International Journal of Conflict and Violence

Vol. 10 (1) 2016

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016189

ISSN: 1864-1385

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence – IJCV
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Editorial

Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are delighted to present to you the latest issue of the International Journal of Conflict and Violence.

In its focus section the issue is engaged with sharpening our understanding of what characterizes extremely violent societies. The assembled contributions on mass atrocities in several national contexts exemplify that extremely violent societies are by no means to be seen as pure results of state actors' repression but find their roots in a complex interplay of individual and group roles and their demands, often embedded in long-term conflicts in the context of civil wars and ethnic conflicts. Our sincere thanks are given to Susanne Karstedt who has taken the challenge to collect different insights into this fairly new understanding of mass violence and genocide that was firstly introduced by Christian Gerlach.

The journals open section this time opens with an article by Fatih Uenal who takes a deeper look into the nature and origin of islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. Following, Friederike Sadowski and Gerd Bohner investigate prejudices toward Americans and Europeans in Egypt. The issue closes with a gender-orientated analysis of state support for crime victims in Switzerland by Anne Kersten and Monika Budowski.

Enjoy reading!

October 2016

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016117
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Introduction: Extremely Violent Societies

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ISSN: 1864-1385

Introduction: Extremely Violent Societies

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In 1995 the German public was confronted with an exhibition of crimes committed by the German Armed Forces when they participated in the Holocaust in East Europe during the Second World War. The displayed photographs showed in graphic detail the killings committed by German soldiers, and documented the direct involvement in mass murder by many men (and some women). In 2015, an exhibition of photos of torture and murder by security forces in Syria was shown in the United Nation's headquarters in New York and later in the European Parliament in Brussels; these photos had been allegedly taken by one or more photographers working for the Syrian security forces and later been brought out of the country. Stephen Ferry's *Violentology – A Manual of the Colombian Conflict* (2012) is a collection of images of massive and persistent violence during the Colombian conflict. These exemplary photo documentations present images of mass violence in the twentieth and twenty-first century and they reveal the major changes in atrocity crimes and mass violence since the Holocaust, as shown in the first, 1995 exhibition.

What actually changed between the Holocaust and the two later cases of mass violence? First, even in the course of the violent decades of the second half of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century "mega-genocides" (Levene 2004, 163) like the Holocaust were rare events, but mass violence was not. The majority of these events are of a smaller scale than the Holocaust and more recent genocides, however their reiteration in the course of long-term conflicts account for millions of victims across the globe. The second major change concerns the role of the state in mass violence. The Holocaust established the "crimes of states/ crimes of hate" model of violence (Alvarez 1999), under which mass violence is executed as top-down state action, where a "select group of government elites" (Alvarez 1999, 467) mobilises and orchestrates large numbers and groups of perpetrators, building on the common motivation of hatred against another group. Goldhagen's (1996) narrative of the Holocaust as a seamless transmission of ideology and cultural models into a reservoir of motives, resulting in uniformity of genocidal motivation and finally action among the German population, is exemplary for this totalitarian model, with its assumptions of planning and strategy at the top, hierarchical chains of command, rigid transmission of elite ideology into subaltern motivation, and unquestioned ideological consensus between elite leaders and the population (Hinton 1998). This "exceptionalist" model based on the Holocaust is presently questioned in many ways, as new legal, political, and analytical challenges arise from profound changes in the global landscape of extreme violence that have become visible during the last decades of the twentieth and the first of the twenty-first century, and of which the latter two photo documentations give evidence.

When Christian Gerlach introduced the concept of "extremely violent societies" in a 2006 article and with his book on the topic in 2010, he aimed at de-constructing the conventional understanding of mass violence as mainly state-driven violence. He wanted to re-contextualise such massive events of violence within a larger framework of conflict, in which different types of civil society actors are constitutive for the occurrence of mass violence events and have a place not only as agents of the state but as actors with their own independent motives, interests and pur-

suits. He describes extremely violent societies as spaces where an "overall acclimatisation to violence" (Gerlach and Werth 2009, 172) facilitates and precipitates events of mass violence of different scales and natures. Mass violence emerges from the "grassroots nature" (ibid.) of other types of violence, and conditions where violence becomes "multi-polar" (Gerlach 2010, 149). Importantly, an array of perpetrator groups comes into the spotlight, among them militias and paramilitary groups, rebel groups, and warlord armies.

Christian Gerlach developed his concept based on astute observation and diligent analysis of documents from mass violence in Turkey during the Armenian genocide, Indonesia in the 1960s, Bangladesh in the 1970s, and post-war Greece, and thus provided an analytical tool that is particularly adapted to the contemporary landscape of mass violence. Contemporary mass atrocities are embedded in trajectories of long-term conflict, and the majority of mass killings since the Second World War have occurred in the context of civil wars and ethnic conflicts (Krain 1997; Human Security Report Project 2011). They typically occur within nation states and independent of their boundaries, and are embedded in the environment, social formations and actor configurations of societies that have a history as well as trajectory of violent conflicts. Societies become "extremely violent" during such periods, creating an environment where violence becomes "multi-polar" (Gerlach 2010, 149). Different groups are victims of massive outbursts of physical violence, including mass killings, systematic sexual violence and enforced displacement, and mass atrocities oscillate between these different forms of violence. Perpetrator participation in these events spreads across the boundaries of different groups and blurs the lines between different types of involvement and non-involvement as for example Fujii (2009) has demonstrated for Rwanda. Diverse groups of perpetrators participate, ranging from state government forces to independent militias and warlord armies, and engage in complex and shifting alliances. Organised violent actors like, for example, paramilitary groups, become increasingly involved, whether encouraged, funded and trained by state actors or other powerful actors. Engagement of military and paramilitary forces, as well as the police, in para-military action results in forced disappearances, widespread torture, and sexual violence (Alvarez 2006; Mitchell, Carey and Butler 2014; Rothenberg 2012). Actors engage in atrocity crimes for a multitude of reasons, and the power of violence stems from the mixture of attitudes, interests and motives that brought them together in the first instance, and their confluence in atrocity events.

Extremely violent societies are not defined by structural or cultural characteristics that are conducive to massive violence and atrocity (Gerlach 2006, 460). Rather they have moved into a violence-prone and dangerous situation, which they can also leave behind again. Mass atrocity crimes are embedded in such trajectories: they act as triggers and create such trajectories as repressive measures mount, the pool of perpetrators widens, and violence is used in an increasingly indiscriminate way against different victim groups.

Notwithstanding the participation of a range of civil society actors, state-led atrocities are a constitutive element and integral part of extremely violent societies. This type of repressive violence is a driver of other types of violence that coalesce in the context of extremely violent societies. In fact, the state and its loyalist arms (militias, paramilitary groups) often account for the majority of atrocity crimes, as for instance in Guatemala. As Gerlach and Werth (2009, 136)) point out, state violence has a very public and a secret side. State terror and repressive policies on the one hand are publicly committed and communicated, and on the other hand often secretly and stealthily executed. Killings, deportations and sexual violence are more public, while enforced disappearances, torture and illegal imprisonment are often concealed. Nonetheless, both public and secret violence instil fear and terror in the population. Even when the conflict ends, they leave "societies of fear" in their wake where citizens distrust institutions and each other, and breakdown of social relations is widespread (Karstedt 2013a).

