind their model of empathy based dialogue. Similarly, in a study on the role of fairness in post conflict societies, Whitt (2014: 108) shows that egalitarianism demonstrated between groups is linked with higher perceived fairness of the out group, thus implying that expectation of fair behaviour is reciprocated with similar gestures. However, both studies' theoretical assertions suffer from methodological limitations. Regarding the former, the model is tested only on a transcript of an interpersonal exchange between a former IRA paramilitary and the daughter of an IRA victim in the context of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Whilst inevitably having an impact on its generalisability, the pre-existing willingness of the two participants also fails to isolate reciprocity as a mediating variable, endogenous to the causal relationship. Furthermore, although the authors express intention that their model has applicability at a group level, no evidence has as yet emerged in support of this. Similarly, the Whitt study on fairness norms suffers from a flawed experimental design, being based on an adapted dictator game where participants are asked to divide a sum of money between two anonymous but ethnically defined recipients. There is no longitudinal data or comparison to substantiate the claim that the experiment shows the re-emergence of a fairness norm post conflict; similarly, the involvement of money in the experiment and the use of out group fairness as attitude indicators seriously inhibits potential conclusions to be drawn from the study. However, despite their respective limitations, these two studies illustrate an important gap: while a mechanism of reciprocity and commitment is assumed across the field, it remains exceedingly undertheorised. This is coupled with little direct experimental or qualitative evidence that an expectation of reciprocal commitment to reconcile plays a role in intergroup reconciliation.

Creating New Identities for Self and Others
The concept of identity transformation as a social mechanism for reconciliation is often tightly interlinked with the mechanisms already outlined in the two previous categories and frequently forms an integral part of broader integrative frameworks[7]. However, it still merits being conceptually isolated and considered in its own category, due to both its prevalence in theories related to post conflict nationbuilding projects, as well its distinct future-based temporal focus, implying long term shifts in perceptions and visions for the trajectory of post-conflict society. The role of ethnicity and partisanship has been shown through quantitative analyses as being a possible powerful obstacle to successful intergroup reconciliation (Dyrstad et al., 2011; Samii, 2013); however, other studies have attempted to theorize the socio-psychological transformation through which identities can play an active role in generating reconciliation, as opposed to hindering it. Two social mechanisms related to the ways in which identities may transform are outlined below, although for similar reasons as the literature already explored above, some theoretical gaps in understanding persist.

    Identity Renegotiation: A re-alignment or shift in perceptions towards self and others is posited as playing a role in intergroup reconciliation. Seu and Cameron (2013: 270) include this kind of transformation as part of their model of empathy-based dialogue, arguing that as the

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[7] For example, Aiken (2010) provides an integrated social mechanism of identity renegotiation and social learning in explaining the relationship between transitional justice tools and intergroup reconciliation; Bar-Tal's (2014) theory of narrative transformation relies on a transformation in perceptions regarding self and others.

process is essentially relational, participants form, test and bring meaning to their own identities through the presence and acceptance of each other. At the same time, individuals are inevitably restricted by being representatives of a wider group, with their loyalties thus also playing a background role in their conceived push-and-pull process of identity negotiation (Seu and Cameron, 2013: 272). Hall's (2014) comparative survey also explores this concept of identity transformation post-conflict, producing the findings that refugees and migrants felt less attached to divisive national identities and also were more likely to harbour peaceful attitudes towards other groups, as compared to their counterparts surveyed in the country of origin. However, theoretical explanations for these findings differ from the relational interaction theorised as part of Seu and Cameron's model, suggesting instead that these less polarised identities were a result of the unique structural conditions and distance from the conflict experienced through being refugees or migrants (Hall, 2014: 13–14). However, as acknowledged by the author himself, these results and theoretical explanations also have to be considered in light of the possibility of selection effects related to the act of migration.

Seu and Cameron's model and Hall's findings represents the general consensus of reconciliation processes involving a renegotiation of identities in the direction of normalisation and relational moderation. In this context, Svensson and Brounéus' (2013) finding that the implementation of a dialogue programme led to an increase in ethnic awareness and identification is surprising. The explanation – that this may be due to the focal point of ethnicity forming the heart of discussions, therefore heightening immediate awareness of difference – is however mediated by their parallel finding that dialogue also led to greater accommodation of other groups, therefore not seen as impeding the overall reconciliation process (Svensson and Brounéus, 2013: 572). Nevertheless, the possibility of reconciliation succeeding despite a hardening of group identities remains an interesting theoretical and empirical divergence within the field.

<u>Identity Construction:</u> Literature analysing the creation and adoption of new, cross-group identities, most often through external intervention, is by comparison more critical in nature. Often assumed to be an important mechanism in creating unity and transcending ethnicity, for example in post-conflict reconciliation in Rwanda, the creation of a new civic based identity is often fraught with difficulties in terms of its ideological and practical implementation (Clark, 2010). Therefore, studies under review concerned with this aspect of reconciliation are often focused more on critiquing failings of various projects, rather than reflecting too deeply on the exact causal links between such interventions and their intended outcomes of reconciliation.

This mechanism of a new identity bringing unity is seen as being obstructed if it is not salient or relatable enough, or if it is seen as a contradiction or threat. Arguing for the former, Clark (2010) provides an in-depth case study of Rwanda to generate an argument that a new supranational identity is no more artificial and instrumental than those it intends to replace, suppressing old identities that are key to the success of the reconciliation process. Keranen (2014) also uses a case study, this time of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to critique the inherent contradictions of reliance on such a mechanism. In promoting multiculturalism on one hand but also individualism and depoliticisation of identities on the other, nationbuilding projects instead cause defence over group identities as opposed to adherence to civic nationhood and unity. A conclusion of both of these two studies thus seems to be that a mechanism of unity is not easily achieved through current designs of such projects and approaches, mostly due to inherent contradictions. However, Jones (2012) provides a slightly more optimistic view. In analysing a

case study of 'success', in essence, a deviant case selection in the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina, she argues that cases of everyday non-compliance to multi-ethnic education reform is a result of pragmatic difficulties in its implementation, rather than individual or group ideological resistance (143-145).

