

## Main Article

# Looking at Conflict Patterns: Declining Frequencies yet Persistent Brutalities in both Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Conflicts

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## Introduction

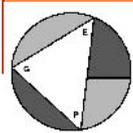
What brutalises rebels? What makes them cruel, or makes them do things that we consider cruel and immoral? That is a primary question—which can be put to all kinds of armed actors—of my research on rebels and rebellion, i.e. the “violent opposition to the ruler, government regime[,] or state for any personal, collective or ideological purpose” (Ten Dam 2015a: 6 (quote), 15). Arguably, rebels or insurgents are the most important and dominant kind of armed non-state actors. After all, without rebels, no rebellions.

The question of *brutalisation* i.e. increasing resort to violence that violates local and/or international norms—that I hold are ultimately based on conscience, empathy and honour (Ten Dam 2014: 8-9)—is of prime importance to the field of conflict studies in general and to the “emerging multidisciplinary field” of ethnogeopolitics (Rezvani 2013: 4) in particular.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, most conflicts are internal, insurgent, ethnic and separatist in nature, and one wishes to prevent or curtail the suffering involved.

A secondary yet crucial question precedes the primary one: do rebels brutalise all the time, increasingly so, or at all? And if so, to what quantifiable degrees? At first glance the answer to that seems affirmative—indeed, rather obvious. Reputations of armed opposition groups plummeted following the end of the Cold War. The ideals of a ‘people’s war’ propounded by Ché Guevara, Mao Tse-tung and Frantz Fanon lost appeal among the young, and gained ridicule when people observed the atrocities in places ranging from Afghanistan to Sierra Leone, from Colombia to Congo.

So-called ‘freedom fighters’ brought little liberation but plenty of savagery and crime; Ché, Mao and Fanon held no sway among them. The remaining ideologues, according to many observers, appear to be Islamic terrorists who show little regard to human life. Their violence is the more frightening, because of their so-called *catastrophic terrorism* i.e. violence intended to kill as many people (civilians) as possible. This trend arose in the early 1980s, superseding a *classical terrorism* intended to gain media attention and its objectives with as few casualties as possible (Van Leeuwen, apud Van Ham *et al.* 2001: 7, 11-12).

It seems as if “even the old guerrilla struggles have grown more awful. Increasingly, the rebel—Irish or Arab, urban or rural—has appeared cruel, a new barbarian. ... The romantic rebel is dead and gone” (Bell 1998: 4). In order to determine whether that bleak assessment is true, and if so, why it has come about, one needs to ask the following questions:<sup>2</sup>

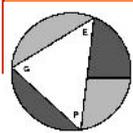


1. Has the decent liberation fighter become extinct? Has it ever existed?
2. Many studies observe the 'degeneration' of the freedom fighter into a criminal, bandit or terrorist. Is this observation correct?
3. Have these studies focused too much on 'new' conflicts, overlooking the commonalities with Cold War and pre-Cold War conflicts?
4. Why do regulations such as The Hague and Geneva conventions seem to have so little impact? Do local values and customs deviate so much from international law? Or do premature and unfair condemnations of rebels as 'terrorists' and 'bandits' lie at the root of their later brutalisation, as they have nothing to lose by violating basic norms?
5. Can we determine what constitutes a 'just revolt', given that there may be different 'just war' notions in different cultures?
6. Do motivations like anger about pain, humiliation and injustice or greed for power, prestige and riches not just spawn rebellions *per se*, but also terrorism, banditry, and other (war) crimes by rebels?
7. Apart from motivations, do the pressures and horrors of battle brutalise rebels—and any other kinds of combatants for that matter?
8. Do all kinds of combatants exhibit similar kinds and degrees of brutality and brutalisation (if any)? Or does the type, status and circumstance of the armed actor in question at least partially determine his or her resort to brutalities i.e. violations of local and/or norms of violence (if any)? We should focus on rebels and other non-state actors, as they are part of most conflicts today; but we should also analyse the nature and behaviour of soldiers and other (semi-)state actors like paramilitaries.

The first three first research questions are about whether and how much brutalisation occurs. The next four questions are about why and how brutalisation occurs for so far it does occur, and the last one is about whether it occurs similarly or differently among all kinds of combatants, even though my present research focus is on insurgents.