As Gerlach moves from the state as dominant actor to an understanding of "violent societies", he focuses the analytical gaze on "the realization of violence rather than upon plans and intentions" (Gerlach and Werth 2009, 134). This uncovers a "diversity of backgrounds, experiences, education

and age groups involved", and sheds light on the different roles these groups and organisations play in the execution of mass atrocities. This "reflects a new sense of complexity" (ibid.) and promotes a more nuanced understanding of such events. Importantly, when unravelling such events from the perspective of how violence is realised, the dynamics of the mass violence events come to the fore, and with it a new understanding of the role of emotions involved, which had received short shrift since Hannah Arendt's book on Eichmann and Stanley Milgram's experiments in the 1960s (see for example Klusemann 2009, 2010).

This important new concept has been received by more traditional genocide scholars with a number of reservations (Hinton, Wolfe, and Huttenbach 2007). On the other hand, it has been used to construct a quantitative indicator of extreme violence that combines both violence by state and non-state actors (Karstedt 2012) and has been promoted as a foundation for a relational approach to violence (Karstedt 2013b). The fact that today we aim at measuring violence by non-state and state actors separately, and the *Human Security Report 2012* (Human Security Report Project 2013) names non-state actors as major violent actors and perpetrators of mass violence in complex conflicts, all this speaks to an at least implicit acknowledgement and success of Gerlach's conceptual vision and innovation.

The five contributions to this Focus Section demonstrate, each in its own way, a new understanding of massive violence and atrocity crimes that is inspired by the core features of Gerlach's concept. The engagement of the authors with the concept of "extremely violent society" ranges from an analysis of state-led torture in West Papua (Hernawan) to the surge of violence by organised crime groups in Mexico (Rodriguez) and homicidal violence in Caracas in Venezuela (Tremaria). Wendy Isaac-Martin's analysis of the conflict and violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) shows how pertinent this concept is for the analysis of contemporary complex conflicts with multiple actors without explicitly using it. John Braithwaite and Bina D'Costa in their analysis of the conflict in Sri Lanka focus on the dynamic interaction between different types of violence and actors, defining these as "cascades of violence" that transform and mutate from one type into the next. They illustrate three "cascade" dynamics, and the nexus between (ordinary) crimes, war and state-led violence: how crime cascades to war, war cascades to more war and to crime, and both crime and war both cascade to state violence such as torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial execution.

While Braithwaite and Bina D'Costa, Budi Hernawan, and Wendy Isaac-Martin all use cases of conflict and mass atrocity that have more in common with the type of violence and violent actors that Gerlach describes, Octavio Rodriguez focuses exclusively on non-state actors and violence by organised crime. However, the drug wars raging in Mexico have been recently rated as a non-state conflict, and one of the most lethal globally (see Rodriguez in this issue). If anything, this testifies to the changing landscape of conflict and mass atrocity in the twenty-first century that Gerlach's concept foreshadows. Rodriguez argues convincingly how different actors with different motives entered the conflict and fuelled the violence in Mexico; in particular state repression was a driving and destabilising factor in the surge of violence between 2006 and 2012, which at the time of this writing has picked up again. Stiven Tremaria exclusively uses interpersonal violence as the lens through which he analyses not Venezuela, but its capital city Caracas as a "violent society". He demonstrates the ways in which this is related to the political sphere and action by the government. His tale of the city of Caracas is one of destabilisation of control, delegitimisation of security and policing forces, and encouragement of violent action by government agencies and political leaders.

Even if the concept of extremely violent societies was not originally conceived to cover such types of violence surges, these two contributions show how surprisingly valuable it might be when used outside of the framework of mass atrocities. Both contributions demonstrate that societies embark on a pathway into extreme violence not when states are strong or mainly through state-led violence as in the Holocaust, but when states are weak and lose out to groups and actors, including government agencies, security forces and factionalised elites that pursue their own interests with violent means. Karstedt (2014) has defined this as the paradox of state-led viol-

ence that is high in strong as well as in weak and failing states.

With her analysis of the conflict in the Central African Republic, Wendy Isaac-Martin (this issue) presents a case that epitomises the type of violence, actors, and dynamics that are defining features of contemporary conflicts. She in particular describes the role of militias that are engaged by political leaders, act in shifting alliances and with confluent motives, and thus create an extremely violent environment. Again, her study is one of a weak state engaging directly or by proxy in mass violence and terror. She demonstrates that the role of ideology, in particular religion, is hugely overrated in this conflict, and corroborates Gerlach's argument of the motivational mix and indistinguishability between ideological and utilitarian or purely pragmatic motives (Gerlach and Werth 2009, 135).

Budi Hernawan presents a narrative of torture in the long conflict between West Papua and Indonesia. This is a study of what Gerlach and Werth (2009, 136) term "the public and the secret" in the development of repressive policies and mass violence. Hernawan shows how torture had a very public side – it could hardly be hidden in the built environment of Papuan villages and towns – but also a hidden side with forced disappearances and a secretly operating security apparatus. Hernawan uses a Foucauldian approach to describe its public side as "theatre of torture".

As these contributions demonstrate, the concept of extremely violent societies is not a rigid framework. It allows for analyses of different scales and spaces – from cities to countries – and different types of violence and conflicts. It is a concept that has a lot of potential in reaching out to other frameworks and aligning and accommodating them. However, its main potential lies in its conceptual power to analyse contemporary mass violence beyond state-led violence, and to get to a more nuanced understanding of such violence. Such understanding will ultimately enhance our tools for intervention and prevention. It is hoped that these contributions will prove its potential and value to a wider audience.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people who have been extremely helpful and supportive. First, I thank the authors for their patience with revisions and the editing process. Alex Strang (Paris) helped with editing, many thanks to her. Julia Marth from the editorial team of the *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* was supportive throughout the process, with many helpful suggestions and invaluable advice. I cannot thank her enough for her support and guidance through a sometimes difficult process, as well as her colleagues for their patience. I am grateful to Professor Christian Gerlach for discussing the project at the beginning, and to Professor Peter Imbusch, who was involved in the initial stages.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2015116
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Cascades Across An "Extremely Violent Society": Sri Lanka

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

Cascades Across An "Extremely Violent Society": Sri Lanka

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In the "Peacebuilding Compared" research project violence is seen as cascading across space and time within and between war-torn societies. This article illustrates the cascade lens as a framework for hypothesis generation. Both violent actions and violent imaginaries cascade. The recent history of Sri Lanka is used to illustrate three cascade dynamics: crime cascades to war, war cascades to more war and to crime, and crime and war both cascade to state violence such as torture, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial execution. Sri Lanka is also a case that cascaded new technologies of crime-war globally, such as suicide bombing vests. These are not the only important cascade dynamics, just neglected ones. The implications of our cascade analysis are not mainly about building positive peace – peace with justice, participation, truth and reconciliation – at the end of tragic cascades. They are more about securing negative peace preventively at the onset of cascades.

1. The Cascade Concept

This essay contributes in a modest way to an ambitious research program on how violence begets violence, and obverse mechanisms whereby nonviolence begets nonviolence. Gerlach (2010) argues that extremely violent societies are not violent in some cultural or essential way. Rather societies transition in and out of extremely violent periods of their histories as a result of crises. Karstedt's (2012) work on her Violent Societies Index shows empirically that extremely violent societies experience disparate kinds of violence that are highly intercorrelated. This essay is about one dynamic that might be responsible for that empirical result – violence cascades across space and time from one kind of violence to another.

As in the cascading of water, violence and nonviolence can cascade down from commanding heights of power (as in waterfalls), up from powerless peripheries, and can undulate to spread horizontally (flowing from one space to another). The cascade metaphor has a long history in geology (Kun et al. 2014) and physics; water is not the only matter that cascades: a spark causes fire to cascade up a mountain, down a gully, and across a plain. In particle *physics*, a shower is a *cascade* of secondary particles produced by a high-energy particle interacting with dense matter. In medicine, infection happens through particles that activate other biological particles to spread through cascades known as contagion. The cascade concept has been used before in the social sciences, in Sunstein's (1997) norm cascades and Sikkink's (2011) cascades of criminal enforcement for crimes against humanity. In the social sciences, phenomena like violence cascade through the agency of human actors, and through physical flows – of suicide bombs, of bodies of refugees. These cascades of objects can provide hospitable contexts for cascades of violent action.