Critical Evaluation of the Field

This section moves on to outline broader trends and gaps identified within the reviewed literature. The first four critiques are based on common theoretical shortcomings, whilst the final two focus their attention on the various methodologies employed across the 18 articles.

Assumed Social Mechanisms

As has been alluded to, a key difficulty in categorising by causal mechanism lies foremost in their lack of definition in the majority of literature on reconciliation. Related to this critique, it must firstly be acknowledged that the studies under review here have a wide variety of different scopes, designs and contributions to the field. Some studies, such as that by Dyrstad et al (2011), focus on testing existing hypotheses and establishing new and interesting causal relationships, and are thus not undermined by a lack of original theory or reflection on social mechanisms. However, it is still a legitimate critique of the field to note that due to the overriding focus on the evaluation of tools and conditions for their success, mechanisms generally tend to be glossed over, assumed, paid lip service or simply absent altogether. This is problematic especially given the objectives of many of these studies; if research is to establish what tools and conditions lead to successful reconciliation, an understanding of how and why this is actually achieved is vital. Interestingly, only one article explicitly states their research question in relation to understanding the 'black box' between an independent and dependent variable – in this case, the use of transitional justice in relation to the outcome of post conflict reconciliation (Aiken, 2010: 167)

A related shortcoming in terms of theoretical generation is the lack of explicit integration. Although many studies involve multiple mechanisms, very few take time to theoretically provide explicit linkages and ordering between various components, thus failing to provide a clear, logical causal journey from independent to dependent variable. In this case, there are two outliers that stand out: Seu and Cameron (2013) for their in-depth, psychological-based model of interpersonal dialogue, and Aiken (2010) for his broad framework linking various aspects of reconciliation under an umbrella of 'social learning'. The failures amongst other studies to explicitly link and order mechanisms undermine their theoretical weight; the consequent lack of clarity also fails to truly further our understanding of how and why tools can influence intergroup reconciliation.

Lack of Transformational Mechanisms

A similar critique applicable to all articles included in this review relates to the lack of transformational mechanisms. This review has based its understanding of social mechanisms on Hedstrom and Swedberg's (1998) seminal 'cogs and wheels' definition, which views mechanisms as the connecting construct that provides deeper, more insightful explanation behind an observed causal relationship or variation. A key aspect of their model looks at social change as being anchored in how macro-states interact with micro-level, producing individual behaviour and action that then generates a change in future macro-states (Hedström and Swedberg, 1998: 21).

Their 'bucket' model, as demonstrated below, provides a typology of three different types of social mechanism, which only when strung together into a coherent pathway can provide a full explanation of why an effect occurs, adequately linking input to outcome. A situational mechanism theorises how an individual exposed to a certain context or event reacts in a particular way, whilst an action formation mechanism formulates how the resulting individual attitudes and desires generates a specific individual behaviour or action. The final missing link, connecting individual behaviour with social change is the transformational mechanism, which specifies how the interaction of individuals' reactions leads to a specific, observable, macro-level outcome.
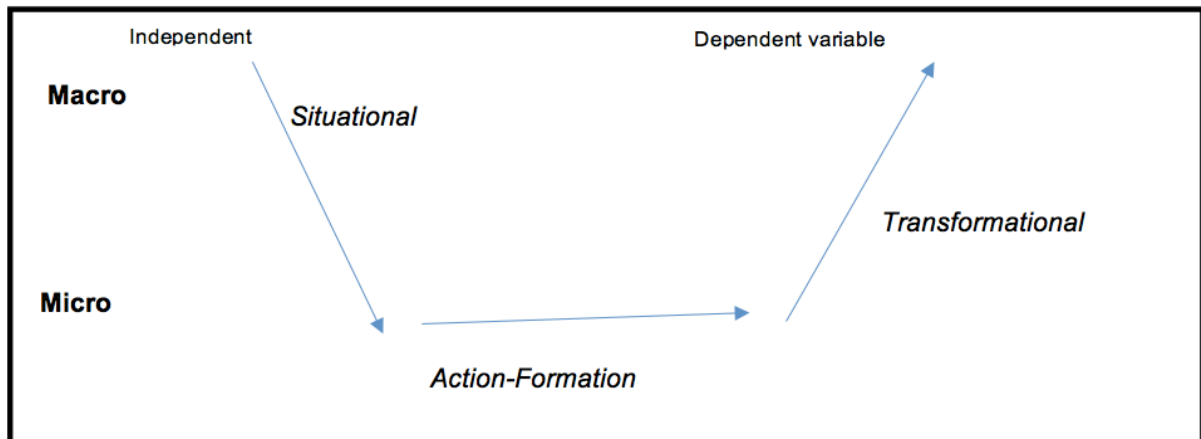

Figure 1. A typology of social mechanisms (adapted from Hedstrom & Swedberg, 1998: 22)

In evoking this model it becomes clear that almost without exception, there is a missing 'third link' in understandings of intergroup reconciliation across the literature selected for this review[8]. None of the reviewed studies provide theoretical or evidential conviction in full causal journeys as conceived above, with most focusing their attentions instead on situational and action formation explanations with the individual as the base unit of analysis, thus leaving the final, crucial link implicit or completely absent[9]. This is rather problematic in light of the group level of analysis involved in explaining intergroup reconciliation, as theory and analysis remains trapped at micro-level. Until a full causal pathway can be established, research surrounding individual based socio-psychological processes can only go so far in defining and explaining our overall understandings of intergroup reconciliation as an outcome, anchored as it is in conceptions of macro level group behaviour and attitudes.

The development of indicators for theorising and testing such a complex mechanism is therefore surely a conceptual challenge for future research, and one that could surely benefit from looking further afield for inspiration from similar theories of collective action. In the meantime, the closest that the field arguably gets to a transformational mechanism is hinted at

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[8] An extra column, assigning each article in accordance to this typology of mechanisms, can be found in the summary table in Appendix 1.

