

POL201Y1: Politics of Development

Lecture 16:

Conflict

Reminder

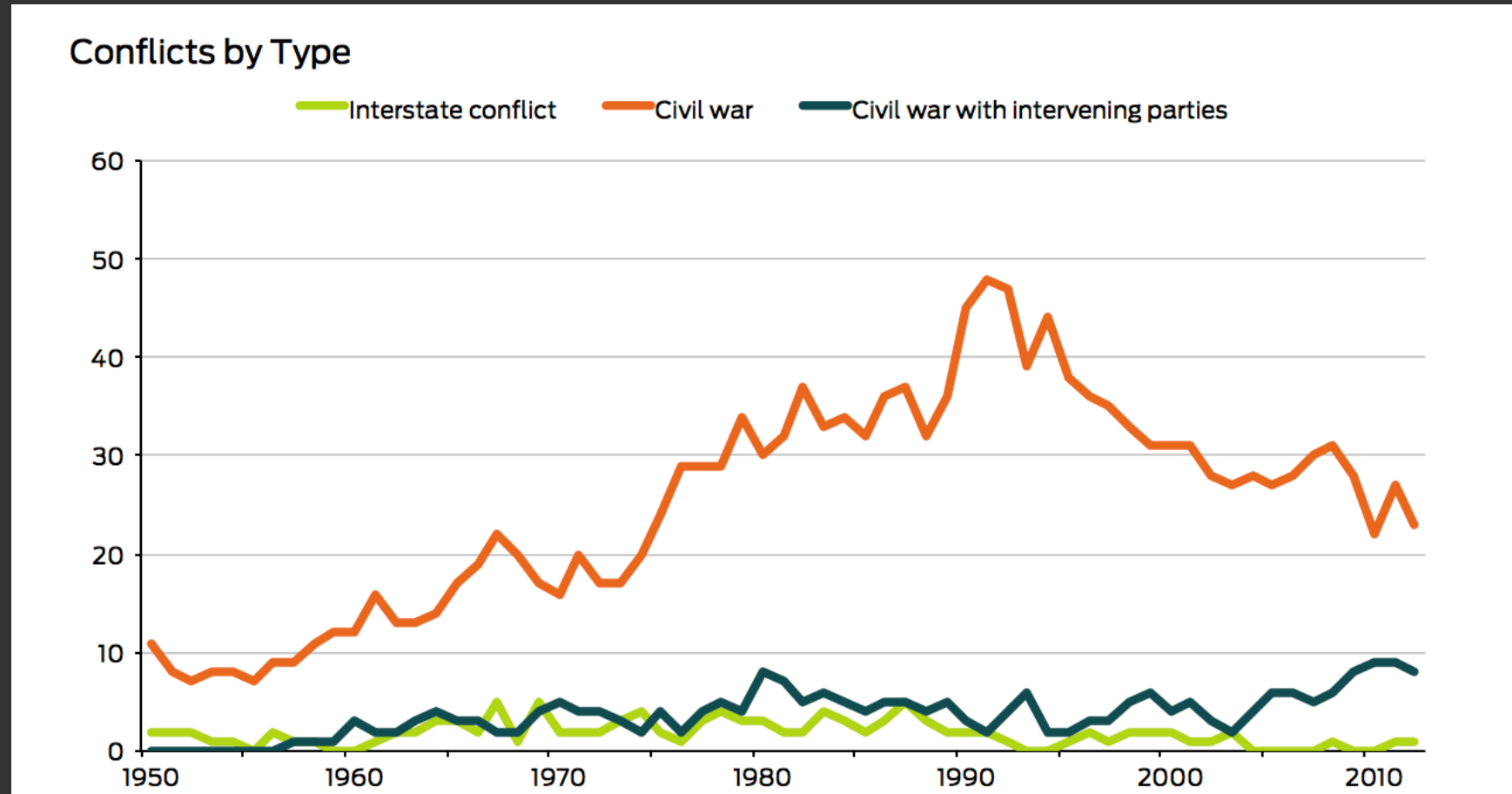
- Research essay due on the 27th July at the start of the lecture: hard copy + Turnitin

Conflict and development

- Hess: the cost of all civil wars equals approximately 8% of the global GDP
 - Hess GD. 2003. "The economic welfare cost of conflict: an empirical assessment." Munich: CESifo Group.
- de Groot: the global GDP would have been 14.3% higher in 2007 if there had not been any conflict since 1960
 - de Groot O. 2009. "A methodology for the calculation of the global economic costs of conflict." Berlin: DIW.
- Mueller: for every year that an area (cell in a geolocalized data grid) experiences more than 50 fatalities, growth is reduced by about 4.4 percentage points
 - Mueller H. 2016. "Growth and violence: argument for a per capita measure of civil war." *Economica* 83: 473–97.

Why would anyone fight?