This essay seeks inductively to illuminate how violence cascades, using Sri Lanka as a least-likely case study (Eckstein

Thanks for funding support from the Australian Research Council for the fieldwork in Sri Lanka and beyond in the Peacebuilding Compared Project that has made this research possible, to the reviewers and editors for their valuable feedback, and to many friends in Sri Lanka who made our fieldwork possible.

1975). The cascades framework we are in the process of developing conceives cascades of violence as recursively related to cascades of militarization and cascades of authoritarianism (Braithwaite and D'Costa, forthcoming). The particular contribution of this article is to complement our earlier (Braithwaite and D'Costa 2012; Braithwaite 2012) and forthcoming empirically grounded hypotheses on cascade dynamics with just three additional propositions:

1. Crime cascades to war;
2. War cascades transnationally to more war and more crime;
3. Both crime and war cascade to state violence such as torture.

These three cascades occur in almost all twenty-five armed conflicts where the preliminary core fieldwork has been completed (and seven hundred variables preliminarily coded) in the Peacebuilding Compared project (http://peacebuilding.anu.edu.au). This is an utterly non-random sample of armed conflicts in which follow-up is required for another decade (all are post-1990 conflicts). The Peacebuilding Compared team led by John Braithwaite that is conducting the broader and longer term research will not assess this pattern as credible unless it continues to hold up in the years ahead for these twenty-five cases and until fieldwork-based coding has been completed on a more geographically representative sample of at least fifty, hopefully sixty, armed conflicts. This statistical approach to inference in the Peacebuilding Compared project is relentlessly complemented by a more historical and ideographic attitude to inference contained within single cases.

As illustrated by Sri Lanka's three recent armed conflicts (only two of which qualify for the coding framework of Peacebuilding Compared), a single society, a single war, includes many degrees of freedom that support qualified inference about explanatory dynamics. For example, there are many ethnic riots, many assassinations at different points in the history of a society, from which theoretically relevant consequences might or might not flow. Sri Lanka is selected as a single society case to assist in the diagnosis of cascade dynamics, first because it is an outlier as an extremely violent society, second because it is a "least likely case" (Eckstein 1975), a case we expect to be least likely to validate hypotheses about violence begetting violence (because violence has worked decisively in ending Sri Lanka's wars). The hope is that better theory emerges from a project that runs for more than twenty years when theory is continuously, provisionally, developed from partial data along the way. Perhaps this is especially so when it is confronted with least likely cases, rather than rushed in a flurry of publication at the completion of overly abstracted data collection.

In the earlier published work on the various cascade dynamics so far detected as recurrent in Peacebuilding Compared, we have considered many other cascade dynamics, such as the way refugees flowing across borders cascade imaginaries of violence and recruitment opportunities for entrepreneurs of violence among the desperate residents of refugee camps. Violence cascades, we hypothesise, when cascades of refugee flows interact with cascades of militarization and authoritarianism.[1]

Sri Lanka was the most consistently violent Asian society across recent decades on Karstedt's Violent Societies Index (2012), though no longer in her most recent data (2014), where Pakistan is the most violent society in Asia and indeed globally. When Sri Lanka was confronted with an existential threat, it responded with security sector crimes that included summary executions, disappearances, torture, intentional bombing of Tamil hospitals, and rape of Tamil refugees (International Crisis Group 2011, 2013; Human Rights Watch 2010; United Nations 2011). These are familiar claims for most readers. They go to hypothesis 3 above (crime and war cascade to state violence). Following a brief overview of the Tamil radicalisation and class radicalisation that are relevant to our arguments, we provide an analysis of early phases of Sri Lanka's conflicts to illustrate hypothesis 1 (crime cascades to war). Then we

1 Here Sri Lanka is not used as a case study of this wider explanatory framework, but only to consider the above three propositions.

move to hypothesis 2 (war cascades transnationally to more war and more crime). Finally we return to hypothesis 3 on cascades of state crime after considering the paradoxical quality of cascades of crime-war in Sri Lanka.

2. Context: Tamil and Class Radicalisation

Sri Lanka's nationbuilding process and the ethnic identity politics of difference (Wickramasinghe 2006; De Silva 2005) are deeply intertwined through a discursive process initiated by the predominantly Sinhalese-Buddhist state elites who took control of the postcolonial state (D'Costa 2013). Class politics, as we will see, was also intertwined with a push-back by radical Sinhalese youth against state elites that cascaded to terrible violence in 1971 and 1987. In our narrative, we will attempt to unpack intersections between the kind of oppression in the Marxist imaginaries of these Sinhalese youth and in the ethnic identity politics of Tamil resistance to their oppression by state elites.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was formed on May 5, 1976, under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran. LTTE was a political party with various military wings, notably the Tigers (armed infantry), Sea Tigers (navy), Air Tigers (airforce) and Black Tigers (expertise in terrorism, including suicide bombing and assassinations).[2] While there were serious ethnic riots alleged to be orchestrated by state actors in 1956, 1958, 1977, 1979, and 1981, the anti-Tamil pogrom commonly known as "Black July" that started on July 23, 1983, was a turning point in Sri Lanka's history. An estimated three thousand Tamils were killed and more than 150,000 became homeless in mob violence that continued for three days. Many viewed the riots as triggered by an LTTE attack in Jaffna, in the Northern Province, that killed thirteen soldiers. A large number of Tamils were displaced and many who were able to leave moved to other parts of the globe. The LTTE declared its first "Eelam war," marking the beginning of Sri Lanka's long civil war.

After the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of July 29, 1987, the Indian Peacekeeping Forces (IPKF) moved in to enforce peace. The last IPKF contingents withdrew in March 1990, after which the second phase of the "Eelam war" was declared. During this phase the LTTE displaced nearly 75,000 Muslims from the North.[3] After an unsuccessful peace agreement with President Chandrika Kumaratunga's government in 1994, the LTTE declared the third "Eelam war," causing mass displacement and a humanitarian crisis, especially in the Jaffna peninsula and the Vanni region in the north. After a four-year ceasefire, the fourth "Eelam war" was declared following the collapse of the peace process in July 2006.

The LTTE's deliberate recruitment strategies, which in earlier decades might have been supported by some of the population, gradually came to be dreaded. They increased the vulnerabilities of the Tamil population in the Northern and Eastern provinces. While LTEE originally started to recruit women, it also began to recruit children in late 1980s after the India-Sri Lanka Accord. Fighting an insurgency of this composition soon became an enormous challenge for the IPKF.

The fighting cadre of the LTTE comprised 30 percent women. Between 1987 and 2002, it is estimated that four thousand women were killed in combat, including over one hundred suicide bombers from the Black Tigers. Women in the LTTE were responsible for the deaths of prominent figures including Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was assassinated on May 21, 1991, during his election campaign.

2 The Air Tigers were commanded by LTTE leader Prabhakaran's son Charles Anthony, while the Sea Tigers, an amphibious warfare unit, which mainly consisted of lightweight boats was headed by Col. Soosai, a.k.a. Thilayampalam Sivanesan. A suicide commando unit called the Black Tigers (Karunku Puligal), which launched one of its first attacks against the Sri Lankan army in 1987 causing forty deaths, and an internationally operating intelligence unit (TOSI) were both headed by Shanmugaligam Sivashanker, better known as Pottu Amman.