[9] This is true even of the most robust theories presented as part of this review. Kenworthy et al (2015) provide a coherent, ordered multi-mechanism framework, but leave the link between micro-level trusting attitudes and behaviour and their overall macro-level outcome variable of intergroup reconciliation implicit. Similarly, Svensson and Brounéus (2013) focus their theory and research design firmly on connecting dialogue with the micro-level social mechanism of trust.

very briefly in the studies by Moll (2013) and Brown (2012). These two theories pay lip-service to the role of 'memory entrepreneurs', who are conceived as individuals responsible for scaling up localised and individual narratives to a national level. Unfortunately, this concept remains completely under-theorised, with little suggestion or detail provided as to who these entrepreneurs may be, how this transformational process may come about or the exact ways in which it interacts across the micro-macro divide. By expanding upon this idea, a crucial first step in furthering our understanding of micro-macro social mechanisms of reconciliation could be made.

Based on Underlying Assumption of Self and Other

The vast majority of articles under review base their theory on an underlying assumption of group divisions grounded in identity-based cleavages, such as ethnicity, religion or ideology. This can be implied primarily from the lens through which case studies are presented (e.g. Brown's (2012) presentation of the 'constitutional allegiances' in Northern Ireland), or the conclusions of the studies themselves (e.g. Dyrstad et al's (2011) finding that ethnicity trumps all other determinants of attitudes towards reconciliation). Reconciliation tools are often designed with these supposed societal divisions in mind, with trials or truth commissions being premised on the essential notion of there being a clear differentiation between those who can be classified as belonging to a wider group of either victims or perpetrators. However, this underlying assumption of the whole field has been brought into scrutiny by the work of authors such as Millar (2012). He argues that there has been further evolution to the dynamics of conflict since the 1990s, moving beyond current statist notions of political conflict as well as the assumed patterns of systematic, discriminatory violence that would usually enforce group dichotomies and distinctions (Millar, 2012: 724). Using the case study of Sierra Leone as a basis for theory generation, he provides the central argument that this new form of 'post identity conflict', with the opportunistic, indiscriminate violence it entails, contrarily leads to blurred group divisions and a lack of targeted animosity towards 'Others'; reconciliation tools designed with traditional conceptions of post conflict identity divisions therefore fail to have a significant impact. Millar's critical stance is undoubtedly important to the academic field of post conflict reconciliation, as it asks important questions regarding its underlying theoretical assumptions, as well as highlighting the possible myopia of current reconciliation tools and techniques often employed by external forces within post conflict societies.

Most articles under review generate their theory and methods based on this pre-conceived notion of differentiated 'Self' and 'Other'. Most conspicuous is Seu and Cameron's relational model of dialogue, which goes as far as stating that the existence of the Other, and their embodiment of essential divisions based on identity and history, is crucial for reconciliation in terms of their ability to engage with opposing narratives and allow for the key reconciliatory gesture of empathy to emerge (Seu and Cameron, 2013: 276). The closest to Millar's critique that any of the articles reaches is the acknowledgement that post conflict group identities are rarely homogenous. Jones (2012: 142), for instance, discovers through her ethnographical fieldwork the everyday complexities of individuals in relation to their conflicts and collaborations, with divisions often intra-group and going beyond reductionist dichotomies based on ethnonationalism. She thus goes on to criticise contact-based tools that are based only on group affiliation (Jones, 2012: 146). However, whilst she provides an important critical view of the politics of reconciliation and its dangerous tendency to over-simplify and dichotomise, the fact

that her case study is selected explicitly as an atypical example of 'successful' ethnic, intergroup reconciliation suggests that even if her theory is not influenced by identity based conceptions of conflict, her research design is still defined according to these overriding assumptions of societal reconciliation taking place predominantly between identity based groups.

Overall, from the selection of articles under review, it is possible to generalise that research into post conflict reconciliation is still firmly grounded theoretically and methodologically in the assumptions surrounding identity based conflict and their aftermaths. Whilst there is critical voice from elsewhere, little acknowledgement of this has filtered through to the mainstream. However, it is also important to be cautious around the salience of this critical voice; Millar bases his theory generation on secondary data from the unique case study of Sierra Leone, which suggests that his wide ranging conclusions regarding a new era of conflict may be a little premature to generalise across the field and shift well-grounded existing paradigms.

Lack of Clear Definitions and Concepts

The final theoretical based critique of the articles reviewed involves their inherent lack of consensual, clear definitions and operationalization. A well-acknowledged shortcoming of the field as a whole, this lack of clarity over how reconciliation can be conceptualised, could be seen as a possible side effect of its rich, interdisciplinary body of literature, or more fundamentally due to its position as an ultimately normative concept[10]. In describing a process from an inescapably moral point of view (i.e. that reconciliation is a positive force, akin to democracy or freedom) its ascribed meaning, definition and criteria are tightly bound to their normative origins, opening itself up for complexity and subjective re-interpretations from different vantage points (Connolly, 1993: 32).

Debates regarding definitions are widely acknowledged and discussed within the broader field, seemingly differentiating according to how each individual study approaches what reconciliation primarily involves, or whether it should be perceived as a static end goal or more dynamic process (Dyrstad et al, 2011: 366). However, despite the prominence of this debate, the vast majority of articles included in this particular review seem to skirt this minefield. Only Dyrstad et al (2011: 366) provide an explicit definition of reconciliation for the purposes of their quantitative study – opting for a more easily operational concept of 'normalisation' of relationships – selected from a short but broad overview of other literature. Eastmond and Selimovic (2012: 521), on the other hand, are explicit in their decision not to frame their study using the term 'reconciliation' due to its lack of clarity; their alternative framing of 'post conflict strategies in divided contexts', however, whilst undoubtedly referring to the same social phenomena as reconciliation, only serves to further confuse the concept. This avoidance of engaging with explicit definitions is problematic, as it becomes difficult to truly establish whether different studies approach the question of reconciliation from a similar or even comparable angle. Without such relatable starting points, it is hard to confidently aggregate theory and findings into consensual understandings; future research must therefore either strive for the development of a consensual, conceptual starting point for research on reconciliation, or at the very least be more explicit in the definitions it chooses to adhere to.