A good way to answer these questions is by testing, through different yet complementary research methods (thick description, semi-quantitative tabulation and interpretation of data, quantitative analysis of data through full-fledged statistics, etc.), a *Brutalisation* theory I have developed myself by incorporating what I consider to be the best concepts available in cultural anthropology, military psychology and other disciplines (see Ten Dam 2010: 335-343; 2011: 237-241; 2012: 226-232; 2015c: 579-611).

My theory is thus made up of the variables *violence-values* (my composite term) on proper and improper violence; *conflict-inducing motivations*, in particular grievances, avarices, interests and ideologies, that bring about i.e. cause or trigger the conflict; combat-stresses like fear, fatigue and rage resulting from or leading to traumas (and hypothetically to brutalities as well); and *conflict-induced motivations*, in particular grievances, avarices, interest and ideologies, that happen by, through and during the conflict.<sup>3</sup> The theory thus



assumes rebels—or other armed non-state and state actors—to increasingly violate local and/or international norms, in a cycle of escalating and worsening violence.

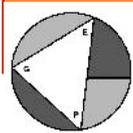
As a first preliminary test of this theory, I have compared separatist rebellions by Chechens and Albanians, particularly in Chechnya (1994-1996, 1999-present) and Kosovo (1997-1999), and their historical causes and antecedents (Ten Dam 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015b). Incidentally, in the previous Editorial (Ten Dam 2015a) I already have argued how best to define any phenomena through a tripartite distinction between *action*, *actor* and  *motive* or human drive. The consequent conceptualisations (see Appendix in Ten Dam 2015a: 13-18) I apply in my own research on brutalisation and other, related phenomena.

### Conflict patterns: implications for ethnogeopolitics and beyond

One might ask how typical, representative and otherwise relevant the Russo-Chechen and Serbo-Albanian conflicts actually are, in the broader context of armed struggles in the past, present and (foreseeable) future. More generally, one might ask how typical and frequent—and how brutal—such separatist insurgencies by ethnic-based groups are or have been as compared to other forms of armed conflict and political violence. And most generally, one might ask how frequent, diverse and brutal all kinds of violence are now or have been so in the past. After all, quantitative studies have generally and remarkably found an overall *decrease* in internal (ethnic) conflicts after 1990, despite the often-cited notion of post-Cold War instability (Gurr 2000: 52).

Figure I in the Appendix shows such a finding from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), though it also shows a sharp, high peak in 1991-1992 and a lower yet steadier rise during 2002-2007, followed by a sharp drop until 2010, a renewed rise during 2011, ending with a smaller drop in 2012 and a small rise in 2013 (from 32 to 33 conflicts). The overall downward trend of political violence—indeed of *any* type of private and public violence across the last decades, centuries and even millennia, as convincingly shown by Steven Pinker (2011, 2012)—even reverses the accumulation of old, unresolved, continuing armed conflicts since World War II. Yet these trends do not diminish the relevance of ethnogeopolitical research—and my Brutalisation research in particular, for the following reasons:

1. According to the UCDP, there have been 144 armed conflicts (47 wars) between 1989 and 2013, and 254 armed conflicts (144 wars) since WW II, many of these protracted or continuing after 1990. Yet rebels are still the predominant armed non-state actors, and intrastate conflicts have far outnumbered interstate conflicts for decades if not longer. Indeed, nowadays wars and lower-level conflicts between states are practically non-existent, though external state involvement in intrastate conflicts remain significant: thus all 33 conflicts “active in 2013 were fought within states, but nine of them—or 27%—were internationalized in the sense that one or more states contributed troops to one or both sides” (Themnér & Wallenstein 2014: 541, 542 (quote), 543, Table I (not to be confused with Table I here) ).<sup>4</sup> Thus the worrying trend was noted that “the number of internationalized



intrastate conflicts continued to be at a high level for the fourth consecutive year [2012]” (Themnér & Wallensteen 2013: 509).