3 Although the Muslims from the Tamil-dominated North speak Tamil, they are not generally considered ethnic Tamils. Before 1990s, nearly 5 percent of Sri Lankan Muslims lived in the Northern Province. However, after the emergence of the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress in 1981, LTTE leaders perceived Muslims as a threat to the mono-ethnic Tamil nation and forced them to leave their homes. Researchers estimate that close to 75,000 Muslims were forcibly displaced during the late 1980s and early 1990s ("Briefing: Sri Lanka's Muslim IDPs 25 years on," http://www.irinnews.org/report/97297/briefing-sri-lanka-s-muslim-idps-25-years-on, accessed 8 March, 2015).

The majority of the child recruitment by the LTTE occurred in the Vanni region. The United Nations estimates it to comprise 64 percent boys and 36 percent girls. Following LTTE's collapse, there is no new evidence of children being recruited. Both Human Rights Watch and Amnesty suggest that the breakaway Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulighal (TMVP), formerly led by Sri Lankan politician and former militant Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (also known as Karuna), has been reconstituted and is now under the control of former LTTE cadre Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan (also known as Pillayan). At least sixty persons who were originally recruited as children and are now adults are still associated with the group.

Between September 2007 and May 19, 2009, the Sri Lankan Army carried out a renewed military offensive in the Vanni using large-scale shelling that caused a large number of civilian deaths. Despite the grave danger, the LTTE refused civilians permission to leave and used them as hostages. Throughout the final stages of the war, the LTTE also continued carrying out suicide attacks against civilians outside the Vanni. A panel of experts appointed by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon to advise him on accountability for killing during the final stages of the conflict found "credible allegations" indicating war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by both the Sri Lankan army and the LTTE (UN Report 2011). The Sri Lankan government has refused to comply with repeated United Nations resolutions calling for an international investigation into allegations of serious abuses by both sides in the country's quarter-century civil war, where in the final six months of the conflict up to forty thousand civilians were killed and another six thousand forcibly disappeared (UN Report 2011).

The state's imposition of an economic embargo on the conflict zone between 1990 and early 2002 has been the single most important cause of severe economic and social decline of the Northern and Eastern provinces (Sarvananthan 2007).[4] The embargo was in force when the LTTE gained control of Jaffna Peninsula and almost the entire Northern province. Because it was a high security zone (HSZ) and heavily militarized area, peoples' livelihoods were destroyed. Restrictions on fishing and subsistence farming, landmines in agricultural areas, collapse of infrastructure, especially major roads all were results of the area being declared as an HSZ. This intensified ethnic grievances and generated deep divisions between the northeast and the other parts of Sri Lanka. During this period the number of serious crimes also escalated in these areas.

Extreme poverty in the Northern and Eastern provinces contributed to huge regional economic disparities with other regions of Sri Lanka. These two provinces comprise 28 percent of Sri Lanka's total area and 14 percent of the total population. The LTTE controlled 44 percent of the area and 20 percent of the population.[5] While no household survey data are available to include the refugee camps and internally displaced persons (IDPs), the Vanni was perhaps the worst affected by the protracted conflict. The inequality and the economic vulnerability of the population were exacerbated by the fact that two parallel economic authorities existed in the provinces – the government and the LTTE. Illegal taxation by the LTTE to finance its activities and the formation of some administrative units by the LTTE such as the Tamil Eelam Police and the Tamil Eelam Judicial Service squeezed resources from the already vulnerable and impoverished communities. The LTTE was also involved in transnational crime, took relief goods from local and international donors and then sold them to the black market, and forcibly took lands from minority communities (D'Costa 2013).

3. Crime Cascades to War in Sri Lanka

Historians do not always take seriously the proposition that crime often cascades to war (MacMillan, 2013). In a sense they are right that this should not be the most central element of cascades of violence theory. Yet perhaps his-

4 The embargo was in force between 1990 to 1996 on the Jaffna Peninsula and until January 2002 in the Vanni region. Also, there was no electricity in the Vanni region between 1990 and 2002.

5 This data is valid until July 2006, before the final round of full-scale hostilities between the rebels and the government security forces. For details see Sarvananthan (2007).

torians should treat it more seriously than they do. Sparks that ignite conflagrations matter. At the height of the tinder-dry Australian bushfire season, the structural conditions are of large fires waiting to happen, awaiting the spark that causes the inevitable. Yet there can be no doubt that there would be more fires without education campaigns to dissuade smokers from throwing cigarettes from car windows, campers from lighting fires, rapid response to lightning strikes and to electricity lines needing repair. Likewise, we could think of effective counterterrorism to protect Archduke Ferdinand from assassination in 1914 as a noteworthy path to war prevention not taken (Clarke 2013).[6] It is dangerous to neglect spark prevention. It is a conceit that one could understand structural conditions so well that one could know that a war, especially a world war, is so inevitable that it is hardly worth bothering with the sparks.

Of course most crime does not cascade to war. Most of us commit crimes in our lifetimes, sometimes major ones, without ever causing a war! Likewise, smokers dispose of cigarettes carelessly countless times, without causing a fire that destroys a town. To date in the Peacebuilding Compared data set, some kinds of crimes are repeatedly coded as sparking armed conflicts. Political assassinations, major terrorist acts, and murder and rape in the context of ethnic/religious riots seem particularly important crimes to minimize for societies that seek peace.

The crime-cascades-to-war argument is easier to make today because few would question that the terrorism of September 11, 2001, resulted in a "War on Terror" which included invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. The leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran of LTTE for an independent Tamil state in Sri Lanka was critical to the escalation of violence. At the start of that war, the LTTE was just one of five major armed groups and another thirty minor ones pushing for Tamil independence. During the 1980s Prabhakaran assassinated leaders of competing groups who did not submit completely to him, liquidating all competing Tamil insurgency groups. He also murdered LTTE members who questioned his judgment. Understanding the biography of a man who turned his society upside down is no easy matter. Frances Harrison (2012, 234) sees him as an example of trauma being "transmitted from one generation to another, storing up trouble for the future." One story told by his father that greatly affected him was of a Hindu Brahmin (most Tamils are Hindu) in the 1958 riots tied to a bed by the Buddhist Sinhalese mob, doused with petrol and burnt alive (Clarance 2007, 41). Prabhakaran also repeatedly used narratives of other violent crimes committed against Tamils to call for an armed struggle against the state. In a 1984 interview with an Indian magazine, Prabhakaran dubbed the anti-Tamil pogrom of 1983 the "July Holocaust" and claimed that this experience united all sections of Tamil masses. He stated: "Armed struggle is the only way out for the emancipation of our oppressed people" (Thottam 2009). Prabhakaran is not the only Tiger leader for whom such crimes figured in their biography of their turn to violence.

The assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India in 1991 was both a crime caused by war and a crime that escalated war. It was an event that decisively changed the dynamics of Indian engagement with Sri Lanka's war. After this, the Indian state and intelligence service was no longer playing a balancing game between sometimes currying favor from Tamil politicians in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu by supporting the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka, sometimes supporting the Sri Lankan state to enhance regional stability. After the young female suicide attacker killed Rajiv Gandhi, India's regional military and intelligence might was committed to the ultimate defeat of the Tigers and played a major role, mostly covert, in delivering that military result. It was a result that did not come, however, until domestic Sri Lankan military leaders became convinced that they could and should win militarily. Assassination attempts were also relevant to that change of heart.

6 Otto von Bismark had a politician's rather than a historian's or sociologist's sensibility when he said "some damned foolish thing in the Balkans" would one day cause a great European war (Harold Evans, "On the Brink", New York Times, 9 May 2014).