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[10] In contrast to academic research, practical handbooks on reconciliation tend to provide more in-depth discussion on the nature of reconciliation as a normative concept, linking it with broader global norms of democratic culture (International IDEA, 2003) or a necessity to address historical injustice (Brounéus and Sida, 2003)

Single-Case Studies

Moving now onto more methodological evaluations of the literature under review, a blatant trend worthy of note regards the over-reliance on single-case study evidence. The vast majority – 16 out of 18 – of studies reviewed were single-case studies with no cross country comparative elements. In general terms, the proliferation of such contextually restricted research designs to such a high extent brings with it a handful of disadvantages. Whilst clearly beneficial for in-depth theory generation, very little valid testing of hypotheses takes place through applicability in different contexts. Only Hall (2014) uses any form of comparative design in his study, directly comparing attitudes of ethnic Bosnian migrants and refugees in Sweden to their peers in Bosnia-Herzegovina; however, this element of comparison still does not allow for generalisations to be confidently made in relation to other conflict-affected populations. The rather descriptive approach taken by the majority of the case study based articles is understandable considering the socio-psychological influence in the field of post-conflict reconciliation; it provides a chance for deep, qualitative analysis and process-tracing of possible social mechanisms, and avoids the reductionism often caused by simplistic operationalization of indicators. However, the fact that such a significant proportion of the field currently is populated by these in-depth, theory generating studies means that many theories have little chance to be validated through convincing scientific examination.

In addition to this overreliance on in-depth case studies, studies under review here also tended to over rely on particular case study selections. Regarding the former, Bosnia and Herzegovina is the subject of six articles, whilst Northern Ireland constitutes 4; together, they account for over half of the 18 articles reviewed. The proliferation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Northern Ireland as cases of post-conflict reconciliation is somewhat understandable in light of their relative accessibility and physical security in comparison to many other post-conflict societies. However, this is understandably also problematic in consideration of their relative structural and institutional integrity, economic support and external intervention; many of the theories generated through the analysis of these arguably extreme cases may not therefore be applicable at all to contexts even slightly less stable or supported. In addition, research fatigue could easily be distorting results.

Finally, applicability of chosen case studies is also questionable in a handful of studies within this review, where context is not necessarily relevant or conducive for the theory being generated or tested. Perhaps also motivated by pragmatic considerations such as accessibility and availability of existing research projects, the use of certain case studies could simply not provide valid results in proving or disproving a theoretical approach. For instance, the use of Nepal in Adhikari et al's (2012) survey on post-conflict reparations is problematic, as the individual cost/benefit theoretical approach being theorised and supposedly supported could easily have been influenced by the rife political instability and considerations of personal safety, obscuring or distorting the individual level factors driving results. Similarly, Aiken's (2010) theorisation of social mechanisms related to the implementation of transitional justice is sorely questioned by the choice of Northern Ireland as a case study, where such tools were not formally institutionalised by the state. Thus, his theory generalises only to a specific context of decentralised, local-driven initiatives.

Lack of Variation Between Research Designs

The fact that out of the 18 studies, a large minority of eight involve an element of quantitative analysis of findings – whether through regression or coding – is not surprising, as during the selection process, such articles tended to be prioritised in order to achieve a fair distribution. The fact that these articles were positively discriminated hints at the wider proliferation of descriptive, qualitative methods more generally within the academic field of post-conflict reconciliation. However, by comparing these articles in terms of their research designs as opposed to their method of analysing results, some interesting patterns emerge. Surveys and interviews prove to be very popular; 10 out of the 18 studies employ this method, with an equal spread over whether results are analysed through quantitative or more descriptive means. The reliance on this specific form of data collection could possibly be related to its ease and sensitivity, if conducted appropriately. In comparison, more experimental forms of research design are ethically questionable considering the delicate nature of post-conflict societies. However, despite this, two interesting examples of how such design could be implemented are shown through the work of Svensson and Brounéus (2013) and Whitt (2014). Seemingly still a rare form of approach to research in this field, the use of behavioural and field experiments could nevertheless be developed and viewed as a positive step in providing more scientific, comparative insights, achieved through their ability to better isolate confounders, causes and effects.

A final gap worth of note in terms of research design regards the use of longitudinal analysis. Only one study, Kenworthy et al (2015), attempts to perform a time lagged study as part of their broader efforts to establish causalities and social mechanisms. However, if reconciliation is to be considered a long term process, there exists an imperative need to understand how this process develops over time, especially if it incorporates multiple complex ordered mechanisms.

Discussion and Conclusion – What are the 'Cogs and Wheels' of Reconciliation?

This review set out to provide a snapshot of the current academic field of intergroup reconciliation. Attempting to do so in the context of such an interdisciplinary, extensive selection of literature is certainly not a simple task, and in light of this certain criteria were enforced in order to position and provide focus for the review and its findings. This means that there are a number of critiques that can easily be levied at the various decisions made at the outset of this review; the short timeframe, for instance, neglects the vast influence of a number of older influential texts. Similarly, the omission of non-English literature creates an inherent culture based selection bias. As previously noted, the lack of systematisation in gathering articles for the review sees representativeness traded off for the benefit of diversity and breadth.

Bearing in mind these critiques, a handful of main findings from this review can nevertheless be considered. The main contribution it provides can be found in its framework. By shifting from the conventional focus on reconciliation tools to their lesser-developed social mechanisms, it has attempted to provide an alternative view of this complex and contested academic field, drawing out trends and gaps anchored more in theory rather than empirics or causal arguments. This review has found that broadly speaking, theory regarding intergroup reconciliation can be grouped according to the temporal focus of its social mechanism.

An additional result of this exercise is the identification of a handful of more general patterns and conclusions that could direct future research, furthering our understanding of this broad, interdisciplinary concept. Firstly, there exists a tendency to over rely on certain forms of

methodology. Secondly, the field rests on a number of underlying theoretical assumptions and contestations, not only regarding the way post-conflict societies are perceived but also in terms of how reconciliation itself is interpreted. Thirdly, and by far most significantly, this review has shown that a large gap persists in understandings in terms of the social mechanisms of intergroup reconciliation. In order to truly establish how and why various tools of reconciliation can be successful in promoting sustainable peace, the exact individual and group level processes through which it takes place must first be sought.