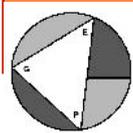
These trends were also detected in earlier UCDP reports. Thus of the 128 active conflicts between 1989 and 2009 (240 conflicts since WWII) only eight were interstate, though twenty-seven were ‘internationalised intrastate’ conflicts in which at least one of the warring parties (government or opposition) “receive military support in the form of troops from another government” (Harbom & Wallensteen 2009: 577, 578 (Table II, note b: quote) ).<sup>5</sup> In sum, conventional wars between states have been rare since the Second World War and particularly since the end of the Cold War. Actually intrastate wars “*always* have outnumbered interstate wars” (M.L.R. Smith 2003: 34).

One could even argue that since the dawn of human history, most intrastate wars (and ‘lesser’ conflicts) have been *rebellions* against the incumbent regime, and that most rebellions have been *separatist* ones seeking independence or some form of self-rule for one’s own community however conceived. Seen from that perspective, the Chechen and Albanian cases are quite typical. Certainly “insurgency and its tactics are as old as warfare itself” (Sewall *et al.* 2007: 2, § 1-2). There “always has been intercommunal strife”; indeed, intrastate wars probably will continue to outnumber interstate wars, even if the latter are “off-season” due to American hegemony and may return with a vengeance once “great-power rivals feel able to challenge” that hegemony (Gray 2005: 19,22 (quotes) ).<sup>6</sup>

2. Quantitative global conflict studies show a remarkable increase in both number and intensity of conflicts during 1979-1989 (e.g. Marshall & Gurr 2005: 11, Figure 3.1), a significant if temporary peak in violence that requires further elucidation and research.

3. Many or most conflict datasets overlook sorts of violence that perhaps are on the increase in most recent years beyond the number of armed conflicts, like the number of battle-related deaths as tabulated by the UCDP (see Figure II) or the number of violent incidents in Africa by different actors as tabulated by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) Project (see Figure III). Particularly both war- and peacetime terrorism might be on the rise. Thus the US State Department estimated that between 1995 and 2000 alone, so even before ‘9-11’, global terrorist violence killed and wounded 19,422 people—78% of the terrorist-related fatalities and injured from 1968 to 1989 altogether (Chalk 2002: 12 (& note 2) ). Most datasets, including the UCDP, heavily rely on J. David Singer & Melvin Small’s classic definition of war as any sustained military conflict resulting in at least one-thousand battle-deaths per year (later expanded to at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year).<sup>7</sup> Gradually a quantitative definition of *armed conflict* was widely adopted as well, as being “the use of armed force between two parties” which “results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year” (Themnér & Wallensteen 2014: 541, note 1).

However, such definitions “ignore the relative amount of fatalities .. when compared to the entire population. A thousand casualties in China signify a much ‘smaller’ conflict than a thousand casualties in Liechtenstein” (Ten Dam 1997: 7). Most definitions also presume that all parties must possess a minimum of organisation. This leaves out violence against civilians



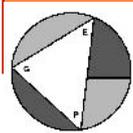
in places without organised resistance. Fortunately some datasets, like PIOOM's, count "indirect conflict-related deaths" caused by "hunger, diseases, and exhaustion" as well (Jongman 1995: 16 (2nd quote), 17 (1st quote) ). Even though my definitions of war and armed conflict also presume that "at least one party is able to resist another's use of overt military force" (Most & Starr 1983: 140), I believe that the broadest conflict or rather violence datasets should include cases of one-sided, uncontested violence against powerless people unable to arm and defend themselves.

Be as it may, only UCDP's most recent article "provides data on trends in battle-related deaths since 1989" (Themnér (Harbom) & Wallensteen 2014: 541). Still, their Figure 2 (Ibid: 544; see further note 7), reproduced here as Figure II, shows an intriguing yet worrying increase in estimated overall combat-related fatalities over the last few years mainly due to "events in the Middle East" (Ibid: 544)—even if the overall number of armed conflicts has continued to go down. Perhaps these fatality estimates signify continuing or even increasing levels of brutalities and brutalisations.

4. Even if the "obsolescence of major war [in recent decades] is just one of many historical declines of violence" (Pinker 2011: 309) apparently accompanied by "humane developments such as the abolition of slavery, despotism, and cruel punishments" (Pinker 2012: xxvi (quote) & his note 3)<sup>8</sup>, one needs to verify these apparent trends of *debrutalisation* (own term) i.e. increasing respect of existing norms and *humanisation* (ibid) towards 'higher' norms, by falsifying the Brutalisation theory. Actually, the overall decline of violence may be as valid as the brutalisation dynamics in the remaining, ever fewer instances of armed conflict and other forms of violence.