Some of our military informants in Sri Lanka argued that their failed assassination attempts on Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, Sri Lankan Secretary of Defence and brother of the President, and army commander General Sarath Fonseka were even bigger LTTE mistakes than assassinating Rajiv Gandhi. These were the two men who persuaded the army that they could defeat the LTTE. Prior to their leadership of the late 2000s, the Sri Lankan military was persuaded by the militarily unsophisticated analysis of the international diplomatic community and Sri Lanka's own strategic elite that LTTE was the world's most militarily powerful terrorist organization. In retrospect, its accomplishments seem less formidable than those of the mujahidin of Afghanistan in driving out the Soviet army and then NATO. One Sri Lankan commander jumped from recognition of the undoubtedly formidable military capability of the LTTE to the inference that defeating it would prove as impossible as it was for France to defeat Ho Chi Minh's army in Vietnam. According to our interviews, this was the answer one of Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga's five most senior military commanders gave on one occasion when she asked each for their assessment of the feasibility of abandoning peace talks in favor of a fully military solution. It was an answer that reflected the thinking of the Norwegian leadership of the post-2002 peace process,[7] of European Union diplomats generally, and of the US State Department.[8] Fonseka served as the commander of the Sri Lankan army from December 2005 until mid-July 2009 and led the military to victory against the LTTE. However, he fell out with the government and challenged President Rajapaksa unsuccessfully during the subsequent election. Two weeks after his defeat, he was arrested and convicted by a military court on four counts of corruption in defence deals, bypassing military procedures in purchasing equipment, and nepotism.

The military defeat of the Tigers in 2009 can be read as a refutation of the cascade hypothesis. While thousands were killed in the final year of the long conflict, the government victory has resulted in a cessation of war deaths and almost complete cessation of Tamil terror. In other words, instead of cascading to more violence, the extreme violence of 2009 seemed to end further violence rather decisively (for more examples, see Toft 2010). There is strong evidence that as long as LTTE leader Prabhakaran was alive, he would have used peace talks to regroup, recruit, and eliminate Tamil leaders who supported peace. Thus, it may always have been the case that a military solution was feasible and the most likely path to ending the killing. We do not argue that violence always cascades to further violence. Rather in our forthcoming book we make good use of the Sri Lankan case to inductively build an account of the contexts and ways in which violence does and does not cascade. As with all social science propositions, often it proves downright wrong that violence cascades. Nevertheless, even at this point of maximum invalidity in South Asia, we diagnose the cascade framework as providing fertile insights and correctives to offer the discerning analyst. Let us then turn to how one should salvage explanatory relevance of cascade hypotheses even in this least likely case (Eckstein 1975) of violence ending violence. A least likely case is a tough test of an explanation because it explores a context where the explanation is least likely to be true.

The hypothesis that violence cascades causes us to critique the maximalist way the Sri Lankan army conducted the

7 "[Lead Norwegian diplomat] Eric Solheim had a meeting with President Rajapaksa in late March 2006 where he told the president that Prabhakaran was a military genius and that it would be suicidal to take him on" (Chandraprema 2012, 312).

8 In our interview with the Sri Lankan military commander General Sarath Fonseka, he said that during the 2000s Pentagon analysts would engage very sympathetically with his analysis that he could militarily defeat the LTTE quite quickly. While US military leaders found that credible, State Department officials saw military defeat of the LTTE as unrealistic. Fonseka described the reaction of the British High Commissioner in Sri Lanka after the July 21, 2006, LTTE provocation of closing the sluice gates that cut off Eastern province farmers from irrigation for their crops. After the LTTE had been routed in the region around the gates by August 14, Fonseka said the High Commissioner warned him that he should not assume that military victory in this region could be replicated across the North. Fonseka's critique of Western diplomats was that they were always talking up the impossibility of military defeat of LTTE. Among the people who believed the Western diplomats' analysis was the LTTE itself and the Tamil diaspora who funded LTTE's military folly and kept pushing for a maximalist military solution. From the moment of that military defeat around the sluice gates, Western diplomats should have been warning Tamil leaders that they must persuade Prabhakaran that military defeat was certain if he did not genuinely embrace a political settlement. General Fonseka's comment in our 2013 interview was: "It probably would not have worked. Prabhakaran probably would not have been convinced. But that would have been the right way to go for the international community and the political leadership of Sri Lanka to work together to end terrorism."

final slaughter of the war. The insistence of the Sri Lankan government that the United Nations quit the North of Sri Lanka eight months before the final onslaught and the lack of UN insistence on its responsibility to protect civilians permitted a more vast slaughter than would otherwise have occurred. Greater slaughter, in the cascades account, builds the potential for larger future cascades of violence. A minimally sufficient military victory will induce lesser cascade dynamics. The ruthlessness and authoritarianism of the unaccountable power afflicted on the Tamil civilians of 2009 became part of a vicious cycle of unaccountable and violent authoritarianism imposed by the victorious regime over all Sri Lankans. Ending the war was politically popular, especially among the Sinhala majority; it was sold as a necessary kind of unaccountable power of the military and the President. Once a long period of wartime unaccountability is entrenched, those who hold power are reluctant to surrender it, especially when they can sell a narrative about the risk of the enemy rising again. Torture and disappearances for the opposition, and impunity of the regime for war crimes, are not the best policies for averting long-term cycles of violence. As Goodhand and Korf put it:

> The Rajapaksa government may have thrown off the shackles of the "peace trap", and successfully, in its own terms, pursued a war for peace, but escaping the "war trap" may be more difficult, as the coalitions and alliances constructed to pursue the war may impede its ability to forge a new broad-based political settlement for lasting peace (Goodhand and Korf 2011, 2).

The Sri Lankan state became a family firm of President Rajapaksa until his defeat in 2015, a state sheared of many of the constitutional checks and balances of its independence constitution. As one party leader put it in our 2013 interview: "The country today is run by criminals. Big business belongs to the criminals."[9] Sri Lanka under President Rajapaksa acquired a form of crony capitalism where the ruling Rajapaksa brothers got a slice of the action from much of both the legitimate economy and the criminal economy. Two of President Rajapaksa's brothers were the two most influential members of his government's inner circle. The military was that part of the family firm controlled by Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa. Before the Rajapaksa government, Sri Lanka was significantly under the control of a shadow government of a handful of criminal business entrepreneurs who used their income from control of gambling, drugs, prostitution, smuggling, and human trafficking to buy individual journalists, television stations, and newspapers in order to shape the political environment. From that base, these business criminals moved up to control blue-chip companies. After the 2009 military victory, the shadow government of organized business criminals who were once the puppeteers of political leaders became the puppets of the brothers. Sri Lanka waits in hope to see whether the defeat of President Rajapaksa in the 2015 election by a senior defector from his own regime, President Maithripala Sirisena, will temper crony capitalism.

Blame for the maximalist slaughter and war crimes also lies with Prabhakaran. His engagement with a succession of peace processes was always tactical, less genuine than anyone on the other side of the table. Even at the end, LTTE orders to shoot civilians who tried to surrender contributed to the slaughter (one war crime causing another). So did Prabhakaran's decision to have his commanders attempt to sneak through the enemy lines wearing suicide vests to use should they fail (Harrison 2012, 67). They all did fail. When they were shot in suicide vests, the army could use this to justify murdering surrendering civilians. They also used an incident in February 2009 when the Tigers sent a female suicide bomber to mingle with a group of escaping civilians; this operation killed twenty soldiers receiving them plus eight civilians (Harrison 2012, 102). That is not to excuse the mass murder of civilians, thirty-two artillery or air attacks on hospitals recorded by Human Rights Watch or the Red Cross, or the indiscriminate bombing of the final UN food convoy of the war (Harrison 2012, 90–91, 240). It does, however, help explain mass murder in terms of a cascade of violence involving suicide vests (invented by LTTE to be cascaded globally mainly by Islamic jihadists). From Iraq to Afghanistan to Yemen to Pakistan, innocent

9 This was the leader of the Marxist Party, JVP, which led the uprisings discussed in the next two sections of this paper.

civilians are now repeatedly killed somewhere in the world on suspicion of being a suicide bomber.