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Appendix 1

Author	Method	Research Question	Theoretical mechanism	Typology (Hedström and Swedberg) S = situational AF = action formation T = transformational N/A = not specified/implied by author
Adhikari et al (2012)	Single case study – Nepal Surveys, quantitative analysis of results	Why do some individuals seek compensation post-conflict, while others don't?	Justice, cost/benefit	S, AF
Aiken (2010)	Single case study – Northern Ireland Descriptive, interviews	How does transitional justice lead to reconciliation?	Social learning, identity negotiation, belief/attitude change	S, AF
Bar-Tal et al (2014)	Theory/framework generation	How are conflict-supporting narratives created and transformed?	Truth, narrative transformation, belief/attitude change	S, AF, T*
Brown (2012)	Single case study – 3 vignettes in Northern Ireland Descriptive	How do everyday processes of social memory interact with transitional justice?	Truth, creation/instrumentalisation of social memory	T**
Clark (2010)	Theory generation Single case study – Rwanda Descriptive	How does the NURC impact on reconciliation in Rwanda?	Truth, narrative change, unity, identity construction	S, AF
Dragojevic (2013)	Single case study – Serbia Open-ended interviews, quantitative analysis of transcripts	How does familial experience of trauma impact on identity formation and attitude to conflict?	Intergenerational narratives, truth, identity transformation	S, AF
Dyrstad et al (2011)	Single case study – Macedonia Surveys Quantitative analysis of results	What individual-level factors determine support for post-conflict settlement and reconciliation?	Ethnicity/identity as an obstruction	N/A

Eastmond and Selimovic (2012)	Single case study – Bosnia and Herzegovina Ethnographic observation, interviews	How is silence used by local populations as a strategy of post-conflict reconciliation?	Pragmatism, cost/benefit, trust	S, AF
Hall (2014)	Comparative case studies – Bosnia and Bosnian refugees in Sweden Simultaneous surveys, interviews Quantitative analysis of results	To what extent does migration affect attitudes towards conflict?	Truth/Narratives, identity negotiation	S
Jones (2012)	Single case study – Bosnia and Herzegovina Interviews, observations Descriptive	How is education reform aimed at reconciliation implemented and viewed at grassroots level?	Identity construction, pragmatism	S, AF
Kenworthy et al (2015)	3 studies, 1x longitudinal, 2x cross-sectional Single case-study – Northern Ireland, with three different sample populations Theory generation and testing Quantitative analysis of interviews/survey results	How does cross-group friendship impact on behaviour and attitudes towards outgroups?	Trust, emotions, self-disclosure	S, AF
Keranen (2014)	Single case study – Bosnia and Herzegovina Descriptive	How do international and local state building processes interact? How do they contribute to the reordering of post-war identities?	Identity creation, creating belonging/unity	S
Moll (2013)	Single case study – Bosnia and Herzegovina Descriptive	What is the current memory landscape and to what extent is it challenged by alternative narratives?	Truth/narratives	T **

Samii (2013)	Single case study – Burundi Surveys Quantitative analysis of results	Why is there wariness towards transitional justice policies?	Justice, pragmatism, cost/benefit	S
Seu and Cameron (2013)	Theory/model generation Single case study – two individuals, Northern Ireland Discourse analysis of dialogue transcript	How does dialogue and contact lead to conciliation?	Positioning, truth, reciprocity, empathy, identity negotiation	S, AF
Subotic (2011)	Single case study – Serbia and ICTY Descriptive	What level of accountability is needed to ensure justice is truly met post-conflict?	Justice, ending impunity, social accountability	S
Svensson and Broneus (2013)	Single case study – Ethiopia Field experiment of two parts, surveys Quantitative analysis of results	To what extent do dialogue processes contribute to positive changes in attitudes and behaviours?	Trust, identity renegotiation, reduced fear, awareness	S, AF
Whitt (2014)	Single case study – Bosnia and Herzegovina Behavioural experiment Quantitative analysis of results	To what extent can co-operative, pro-social norms re-emerge across ethnicities following a period of ethnic violence?	Fairness, reciprocity	S, AF (but no variation in X)

Refugees and Terrorism

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Abstract

*T*his paper investigates the link between the number of refugees in a country and the incidence and magnitude of terrorist attacks in the same country, using panel data for 161 countries during the time period 2002-2012. The results clearly show that there is little or no support for the hypothesis that countries hosting large numbers of refugees would be more prone to terrorism than countries that do not. This contradicts both theoretical connections between refugees and the incidence of political violence, as well as an earlier study on the relationship between refugees and terrorism.

Introduction

Today, Europe is facing one of the worst refugee crises since World War II. The impact that these flows of international migration and refuge have on both national and international security is a topic that has been discussed by many scholars since the end of the Cold War. The discussions have related to, for instance, the security risks for hosting and source countries (Weiner, 1992) their consequences for national identity (Stivachis, 2008), or their effect on the risk of civil war (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006; Buhaug and Gleditsch, 2008).

Yet, despite this clear link between refugees and security, there are surprisingly few studies investigating the connection between refugees and other types of political violence than open conflict or civil war. To date, only one major quantitative study has investigated the relationship between refugees and terrorism, which concludes that countries with a higher number of refugees are more prone to experience political violence in the form of terrorism (Choi and Salehyan, 2013). There are, however, weaknesses in this study as it does not take into account whether the country is located in a conflict prone region of the world, nor does it assess the conflict status of the country itself (Buhaug and Gleditsch, 2008)[1]. This is problematic, as it makes it difficult to separate the effects refugees themselves may have on terrorism from other effects, which may arise from countries being involved in armed conflict with groups using terrorism, being located in conflict prone neighbourhoods, or the possible circular effect of terrorism on refugees and refugees on terrorism.

This lack of research on the possible connection between refugees and terrorism is problematic, as terrorism today is one of the most discussed security issues. Thus, this paper aims to address this gap in the research, and the problems outlined above, by conducting a quantitative study investigating the connection between refugees and terrorism outside the

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[1] They do, however, use the "State Failure Index" which can be seen as a proxy for war or internal conflict

context of armed conflict. The results from this study will then be analysed in order to answer the research question:

How do refugees affect the incidence and magnitude of terrorism in host countries?

The reminder of this paper is divided into four sections. In the first section, the theoretical connections between refugees and political violence will be discussed and generalised to the case of terrorism. This is followed by a section where the concepts of "terrorism" and "refugees" will be defined and operationalised, and where the methodology and data for the study will be discussed. Lastly, in the two final parts of the paper the results of the study will be analysed and conclusions will be drawn.