5. My two-case study explores unfamiliar terrain. Scholars—with the exception of colleagues like Babak Rezvani (see e.g. Rezvani 2008, 2009, 2010, 2014a, 2014b)—rarely study peoples, histories, insurgencies and related phenomena in Eurasia and the wider Middle East compared with those in Africa, the America's and South-East Asia. Thus a "scholar of Middle Eastern studies" should "not pay attention only to the 'classical' Middle East but also to the Caucasus, Central Asia and North Africa" (Rezvani 2014a: 870). My Table I (see Appendix) showing numbers of Google hits in 2009 for these (sub-)regions seems to corroborate this (though 'Balkan' gets a very high number of hits on 'Google UK' search). Arguably, Eurasian *Muslim* non-state actors are least researched of all, despite their apparently crucial role in the break-ups of the Soviet and Yugoslav federations. Moreover, also Kosovo and Chechnya share the "experience of colonialism" and "problems of building new institutions" in the Third World (Horowitz 2000: 18).<sup>9</sup>

6. Studying secessions may enhance understanding of the breakups of Communist federations, though my current research focus is to understand rebel degenerations rather than state disintegrations. Both the so-called, predominantly rightwing Totalitarianists (M. Malia, Z. Brezinski) and the so-called, usually leftwing Modernisationists (J. Hough, A. Dallin, R. Suny) in Sovietology studies did not foresee Gorbachev's liberating yet destabilising *perestroika*, *glasnost* and *demokratzia* policies. Once the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia disintegrated, they claimed that these events were bound to happen: liberalisations



deligitimised the Communist system and legitimated separatism (Totalitarians), or cultural-socio-economic developments increased national consciousness (Modernisationists). Yet “these structural characteristics cannot account by themselves for the collapse of the USSR in retrospect, as they have been used to emphasize the stability of the system as well” (Ten Dam 1993: 5; Lipset & Bence 1994). More likely the “breakdown of socialist system was not inevitable” (Szelényi & Szelényi 1994: 212 (quote)-218). Even Modernisationists applying “resource mobilization theories” that challenged “relative deprivation” (Mason 1992: 108) cannot explain persistent secessionism in ‘non-sovereign’ territories that had few chances to gain international recognition, like Chechnya and Kosovo (Walker 2003: 3-4,12,164-168 & chapter 4).<sup>10</sup>

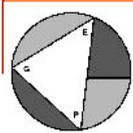
My focus on non-state violence does not neglect state violence. Even if “civil war has been a far greater scourge than interstate war” (Fearon & Laitin 2003: 75) with at least sixteen million combatant and non-combatant deaths since WWII, state(-sanctioned) terrorism has killed and hurt far more defenceless people (unarmed civilians, disarmed combatants, etc.) than any non-state terrorism. States often overreact to planned insurrections and spontaneous revolts, and even more often initiate violence unprovoked by any violence from ‘their’ citizens. In the twentieth century states have killed, through both wars and ‘peacetime’ repressions, over a hundred million people, mainly defenceless civilians—at least ten times the number of people rebels have been able to kill (Chirot 1994: esp. 7,9).

### Conclusion: notes of caution

Regarding the conflict patterns and trends described, assessed and summarised above, I need to make two cautionary notes, particularly to those involved in the field of ethnogeopolitics, but also to any scholars who may tend to overrate the universal application of their discipline or the general validity of their preferred theory or research approach: ethnic conflicts may be predominant, but not all conflicts are ethnic in nature, nor are all conflicts caused by majorities suppressing minorities.