Types of conflict



Conflict and collective identities

- Political Instability Task Force: more than half of civil conflicts since World War II classified as (inter)ethnic
 - From Ray, Debraj, and Joan Esteban. 2017. "Conflict and Development." *Annu. Rev. Econ* 9 (April): 263–93.
- Fearon: interethnic conflicts have involved 14% of the 709 categorized ethnic groups
 - Fearon, James D. 2003. "Ethnic and cultural diversity by country." *J. Econ. Growth* 8: 195–222.

Do ethnic divisions cause conflict?

- No evidence of a strong relationship between conflict and ethnic fractionalization
 - E.g. Collier Paul, and Anke Hoeffler. 1998. "On economic causes of civil war." *Oxf. Econ. Pap.* 50:563–73; Fearon, James, and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75–90.
- Caveat:
 - Is ethnic fractionalization a valid measure of ethnic divisions?
 - See Ray, Debraj, and Joan Esteban. 2017. "Conflict and Development." *Annu. Rev. Econ* 9 (April): 263–93.

Causes of conflict

- Grievance
- Greed
- 'Beyond greed and grievance'

Grievance (Galtung)

- Violence:
 - Personal (direct)
 - Structural (indirect) = social injustice: unequal distribution of resources in a society, e.g. differences in income distribution, levels of education and literacy, disparities in who makes decisions about resource distribution
- Peace:
 - Negative: absence of personal violence
 - Positive: absence of structural violence.
- “If people are starving when this is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed.”
 - Galtung, Johan. 1969. “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research.” *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3): 167–91.

Grievance (Gurr)

- Relative deprivation theory:
 - Relative deprivation: “actors’ perception of discrepancy between their *value expectations* and their environment’s apparent *value capabilities*” or “the perception of frustrating circumstances”
 - Value expectations: “the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are justifiably entitled”
 - Value capabilities: “the conditions that determine people’s perceived chances of getting or keeping the values they legitimately expect to attain”
 - Relative deprivation → frustration → anger → civil violence
 - Gurr, Ted. 1968. “Psychological Factors in Civil Violence.” *World Politics* 20 (2): 245–78.

Grievance (Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch)

- Horizontal inequalities:
 - Political: blocked or limited access to central decision-making authority within the state
 - Economic: unequal distribution of wealth among groups
 - Social: groups' uneven social access to education, societal status, etc.
 - Cultural: group-level inequalities with respect to cultural policies and symbols, e.g. national holidays and religious rights
- Horizontal inequalities between politically relevant ethnic groups and states at large can promote ethnonationalist conflict
- In highly unequal societies, both rich and poor groups fight more often than those groups whose wealth lies closer to the country average
 - Cederman, Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review* 105 (03): 478–95.

Greed (Grossman)

- Rebellion as an industry that generates profits from looting
- “The insurgents are indistinguishable from bandits or pirates”
 - Grossman, H.I. 1999. “Kleptocracy and revolutions.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 51: 267–83.

Beyond greed and grievance (Kalyvas)

- The dichotomy between greed and grievance is false
- Civil wars are not binary conflicts, but complex and ambiguous processes that foster the joint action of local and supralocal actors
- These actors form alliances in which local motives and supralocal imperatives converge

Beyond greed and grievance (Kalyvas)

- Individuals have different characteristics and motives, which may be unrelated to group identity or the master cleavage →
- Different dynamics at the top and at the bottom differ:
 - Disjunction between identities and actions at:
 - The central / elite level
 - The local or mass level
 - Two dimensions:
 - Actions on the ground often more related to local or private issues than to the war's driving (or "master") cleavage
 - Individual and local actors take advantage of war to settle local or private conflicts
 - Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2003. "The Ontology of 'political Violence': Action and Identity in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1 (3): 475–94.

Beyond greed and grievance (Collier and Hoeffler)

- Feasibility hypothesis: “[r]ebels will conduct a civil war if the perceived benefits outweigh the costs of rebellion”
- Key variables:
 - Availability of finance
 - Cost of rebellion
 - Military advantage
 - Collier Paul, and Anke Hoeffler. 1998. “On economic causes of civil war.” *Oxf. Econ. Pap.* 50:563–73.
 - Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (4): 563-595.
 - Collier, Paul, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner. 2009. “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 61 (1): 1–27.

Beyond greed and grievance (Miguel et al.)

- 5% drop in annual economic growth increases the likelihood of a civil conflict in the following year by 12%
- Why? Opportunity cost

Key insights

- Agents and their preferences matter (Kalyvas)
- Opportunities matter (Collier and Hoeffler)
- → Rationality of conflict?

Can conflict be rational?



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Distribution of costs and benefits of conflict: ruler vs. society

- Imposition of costs on society by the ruler
- Internalization of costs by the ruler, but:
 - Asymmetric information (→ players test one another's strength)
 - Commitment problem

Distribution of costs and benefits of conflict: fighters vs. society

- Reduction of the opportunity cost of joining a military force, e.g. when returns to predation exceed returns to production
- Selective incentives:
 - Rewards
 - Coercion
 - Social sanctions → collective identities as a mobilization tool?

Takeaway

- Complementarity of rational action and socially deleterious effects