Somasundaram argues that the development of the Tamil militancy and the LTTE suicide bombers can best be understood in terms of socio-cultural and political contexts (2010, 423). He observes that while Tamils in Sri Lanka had often been stereotyped as somewhat submissive, the suicide cadres had developed very quickly following the 1983 riots. Somasundaram argues that "social sanction for a group to behave violently can bring out aggressive acts they had learnt or seen" and this increased the participation of Tamil youth in suicide attacks (2010, 422). Prabhakaran also advocated the cult of cyanide capsules to Tamil rebels who were instructed to commit suicide rather than be captured by the state. This was the worst way that violence cascaded globally from Sri Lanka. It was the cascade of violence that gave the Sri Lankan state the green light from the United States, India, and China to "do what it takes to fight terrorism." The prominence of that terror cascade in the calculations of the great powers was heightened by the Sea Tigers' innovation of a suicide boat that speeds toward a navy ship; this was replicated by jihadists against the USS Cole in 2000.

A cascades analysis does not say military solutions never work. Our least-likely case analysis suggests that military solutions, even when they work, cascade violence. Hence, it warns that maximalist military solutions risk more virulent cascades of violence than minimalist ones. Second, it counsels mobilizing the spectre of military defeat to motivate peace negotiations when military defeat is in reality a credible possibility (as in Iraq-Kuwait 1990, Sri Lanka 2009). This is a better option with the Saddam Husseins and Prabhakarans of this world than purely facilitative diplomacy that fails to be assertive with military reality checks. It is a philosophy of preventive diplomacy as something that must be asserted, fail and fail again in multiple creative modalities before taking the risk with cascades of violence. One of those last chance modalities involves laying out the full brutality of the worst possible military consequences of shunning a political settlement. This is not best done by making threats, but by third party diplomats laying out the military reality check. Western diplomats share some blame for the cascades of violence from Sri Lanka for their failure to open their minds to the military reality and then to use it to try to motivate a diplomatic solution.

4. Crime-War and Security Dilemmas of the JVP: From Class Struggle to Ethnic Separatism

This section continues the analysis of hypothesis 1 (crime cascades to war). It does so, however, by considering two other wars that immediately preceded the take-off of the Tamil insurgency. The first of these JVP civil wars was in 1971. War recurred in 1987–1989 when a Sinhala nationalist and Marxist political party, the Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna (Peoples' Liberation Front, hereinafter JVP),[10] took up arms against the state. Many JVP activists had disappeared before the conflict and thousands by the end of it. Many were also tortured and female activists were raped by the security forces (as also happened with LTTE women). This state crime was important to the onset of the cascade of violence that occurred.

The various phases of conflicts demonstrate that economic interests have played a major role in Sri Lankan ethnic rivalry. The class theories model of ethnic conflict (Horowitz 1985, chap. 3) demonstrates that there may be diversity of conflict motives among different classes of the society. The economic rivalries between traders vs traders, clients vs traders/merchants, landowners vs labourers, labourers vs labourers may all further accentuate differences marked by ethnic lines. In the mid-1980s, JVP's financial support base was small entrepreneurs based in Colombo who either experienced rivalry from Tamil businesses or had difficulty in obtaining credit from banks that they believed were under disproportionate Tamil influence (Ponnambalam 1981). JVP led an unsuccessful youth rebellion in 1971, which was crushed with a loss of four to ten thousand lives, and another armed uprising in 1987–89 that again was put down at a cost of perhaps forty thousand or more lives (Gunaratna 2001, 105, 269).

10 Following the split within the Ceylon Communist Party in 1963 roused by the Sino-Soviet conflict, Sri Lanka's largest leftist party, JVP, was founded in 1965. JVP has been described as "hydra-headed" and "phoenix-like" for its ability to regenerate despite being violently annihilated by the state.

Just as the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and the attempts on Rajapatsa and Fonseka were crimes that escalated plans for war, we can see that kind of cascade in the origins of the JVP uprisings in Sri Lanka. In our interviews, JVP leaders stressed that they turned to armed struggle because their party was being tyrannized by state violence in the form of arbitrary arrests, torture, and disappearances. In the literature (Gunaratna 2001, 269) and in our interviews, it was often said that the most fatal mistake JVP made was to announce that if members of the military and the police did not defect to them, they would kill their families. Some JVP members, without actually being ordered to do so by the JVP leadership, then indeed proceeded to kill family members of the security forces. They had delusions about their own power because they had already persuaded two thousand soldiers to desert, many to join JVP (Gunaratna 2001: 328).[11] Erroneously, they calculated that by threatening military families in the conditions of extreme uncertainty they had created by December 1988, when around a hundred people were being assassinated every day (Gunaratna 2001: 267), larger sections of the military might defect to them. Instead, JVP triggered a cascade of slaughter of their own cadres. The security forces recruited hit squads of soldiers and police whose family members had been killed by JVP (Gunaratna 2001, 333, 338–39). They had no compunction about executing the systematic killing of the entire leadership of the JVP. Once almost all Politbureau and Central Committee members had been killed, the insurrection collapsed. On the other side, it was likewise a case of crime enabling civil war: "The JVP concentrated on recruiting members from houses set on fire and families in which brothers or fathers were killed or a female harassed or raped" (Gunaratna 2001, 295).

With the JVP uprisings, a Marxist imaginary cascaded violence:

> Where there was a lot of influence on both JVP and LTTE from Marxism was when it comes to armed struggle. People thought, especially oppressed people thought, the best way was armed struggle because of the Marxist influence. They thought that killing was a good way to liberation. . . JVP and LTTE had the same heroes. It was not Gandhi. It was [advocates of violence like] Bose, Mao, Che, Castro. (1971 JVP leader interview 091338 in 2013)

Assassinations on both sides in the failed JVP uprising of 1971 motivated both to settle scores in 1987. The security forces argued that the government had erred in not wiping JVP out in 1971. In 1987 this perception also encouraged the security forces to believe that unless we wipe them out first, this time they will wipe out not only us but our families. This perceived security dilemma magnified and cascaded common criminal threats into an imperative for war.[12] Deputy Inspector General of Police Premadasa Uduganpiola, the most efficient, ruthless death squad leader, who had lost his wife, children, mother, and brother to JVP said: "I did not want a Pol Pot regime to come" (Gunaratna 2001, 340). Even more interesting is the considerable data supporting the analysis that the JVP prematurely resorted to armed struggle against the government by attempting to capture the armouries of seventy-four police stations on April 5, 1971, and then abduct the prime minister and senior ministers, because of their analysis that if they did not strike first, the state would wipe them out in the way that the Indonesian government had wiped out its communist party in 1965 (Cooke 2011, 122, 135; our interviews). That security dilemma analysis of JVP in 1971 was exaggerated because the Sri Lankan security forces did not see JVP as the threat that the Indonesian security forces saw in their communist party of 1965; the latter was the largest in the world outside China and the USSR and already wielded great power inside Sukarno's government. Cascades of imaginaries can be as important as cascades of action. Imaginaries of preemptive violence are spread by networks, in this case Marxist networks that conceived a security dilemma, even if it was not fully grounded in reality. What the security dilemma realities are matters little if key actors imagine that when they fail to act decisively to kill the enemy, the enemy will do so to them.