First, I hold that one should not presume that all internal conflicts, or even all conflicts *per se*, are ethnic in character depending on one’s definition of ethnicity—as for instance Donald Horowitz appears to do in his otherwise excellent research. Horowitz presumes that *ethnic conflict* has acquired an “ubiquitous character” due to Decolonisation and the “dismemberment of empires and large states”, concluding that the “permeative character of ethnic affiliations” determines the nature of practically all conflicts (Horowitz 2000: 5,4,7 (quotes)).<sup>11</sup> Yet one should envisage and expect to encounter non-ethnic, civic conflicts, and allow the generic term ‘conflict’ to include such phenomena, however rare these may be.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, I do not deem it wise to loosely apply or interchange characterising, adjective terms and concepts like ‘ethnic’ and ‘national’, even if these do seem to refer to kindred, interrelated or overlapping phenomena. Consequently, I conceptualise *patriotism* and *nationalism* as loyalties and identities that may or may not be based on ethnicity i.e. any



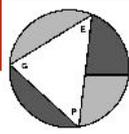
group with an “actual or perceived common ancestry” (Ten Dam 2014: 6; see further Ten Dam 2015a: 6, 14). Generally, I deplore the cavalier and over-generalised use of so many concepts, like ‘identity’ and ‘modernity’ (see Ten Dam 2010: 335-340), not just the concept of ‘ethnicity’ or the composite term ‘ethnic conflict’.

Alas, “Although the technical meanings of the terms “ethnic,” “ethnoreligious,” “communal,” and “national” are not identical, it is becoming an increasingly standard shorthand to refer to the whole field as the study of “ethnic conflict” ” (Licklider & Bloom 2007: 1, note 3).<sup>13</sup> In contrast, I hold that conflicts *per se* may refer to other contrary, perhaps even irreconcilable, interests than mutually antagonistic identity claims by actual and (self-)perceived ethnicities —like redistributive demands by certain socio-economic classes which cut across ethnic cleavages.

Second, one should not assume that invariably majorities suppress minorities in armed conflicts, as Ted Robert Gurr’s Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project seems to suggest.<sup>14</sup> Conflicts can be “initiated .. by minorities against majorities, or by minorities against other minorities” (Tishkov 2004: 9), and often “representatives of minorities dominate and suppress “others” ” (Ibid).

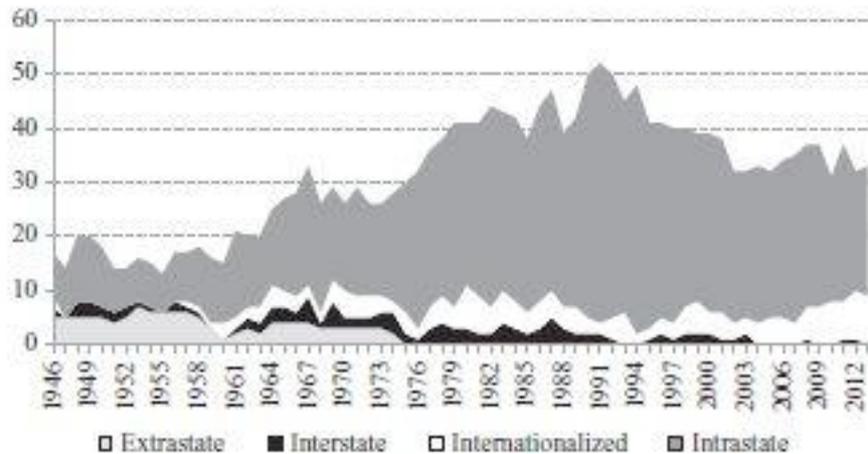
Indeed, in many cases numerical minorities suppress numerical majorities; think of South-Africa under Apartheid, or contemporary Sudan essentially ruled by three Arab tribes constituting just five percent of its population. Thus the MAR project’s designating of ‘minority elite’ for Sudan as being “No: Northern majority dominates” (Marshall & Gurr 2005: 60, Table 8.2) is misleading or at least confusing.<sup>15</sup> Labels are arbitrary, unless their definitions are clarified and their frameworks specified: thus Kosovar Albanians are (or were) a numerical ‘minority’ in Serbia, but constitute a numerical ‘majority’ in Kosovo itself. The same can be said of the Chechens in and beyond Chechnya.