Refugees, Political Violence, and Terrorism

Refugees can broadly be seen as individuals who leave their home countries for a fear of politically, ethnically, or religiously motivated harm. While it is important to stress that refugees are themselves victims of political violence, or the threat thereof, refugees may also pose security challenges to the hosting countries, and in some cases even cause an increase of political violence in these hosting countries.

There are several different mechanisms through which refugees may cause an increase of political violence in the host country. Refugees may, for instance, bring rebel groups, combatants, and arms with them into the host countries. There, these rebel organisations might try to establish safe havens from which these organisations can conduct cross border raids into their home countries. Due to the high level of victimisation among refugees and the fact that refugees are often subjected to severe economic hardships, refugee camps may also provide fertile recruiting grounds for the rebel groups (Salehyan, 2007; Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006). However, these rebel organisations are not only a security problem for the home country, but also for the host countries, whose sovereignty may be threatened by cross-border activities by the rebel groups (Weiner, 1992). The rebel groups may also make demands to the host governments to take actions against the home government that the rebel groups are fighting. For instance, the cross-border activities by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from Jordan into Israel, provoked a bloody battle between Jordanian forces and the PLO in September 1970 as the Jordanian armed forces tried to put an end to the challenges to the Jordanian sovereignty posed by the PLO (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006; Weiner, 1992).

Another way in which refugees may cause political violence in hosting countries is by giving direct or indirect support to local political or ethnic actors. For instance, local rebel groups in the host country may, in cases where there are transnational ideological or ethnic ties, recruit new members to their struggle in the refugee camps, or use the flow of refugees in order to import weapons and ideas of how to conduct fighting against a government (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006). Furthermore, flows of refugees may also disturb the ethnic balance in the host country, either by introducing an entirely new ethnic group to the country, or by reinforcing the numbers of an existing ethnic group within the country. These changed demographic patterns may, in turn, spark political conflict as other ethnic groups might feel threatened, and therefore act against either the ethnic group itself, or against the government for not taking action (Weiner, 1992; Stivachtis, 2008). Again, the case of the Palestinians is illustrative, as the massive flow of

Palestinian refugees into Lebanon sparked reactions from the other ethnic groups within the country, which in turn led to the Lebanese civil war (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006).

Finally, refugees may also pose economic and environmental challenges to the host country. This can for instance be through decreased wages and increased prices as the refugees enter the labour market, or by putting a strain on the host country's land, water, housing, or health care resources. As the inhabitants and the refugees start competing for these resources, which may be scarce, the standard of living for the original inhabitants of the country may drop[2]. As the standard of living decreases, economic and environmental grievances against the refugees increase, and may spark political violence between the refugees and the original inhabitants (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006).

These last two points, regarding demographic balance and economic and environmental factors, are especially important in cases of ethnopolitical conflicts as they provide strong incentives for ethnopolitical action by creating resentments of losses in the past (living standards or a demographic advantage), and fear of future losses. As Gurr notes, these types of incentives are crucial for ethnopolitical action to take place (Gurr, 2000: 69-70).

While political scientists have investigated the connection between refugees and the onset of civil war, although with inconclusive results (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006; Buhaug and Gleditsch, 2008), it is reasonable to assume that civil war is not the only type of political violence that refugees may cause. Indeed, it is perhaps more likely that refugees would rather engage in types of political violence that require less organisation and fewer resources, such as terrorism. For instance, rebel refugee groups wishing to put pressure on the host government for concessions might be unwilling or unable to face the armed forces of the host country in a stand-off, but might be willing to conduct terrorist attacks within the territory of the host country in order to send a violent message. Another possibility is that the original inhabitants of the country use ethnic terrorism for 'defensive' purposes in order to force the refugees to leave again, and thereby address the economic or demographic problems of the refugees[3]. These arguments can be summarised in the following hypothesis: *(H1) The number of refugees in a country will be positively correlated with the number of terrorist attacks in the same country*

The effect in Hypothesis 1 should hold true for both domestic and transnational terrorist attacks, as the framework allows for rebel groups based in either their home country or their host country to operate across the international borders thereby causing both domestic and transnational terrorist attacks.

Methodology, Operationalization's, and Data

In order to evaluate the hypothesis outlined above, a dataset containing data on terrorist attacks, refugees, and a number of background variables in 161 countries were assembled. The units of analysis of the study are country-years, and due to limitations in the scope of the paper, the time period is limited to 2002-2012. Below, the dependent and independent variables are defined and operationalized, after which the statistical models are introduced.

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[2] Refugees may, of course, also bring economic growth to the host country by bringing economic resources, education, and/or cheap labour, which may spur the economic both short term and long term as the refugees are absorbed into the host community.

[3] This argument is advanced by, for instance, Byman (1998).

Defining and Operationalizing Terrorism

The dependent variable of this study is the number and magnitude of terrorist attacks that take place in the 161 countries included in the study. Terrorism, however, is a highly contested concept, and therefore every paper dealing with this concept must discuss the problem of definition. One of the main problems with defining terrorism is that there already exist over 200 definitions, each with its own weaknesses and biases concerning reliability and validity (Bjørgo, 2003). Another problem is that these definitions are often politicised, in which actors are classified as terrorists rather than, for instance, rebel groups. It is, however, possible to depoliticise the definition of terrorism by basing the definition on the terrorist acts in themselves rather than the actors performing the acts. Such a definition is more reliable than actor dependent definitions, as it removes the political component of the definition.

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD), hosted by the University of Maryland, provides such a definition. According to this definition, an act is classified as a terrorist act if it is an *intentional*, *violent* act carried out by *sub-state actors* and fulfilling at least two of the following criteria; the act is outside the context of legitimate warfare, the act is aimed at gaining a social, religious, political, or economic goal, and there must be evidence that the act is aimed to intimidate, coerce, or send a message to a larger audience than the immediate victims of the act (START, 2014a). The definition provided above suits the purpose of this paper very well, since it is a reliable, comparatively de-politicised, and valid definition of terrorism.