11 Others among these deserters and the estimated twenty thousand deserters from the long war against the Tamil insurgency (Gunaratna 2001, 368) became members of armed criminal gangs who did armed robberies, kidnapping for ransom, and contract killing, among other activities (a war leads to crime dynamic internal to the victorious army).

12 So far in the Peacebuilding Compared coding, security dilemmas mediate the magnification of violence in only some of the cases.

Preventive diplomacy was needed in 1971 to persuade JVP that they were not in that security dilemma and that parliamentary politics was a more plausible path to power (which became a reality in 2004 when JVP became the third force in the Sri Lankan parliament with forty-one seats and various ministerial portfolios). It was true that state crime against JVP cadres was also a cause of the 1971 uprising. So what we have here is serious state crime that needed to cease combined with an imagined security dilemma imported from state violence in Indonesia that triggered a cascade of JVP violence, that in turn triggered a cascade of state violence. All this was allowed to cascade for want of preventive diplomacy to provide a reality check to the immature political minds of the JVP cadres of 1971, whose average age was twenty (Gunaratna 2001, 119). More mature minds might have persuaded them that they were not in as dire a security dilemma as they believed (or propagandized).

Our hypothesis is that the two JVP uprisings helped create a culture of violence and a legacy of untreated trauma in Sri Lanka. Beyond these profound ways that JVP violence contributed to crime (hypothesis 2), and was caused by it (hypothesis 1), in both uprisings common crime to steal guns was the principal way JVP armed. In addition, there were hundreds of major robberies planned by JVP from September 1986 of money, gold and other valuables that allowed them to buy guns (Gunaratna 2001, 267). Gunaratna describes this crime wave as contributing to anomie, a state of disorder where citizens no longer knew who was in charge or what the rules of social order were:

> The gradual build up of crime and the accompanying brutalization of the society was followed by the emergence of a lawless, a policyless and a leaderless nation. Two governments had emerged [JVP was called the "night government"] and the people did not know whom to support and follow. (Gunaratna 2001, 270)

5. Paradoxes of the Cascades Between LTTE and JVP Violence

This section pursues greater complexity and nuance with hypothesis 2: that war cascades to more war and more crime. JVP always tended to be a Sinhala nationalist group and still is. It chose to reignite its uprising in 1987 because it believed that Sinhala dignity was challenged by the presence of an Indian peacekeeping force on Sri Lankan soil. JVP argued that the Sri Lankan government was allowing their country to be held hostage to Tamil division and Indian imperial designs. There was paradox therefore that LTTE had provided weapons, landmines, explosives, and training to JVP to weaken a Sri Lankan military that would have to fight on two fronts (Gunaratna 2001, 133). The LTTE threat cascaded through the intentional agency of LTTE strategists of violence who helped make JVP a more credible threat.

In the late 1980s the Sri Lankan state was suffering military defeats at the hands of the LTTE. It seemed to lead a society that was disintegrating. For that reason, the state at first welcomed Indian peacekeepers. Initially, Sri Lankan leaders hoped the Indians could get LTTE under control while they concentrated on subjugating JVP in the South. The next paradox was that JVP nationalist propaganda pilloried the state for its weakness in surrendering Sinhala sovereignty to the Indians. Indian intervention redefined JVP politics in Sri Lanka (Uyangoda 2008). This resonated in the South and built support for JVP. It helped destabilize President Jayewardene, who lost power in 1989. Consequently, his successor, President Premadasa, was minded to convince the unpopular Indian peacekeepers to leave. Then came the next paradoxical cascade, of the government of Sri Lanka replenishing the firepower of its principal enemy, the LTTE, so it could inflict more losses on the Indians. This it did, killing twelve hundred Indian peacekeepers. The peacekeepers had initially been fairly popular among Tamils; many Tamils were protected from the LTTE by the peacekeepers, and protected as a result of the pause from the more general ravages of war. LTTE maneuvered to undermine this Tamil civilian goodwill by firing on Indian troops from inside places of worship and other locales where Indian return fire would kill many Tamil civilians. Incidents of rape of Tamil women and other misconduct by demoralized Indian peacekeepers, who in our interviews found it hard to understand why they were there being killed, also made the cascade worse.

When a country at war has four combatants – a state military, the Indian military, JVP and LTTE – and where, as we have seen, some combatants chose not only to escalate violence against enemies but also against "friends" who might resist their enemies as a result, cascades of violence can become convoluted and virulent (see Karstedt 2012 for a

discussion of this phenomenon including in the waves of violence in Sri Lanka). Organized crime then sees opportunities to enrol political parties to their projects, even to seek to take them over as some interviewees alleged organized crime interests did with the JVP. More mundanely, a climate of extreme violence created opportunities for Sri Lankan organized crime to promote protection rackets, in turn nurturing a political culture of corruption. Suicide (self-violence) also trebled between the 1960s and 1990s in Sri Lanka (Gombrich 2006, 25). Sri Lankans became inured to a culture of disappearances.

While we do not document cascades of state crime and combatant crime in detail here, it must be noted that abductions, disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, rape, and sexual violence were rampant in Sri Lanka during its twenty-six years of protracted warfare. Human rights organizations and the United Nations document narratives of torture and killings (see Amnesty International 2013; Human Rights Watch 2011; UN Report 2011). Various regimes were quite open about making the fact of torture a common knowledge. "Disfigured heads and bodies were displayed openly to serve as a warning to the public. Such atrocities became commonplace. The existence of at least eight such torture chambers was discovered by a Commission investigating disappearances in four provinces" (Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal or Disappearance of Person in the Western, Southern and Sabaragamuwa Provinces 1997, 34). In our interviews, Tamil activists also reported that there had been an increase in disappearances following the failed 2005 peace process. Human rights activists and Sri Lankan Tamils living in Jaffna and Colombo were frequently "white vanned". White vans without number plates picked up people who were usually never seen again. Incidents of enforced disappearances continue even at present, though at a much lower level. A recent in-depth report that includes interviews with forty witnesses of sexual violence and torture notes that the witnesses had only been released after their family paid a large bribe to the security forces, most often brokered by a member of the EPDP or by well connected persons in Sri Lanka (Sooka 2014, 43).[13] Domination dynamics that cascade from cascades among the four major combatant forces down to individuals take many forms: cascades of exclusion, militarism, cronyism, corruption and money politics, cascades of state terror and cascades of class politics, among other domination dynamics.

6. Conclusion: Multiplicity in Crime-War Dynamics

Archer and Gartner (1984) showed that homicide rates rise after nations participate in wars at home or abroad (supporting hypothesis 2). There are other war-crime dynamics beyond those considered here that feed this result. We have illustrated but a few. These include war in Sri Lanka cascading to rape, during the war and in refugee camps afterwards, followed by murder to eliminate witnesses; war cascading to militarization of a society in which army officers steal land and businesses from people; war cascading to crony capitalism in which a ruling family loots the nation, corrupts accountability institutions and causes political opponents to disappear. In our forthcoming book, we catalogue in more detail war to crime cascades across South Asia in and between India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Afghanistan (Braithwaite and D'Costa forthcoming).