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Appendix Conflict Patterns and Trends in Figures and Tables

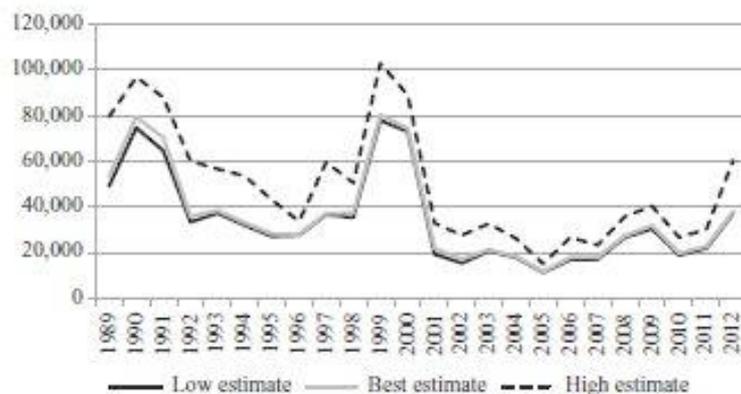
Figure I Number of Armed Conflicts by Type, 1946–2013

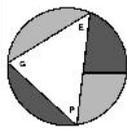


*Extrastate [extrasystemic] armed conflict:* between government of a state and non-state group(s) outside its territory (colonial and imperial wars etc.); *Interstate armed conflict:* conflict between two or more states; *Internationalised internal [international intrastate] armed conflict:* between government and opposition groups, with intervention from foreign state(s); *Internal [intrastate] armed conflict:* between government and internal opposition groups. Original definitions from Niels Gleditsch *et al.*, 'Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset' *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 39 No.5, September 2002, p.619.

Source: Lotta Themnér (Harbom) & Peter Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict, 1946-2013' *Journal of Peace Research* Vol.51 No.4, July 2014, pp.541 (note 1: "For in-depth definitions of key concepts, see [www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/)"), 544 (Figure 1).

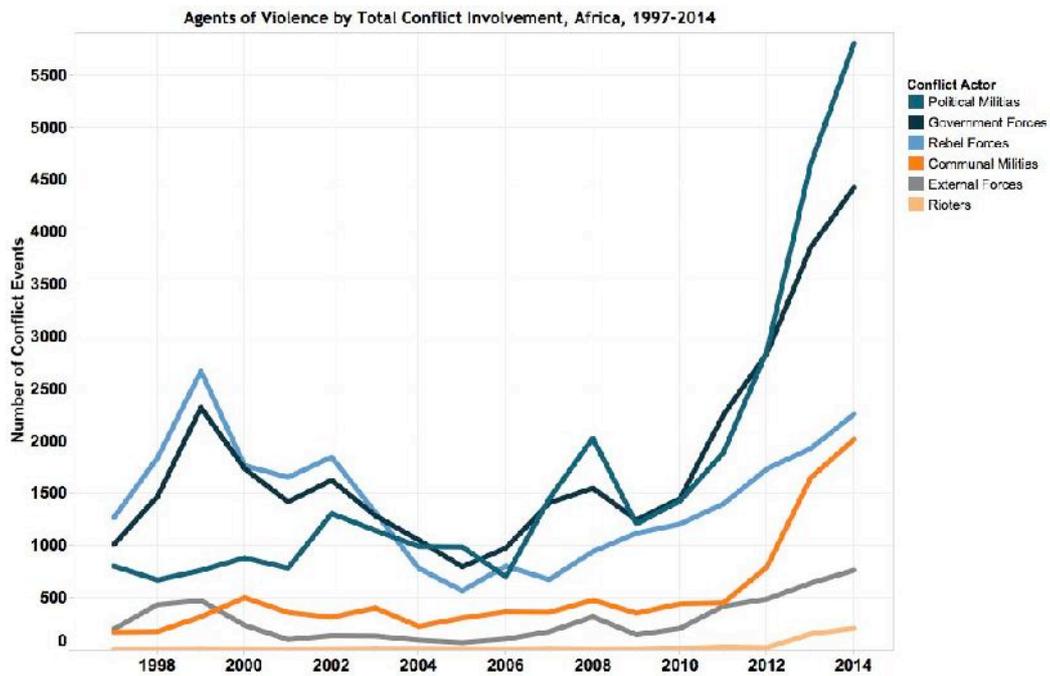
Figure II Battle-related Deaths by Type of Estimate, 1989–2012





Source: Lotta Themnér & Peter Wallensteen, 'Armed Conflict, 1946-2013' *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 51 No.4, July 2014, p.544, Figure 2 (note below figure: "A total estimate for battle-related deaths in 2013 is not included since no reliable battle deaths estimate data for Syria could be provided").