The data on the number of terrorist attacks, as well as the number of victims of terrorist attacks, in every country is also obtained from the GTD (START, 2014b), which gathers this data by computerised analysis of articles in the media globally (START, 2014a). As this study aims to investigate both the incidence and magnitude of terrorist attacks, two separate models will be specified; one with the number of attacks and one with the number of victims[4] as the dependent variable. Each of these variables will be weighted by the population size of the country so that the dependent variables will be the number of attacks and the number of victims per million inhabitants. The data on population was drawn from the World Bank (World Bank, 2015)

Defining Refugees and Background Variables

The main independent variable of this study is the number of refugees that each country hosts. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a refugee as an individual who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country' (UNHCR, 2014: 1). This paper will use the same definition of refugees, but will also consider asylum seekers, i.e. individuals who claim to be refugees but status has not yet been evaluated, as refugees (UNHCR, 2014). The data for this variable is obtained from the UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database (UNHCR, 2015). In order to account for the different strain on countries of different sizes, this variable is also weighted by the population so that it reflects the number of refugees per 1000 inhabitants.

In addition to the main independent variable, a number of background variables will also be included in the study in order to control for the possibly confounding of these variables. The first of these are a set of dummy variables indicating whether or not a minor conflict or war is

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[4] Both the number of fatalities and the number of injured from terrorist attacks are counted as victims.

ongoing in the host country or in any country with a land border to the host country. Minor conflicts are defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) as a conflict between at least two parties that has resulted in at least 25 battle related deaths during the specified calendar year. A war is defined in the same way, but with at least 1000 battle related deaths during the specified calendar year (UCDP, 2015). The data for these four dummy variables is taken from the UCDP, and both state-based and non-state conflicts are included (Sundberg et al., 2012; Themnér and Wallensteen, 2013). In order to counter the endogeneity problem that may occur, since terrorism may also cause conflict, these dummy variables are all lagged one year.

Including these four variables in the dataset as terrorism makes it possible to separate the effect that being involved in armed conflict has on terrorism compared to the effect that refugees themselves have on terrorism. It also controls for circular effects that refugees and terrorism may have upon one another. Lastly, it controls for spill over effects that conflicts in neighbouring countries may have upon terrorism in the host country.

A second set of dummy variables deal with the regime type of the host country, as regime type is often associated with the incidence of terrorism. This is because autocratic governments are assumed to be able to use harsher methods to repress terrorist groups, while democratic countries may have institutions in place to make it possible to resolve grievances without resorting to violence or terrorism (Piazza, 2007, 2008; Eyerman, 1998). An argument can also be made that groups using political violence would be more prone to do so in democracies than in autocracies, as democratic governments are accountable to the voters and terrorism would therefore be a tactic more likely to succeed in democracies (Schmid, 1992). Thus, two dummy variables are introduced, one for autocratic countries, defined as countries with a score of -6 or less on the Polity IV scale, and one for democratic countries, defined as countries with a score of 6 or higher on the Polity IV scale (Marshall et al., 2014). In addition to these two dummies, a dummy for 'lack of state' is also included, which is defined as all cases where no central government is in power for reasons such as interruptions, interregnums, and transitions[5]. The data for these three variables is taken from the Polity IV dataset (Center for Systemic Peace, 2014). To control for possible effects from economic factors, the natural log of GDP per Capita (PPP) is included as a background variable, with data taken from the World Bank (2015). Lastly, the number of terrorist attacks and casualties in the previous year, scaled in the same way as the dependent variable, was included as a background variable to capture the effects of countries targeted by prolonged terrorist campaigns.

Statistical Methods and Models
As the data analysed is in panel data format, this paper will use Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression with Fixed Effects (FE) as its statistical method. Essentially, the FE framework introduces dummy variables for each country and year and adds them to the model, thereby adjusting for country and year specific effects in the data. In order to adjust for possible serial correlation within countries, and heteroscedasticity between countries, standard errors are clustered on country level[6]. A problem when analysing the incidence and magnitude of terrorism is that these data are count data, making OLS regression problematic. However, by transforming

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[5] Coded as -66, -77, and -88 respectively in the Polity IV dataset, see Marshall et al. (2014) for more details.
[6] As the sample size is relatively large, and both between case heteroscedasticity between groups and serial correlation within groups may be expected, the HC-0 estimator is used with the Arellano method. See Arellano (1987) for details.

the dependent variables into scaled per capita measurements, these variables become continuous, allowing the use of OLS instead of having to resort to negative binomial regression[7]. Two separate statistical models are analysed. In the first model, the number of terrorist attacks will be the dependent variable, and in the second model, the number of victims of terrorist attack is the dependent variable.

Results and Analysis

The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 1 below. These results clearly give *no* support at all for the hypothesis that refugees would cause an increase in either the incidence or magnitude of terrorism in their host countries. Rather, while being very far from statistically significant, the results indicate that as the number of refugees per 1000 inhabitants in a host country increases, the number of terrorist attacks and victims actually decrease slightly when controlling for conflict status and neighbourhood. This is highly interesting, as it contradicts the theoretical connections between refugees and terrorism outlined in section two.

These results also contradict the only other study to date investigating the connection between refugees and terrorism (Choi and Salehyan, 2013), which found strong support for the hypothesis that an increase in the number of refugees would lead to an increase in terrorism. That study did, however, not take the conflict situation within the host country, or the conflict situation in the neighbouring countries, into account. These conflict related factors may indeed cause both the increase in refugees and an increase in the number of terrorist attacks. Excluding these variables would then make it possible to attribute the effect of conflicts on terrorism to the refugees. More likely, however, is that the results differ due to the different time periods of the studies, as this study only covers the years 2002-2012, while Choi and Salehyan's (2013) study covers the years 1970-2007. This possible difference between the time periods may be an indication that the behavioural patterns regarding terrorism may have changed during this time period. It may, for instance, be theorised that the profound opinion effects of the September 11th 2001 attacks in the United States and the following Global War on Terrorism, has altered the behaviour of groups that would otherwise have resorted to terrorism. This since terrorism may now cause a different response than before these events.

The results also show that there seems to be little support for the so called "neighbourhood effect", i.e. that being located in a conflict prone region of the world, has very little effect on the number and magnitude of terrorist attacks.