Figure III



Source: Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) Project, 'Trend 2: Agents of Violence in 2014', [www.acleddata.com/agents-of-violence-in-2014](http://www.acleddata.com/agents-of-violence-in-2014) (last visited 4-04-2015).

NB: if not detectible in colour: highest line at 2014 = Political Militias; next-highest line = Government Forces; third line = Rebel Forces; fourth line = Communal Militias; next-lowest line = External Forces; lowest line = Rioters. For definitions, see Clionadh Raleigh, & Caitriona Dowd, *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) Codebook 2015* University of Sussex (formerly at PRIO), 2015, pp.4-7; [www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ACLED\\_Codebook\\_2015.pdf](http://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ACLED_Codebook_2015.pdf).

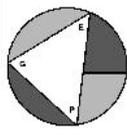


Table I Number of Google hits for search terms on regional conflict studies

Search terms: ‘[region] conflict studies’	Google UK* Accessed 14-11-2009	Google Scholar (beta) Accessed 14-11-2009	Google Scholar – advanced scholar search Accessed 15-11-2009
Eurasia conflict studies**	78,000	27,000	17,800
Caucasia	2,820	1,270	823
Caucasus	96,400	25,100	17,900
Northern Caucasus	29,200	21,900	15,600
North Caucasus	48,100	21,500	14,700
Central Asia	1.02,000	1.110,000	606,000
Balkan	1.470,000	46,600	32,900
South-Eastern Europe	753,000	31,600	15,800
South Eastern Europe	747,000	900,000	357,000
Africa	1.300,000	1.350,000	940,000
Asia	1.750,000	1.380,000	818,000
South East Asia	802,000	835,000	433,000
America	3.160,000	2.540,000	1.830,000
Central America	1.590,000	1.820,000	1.260,000
Southern America	815,000	689,000	456,000
South America	1.500,000	1.210,000	823,000
Middle East	11.000,000	993,000	695,000
Middle Eastern	11.100,000	847,000	586,000

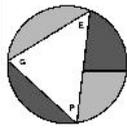
\*: general search on ‘Google UK’ also included newspaper articles, research institutes, etcetera.

\*\*: ‘conflict studies’ was added to the name/designation of each region.

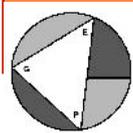
Source: <http://sites.google.com/site/tristansolutions/google-hits-for-region-conflict-studies>.

### Endnotes

1. There is “no general consensus on the definitions of geopolitics and ethnopolitics, and hence ethnogeopolitics also cannot be easily or non-controversially defined” (Rezvani 2013: 4). Still, while geopolitics in the broader sense is “focused on military strategy, economics and natural resources, but also on culture”, traditional geopolitics is focused on “states and global regimes” only while ethnogeopolitics looks at all these factors at “the level of peoples” (Ibid.: 4 (quotes) ).
2. I thank Prof. Adrian Guelke for helping me to formulate these first probing questions during the early phase of my PhD research at Queen’s University Belfast in 2005-2006. I added the eighth research question in later years, when I studied the literature on combat-stress (see Ten Dam 2012, 2015b).



3. From 2005 till early 2014, I have described my Brutalisation theory, with some modifications, as “a cycle of violence involving four main variables: “*values* on “good” and “bad” violence (variable 1); *grievances* leading to armed conflict (variable 2); *combat stress* leading to atrocities (variable 3); and *new conflict grievances* emanating from such atrocities (variable 4), spawning counter-atrocities and eventually hardening or debasing the original violence-values (the cycle returns to the first variable)” (Ten Dam 2010: 332). Since then, I have widened and reformulated the theory’s variables, so as to more equally represent different motivations as explanations of brutal behaviour.
4. In 2011, “36 of the 37 active armed conflicts were fought within states. Of these, nine were internationalized, meaning that they saw international involvement with troop support to one or both sides of the warring parties” (Themnér & Wallensteen 2012: 565,566 (quote),567, Table I). There have been 133 active conflicts between 1989 and 2010, and 246 active conflicts since WWII (Themnér & Wallensteen 2011: 525, 527, Table I). No breakdowns on the numbers of extrasystemic conflicts between state and outside non-state group(s), and intrastate, international(ised) intrastate and interstate conflicts, are given for e.g. the 1946-2010/2011 and 1989-2010/2011 periods; neither can these be easily found at [www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/). Themnér and Wallensteen reiterate that interstate conflicts “have become .. increasingly rare .. since the early 1990s, .. especially since 2004” (Ibid 2011: 528).
5. Of the 122 active conflicts between 1989 and 2006 (232 conflicts since WWII) only seven were interstate, though twenty-six were ‘internationalised intrastate’ conflicts (Harbom & Wallensteen 2007: 623, 624 (Table II & note b) ). On closer look the year 2006 had 33, and 2007 even 34 conflicts, though “wars—conflicts with more than 1,000 battle-related deaths—decreased by one” to four in 2007 (Harbom, Melander & Wallensteen 2008: 697 (& note 1), 698 (quote) ).
6. Colin S. Gray recognises that most armed conflicts have been, and probably will be, internal; he just warns against the overconfident assertion that (major) interstate wars are becoming forever extinct.
7. In 1963 J. David Singer founded the Correlates of War (COW) project to accumulate data on wars since 1816 ([www.correlatesofwar.org](http://www.correlatesofwar.org)). See also his classics as shown in the Bibliography (Singer & Small 1972; Singer *et al.* 1979).
8. Steven Pinker already noted some of the “downward trends” (Pinker 2012: xxvi (quote) & his note 3) of violence like homicide in his earlier works (Pinker 1998: 518-519; Pinker 2002: 166-169,320,330-336; the page references seem to fit with the editions in my possession—see Bibliography).
9. Horowitz focuses “on Asia and Africa” (Horowitz 2000: xvii), as ethnicity is supposedly “less urgent” in the West” (Ibid: 18)—despite the noted “fragmentation of two .. Eurasian pseudofederations” (Ibid: xi).
10. Yet since 2008, governments *stopped* refusing to “recognize Kosovo” (Walker 2003: 17, note 12).
11. Horowitz does not come up with an explicit, universal definition of ethnic conflict, though he circumscribes ethnicity as group identity differentiated “by color, language, religion, or some other attribute of common origin” (Horowitz 2000: 17-18, 41). Still, Horowitz seems to suggest that practically all internal conflicts are ethnic in nature. Though he allows for other types of ethnic conflict, like “ethnically based military coups” (Ibid: xvi), he practically equates it with rebellion.
12. Actually, non-ethnic conflicts appear to be quite frequent, even if the ethnic intrastate conflict still is the dominant type.
13. Unsurprisingly, Roy Licklider and Mia Bloom’s same footnote 3 refer to Horowitz’ *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (2000).
14. Even if any of the “284 politically-active ethnic groups” tracked from “1945 to the present” represent majorities as in numbers of people in a certain country or region, the project’s title—‘Minorities at Risk’—suggests otherwise ([www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/about.asp](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/about.asp); last accessed: 9-02-2015). Even

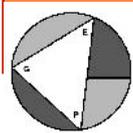


when looking at definitional criteria of groups constituting a *minority at risk* (MAR), it remains unclear if and to what extent a numerical criterion is being applied (not even criteria 1 and 2 make this sufficiently clear): thus criterion 4 states that these “include advantaged minorities like the Sunni Arabs of Iraq .., but exclude advantaged majorities” ([www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/definition.asp](http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/definition.asp); last acc. 9-02-2015). Then what about *disadvantaged majorities*? Are these latter groups really excluded from the data? Then one gets a lopsided picture, which neglects numerical majorities that are or may be at risk of marginalisation, discrimination and worse.

15. MAR's designation of Sudan as 'majority-dominated' in 2005 seems to refer to North Sudan dominating the 'minority' in South Sudan, which became independent in 2011—but this is not made explicit.

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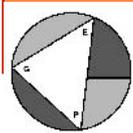
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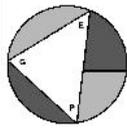
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