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[7] For a more detailed discussion on Negative Binomial regression and Fixed Effects see Greene, 2012: Ch. 12, 18. The transformation made will still create a distributional problem with regards to the normality assumption. However, due to the relatively large sample size, the Central Limit Theorem will ensure an approximate normal distribution of the regression parameters, ensuring valid inference from the standard errors.

Table 1: Regression Results

	Dependent variable:	
	Attacks	Casualties
	(1)	(2)
Refugees	−0.001	−0.023
	(0.003)	(0.044)
War$_{t-1}$	0.727	−1.453
	(0.477)	(1.767)
Conflict$_{t-1}$	0.080	−0.229
	(0.187)	(1.193)
Neighbor War$_{t-1}$	0.221	0.292
	(0.291)	(1.713)
Neighbor Conflict$_{t-1}$	−0.046	−0.893
	(0.161)	(0.633)
Democracy	0.131	3.912
	(0.140)	(2.472)
Autocracy	−1.261*	−7.854
	(0.714)	(7.908)
Absent State	0.287	12.390
	(0.365)	(11.333)
log GDP/Capita	0.798	2.562
	(0.538)	(3.650)
Terrorism$_{t-1}$	0.676***	0.622***
	(0.198)	(0.043)
Observations	1,822	1,822
R^2	0.392	0.420
Adjusted R^2	0.356	0.381
Note:	Clustered std.E. in parenthesis	
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

This is surprising, as it could be expected that conflicts in neighbouring countries would increase the amount of terrorism in the country itself. This effect may, however, be a result of using neighbouring conflicts and wars as the background variable rather than the number of terrorist attacks experienced by neighbouring countries. Another possibility, which may also explain the statistical insignificance of the "War" and "Conflict" variables, is that the fixed effects on country

levels capture much of the effect which these dummy variables would otherwise have captured[8]. Thus, the results relating to wars, conflicts, as well as the variables related to the 'neighbourhood effect', should be interpreted with highest caution.

It is also worth noting that the results show that autocracies experience less terrorist attacks and suffer fewer casualties from these attacks than mixed/transitional regimes and democracies. This is, however, not necessarily an effect of the regime type itself on terrorism, it may also be an effect of the so called reporting bias, whereby autocracies may be more able to suppress news of terrorist attacks than democracies, where the free press is, hopefully, active in the reporting[9]. If the regime manages to suppress the news of terrorist attacks, it will consequently not be registered in the GTD, and thereby it may seem as if autocracies experience fewer terrorist attacks, or attack of lower magnitude.

As a robustness check, a number of respecified regressions were also run, whereby the dependent variables were not scaled by population[10], where the number of refugees were logarithmised, and with different combinations of background variables. However, in all cases where the conflict related variables were included, the variable relating to the number of refugees remained insignificant. This further increases the confidence in the result that refugees do in fact have little or no effect on the amount of terrorism experienced by a host country. As a final robustness test[11], the regressions were rerun without the fixed effects and without any of the background variables. However, even in this bivariate regression, the variables relating to the number of refugees in the country remained statistically insignificant. The results from these robustness checks can be made available upon request.

To investigate possible problems of multicollinearity, VIF-tests were conducted[12]. These VIF-tests showed moderate amounts of multicollinearity, but with no VIF-values above 6.05, which indicates that while there is of course multicollinearity as in all forms of 'real' data, this problem is not severe. More specifically, with regards to the refugees the VIF-factor is a mere 3.1, while the four conflict related variables are in the interval 1.8-6.05. As noted above, however, it is important to emphasise that much of the effects of the independent variables in the study may have been captured by the individual, state specific, fixed effects variables rather than the independent variables. While this problem is usually not considered as a multicollinearity problem, it is still worth noting that each of the fixed effect dummies may have a relatively high correlation with other dummy variables. This is especially a problem with dummy variables with a low proportion of one type of answer, i.e. when the proportion of zeroes or ones is high. Especially the results relating to the "war" variable may be prone to this problem as only roughly 3.3 percent of the observations in the sample had a one for this variable.

The relative high R^2 values, of around 0.35-0.4 does, however, show that the variables included in the model does a very good job of explaining the dependent variable, since it indicates that roughly 35-40 percent of the variation in terrorist attacks and casualties are explained by the model, even though very few variables are statistically significant. A further

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[8] For a more detailed discussion on the effects of Fixed-Effects estimation on parameter estimates, see Beck Katz (2001).

[9] Issues relating to press freedom, democracy, and the tendency to report terrorist attacks are explored by Drakos and Gofas (2006).

[10] In these cases Negative Binomial regression was used instead of OLS.

[11] Suggested by reviewers.

[12] As multicollinearity is only a problem for variables which can be assumed to be correlated, the VIF-tests were performed on a model without the fixed effects variables.

analysis of these R^2 values shows that this high explanatory power is largely due to the inclusion of the number of terrorist attacks and casualties in the previous year. Indeed, the results show that for each terrorist attack and casualty per million inhabitants in the previous year, between 0.6 and 0.7 attacks and casualties can be expected in the current year. Excluding this variable from the regression has a very slight effect on the significance levels of the other variables, but the adjusted R^2 value drops to approximately 0.05, indicating that the model outlined above can only explain a very small amount of the variation in the number of terrorist attacks and casualties in the countries included in the study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to empirically investigate what effect refugees had on the incidence and magnitude of terrorist attacks in the host country. The results clearly showed that the number of refugees in a country has little or no effect on the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated or the number of victims of terrorist attacks in the same country, when state specific effects, and the number of attacks and casualties in the previous year, has been taken into account. These results refute the theoretical connections that were drawn from the literature on refugees and terrorism, as well as the evidence from the, to date, only other quantitative study investigating this connection, when controlling for the conflict status and neighbourhood effect of the countries. It is also important to note the low goodness of fit of the models specified for this paper (when terrorism in the previous year was excluded), as these values indicate that refugees and wars can only explain a very small amount of the variation in terrorist attacks and victims. This further questions the link between refugees and terrorism.

The issue of the effect of refugees on terrorism can, however, not be considered settled. Rather, this study opens up for further studies in this field, for instance for studies analysing wider time periods than this paper, or using other control variables. Further studies may also focus differentiating between domestic or transnational terrorism, as it may be that refugees have different effects on these different types of terrorism.

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