Many of the data points that drive the Archer and Gartner (1984) result are countries that experience elevated homicide rates after participation in wars that end with a peace forged by military victory – World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War. At one level, major cases like these and Sri Lanka where peace is achieved through military victory do refute the simple hypothesis that war cascades to more war (consider Toft 2010). A cascade approach helps us unpack simple causation models that read Sri Lanka as a case of nonviolence secured through violence. We might likewise unpack World War I, World War II and the Indo-China War as cases that each included a cascade to genocide (to a Turkish genocide against Armenians with World War I, Nazi genocide against Jews, Roma, and other non-Ayrian peoples such as disabled and LGT people with World War II, and Khmer Rouge genocide against class enemies of the new

13 The Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) is a political party and a pro-government paramilitary organization in Sri Lanka.

Maoist Cambodia that included supporters of the defeated pro-US Lon Nol government, non-Maoist intellectuals, professionals, monks, and people of Vietnamese and Chinese ancestry with the Indo-China war). Each of these genocides cascaded refugees who triggered other conflicts in places like Palestine; refugees from the Khmer Rouge (who mostly fled to Vietnam) encouraged the cascade to a Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. *Within* each of these wars where military victory caused a peace, a war between A and B drags in C, which in turn drags in D and E. The fact that the cascade dynamics internal to these wars are so profound is what leads us to call two of them World Wars and to call what started as the Vietnam War the Indo-China War. Sri Lanka is not a case like these mega wars where large numbers of national armies are dragged in. Yet we can see the state military victory in the first JVP uprising as creating conditions not only for peace, but for the second JVP uprising and the Tamil war, just as we can see this with respect to World War I creating conditions for World War II.

So we have illustrated how we must unpack cascades internal to a country case, and internal to a single war, to understand the ways in which the peace-through-war script in Sri Lanka is not quite right. Just as Sri Lanka is not a case that cascades to world war, it is also not a case like Iraq (2003), El Salvador (Richani 2007), and various African cases where more people are killed by homicides, state violence, and armed gang violence after the peace agreement was signed than were being killed during the war. Even so, Sri Lanka powerfully demonstates the cascade dynamics of homicide leading to war and war leading to homicide.

Our research program conceives these as rather general dynamics. For example, in deciding to invade Iraq, President Bush's inner circle undertook a static analysis of the cost and desirability of regime change in Iraq (see Woodward 2002, 2004; Loban 2013) rather than any recursive analysis of possible cascades. Our policy inference, of course, is that such decisions will be better if they are open to recursive diagnosis of cascade risks. President Bush did not weigh the costs of a crime wave in Iraq that took more lives than the invasion (Iraq Body Count 2012). More academics have been killed in Iraq (448) through kidnapping, suicide bombs and other violence than coalition forces up to the time of President Bush's "Mission Accomplished" declaration (Griffis 2014). President Bush did not weigh waves of traumatized young American soldiers returning home to inflict violence on their families and on themselves. Nor was there any factoring in of the threat to American constitutional values that state crime at institutions like Abu Graib, Guantanamo Bay, extraordinary rendition to totalitarian regimes like that of Libya, would have on the fabric of American society or on the lives of young Americans like Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning who exposed these state crimes. He did not weigh the risk of cascades to civil war that could empower something like Islamic State, led by a former inmate of Abu Graib prison.

Obversely, our analysis causes us to reconsider the importance to war prevention of sharpened security sector and crime prevention competence. Improved democratic policing that might have prevented the anti-Tamil riots of 1956, 1958, 1977, 1979, 1981, and 1983 that so shaped the imagination of young LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran,[14] improved policing that might have prevented his assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, are counterfactuals we can-

14 In this context, we mean democratic policing that is not captured by a ruling party or a dominant ethnic group, but that acts decisively to protect the rights of citizens of all ethnicities and parties. Across South Asia – in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, as well as Sri Lanka – there is a deep pathology of police being politicized rather than playing an independent role in a separation of powers that sees them douse sparks of communal violence, whichever group is injured first. Braithwaite and D'Costa (forthcoming) see this as a cascade of violence from a colonial policing of the Raj that was politicized to defend British interests. We see the importance of this policing pathology in Wilkinson's (2004) research that shows a history of cascades of violence of this type across hundreds of such communal riots in India. Where the police do show resolve to prevent violence from spreading, to smother the sparks, they have overwhelmingly succeeded in doing so throughout Indian history. Wilkinson found that the cases where there is a lot of killing are cases where the police fail to show resolve. Failure of resolve in turn occurs because their state government is politically reluctant to allow the police to control a group that delivers electoral support to the party in power. One reason low-intensity Maoist insurgencies afflict some rural areas of half India's states is that state political leaders have tolerated them or encouraged them. State leaders' tolerance is because the insurgents mostly killed party-political opponents of those state leaders in the regions Maoists control (Chadha 2005: 375-6; Routray 2012:319). Likewise in Nepal, the king tolerated Maoist killings for years because they were killing his republican enemies in the democratic parties (Braithwaite and D'Costa, forthcoming).

not empirically test.[15] Yet we can hesitate to dismiss them as sparks that if extinguished would inevitably be followed by other sparks that light identical conflagrations. Extinguishing sparks that ignite wars is not as important as tackling root causes of those wars such as the domination of Tamils, discrimination and violence against Tamils by a Sinhala nationalist state. Yet it is important.

Peacebuilders can be attentive to redressing root causes of regional cascades of violence at the same time as they also work at dampening all types of cascade dynamics. States and the UN can be moderate in deploying military power to guarantee a responsibility to protect civilians. It is possible to demand a political process and political transition backed by military might that threatens regime change, without moving with maximal force to war as the instrument of regime change. When diplomacy and military deployment becomes more like that, extremely violent legacy societies like Sri Lanka, parts of the former Yugoslavia, and Palestine can become less common. That at least is one policy hypothesis that motivates the ongoing inductive work of Peacebuilding Compared.

15 Similar arguments about improved policing can be made about Archduke Ferdinand's assasination in 1914 that sparked the Great War.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016129
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Political and Ethnic Identity in Violent Conflict: The Case of Central African Republic

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

Political and Ethnic Identity in Violent Conflict: The Case of Central African Republic

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The conflicts in the CAR were largely ignored by the international community until 2013. International interest rose with the presidential coup by Michél Djotodia, the first Muslim president of the CAR, who later resigned in January 2014. As the violence in the country escalated, it was mainly portrayed as a conflict fuelled by religion between Muslim militia, Christian defence units and civilians. This paper focuses on this conflict and contextualises it within a trajectory of conflict. It argues that the conflict has other facets apart from a religious strife, and includes ethnic and political factions and conflict as well. Through a case study method a narrative of events is provided and processes, groups and identities are analysed. The data were retrieved from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) briefing notes and news series, and cover the period from 2000 to 2014. The results show that apart from a long-standing conflict related to changes in political leadership, there are other paths of violence, which are representative of other ethnic and political identities. The violence, which is currently defined as sectarian religious conflict is actually related to the contestation of political leadership, and the exploitation of different conflicts and groups for purposes of power.

1. Trajectories of Conflict in the CAR

Since independence in 1960, the CAR has experienced violent conflicts. These were embedded and resulted from competitors attempting to usurp or maintain political leadership and power, and the constant scourge of rebel armies, militias, armed youths, bandits, and civilian criminality. This led on to the persistent weakening of state institutions, including democratic social and political structures, as well as a faltering economy that cannot incorporate the majority of the population. CAR thus experiences violence, extrajudicial executions, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, and rampant state corruption. In addition, multiple actors – non-state actors as well as government – are involved in violence, and conflicts between state and non-state actors have been a defining feature. As such, CAR exemplifies very well what Gerlach (2010) has defined as an 'extremely violent society'.

The 2013–2014 conflict is often understood as a religious confrontation pitting government troops against militias that eventually spilt over into civil and community confrontations. However, a characterisation of the conflict as Islam versus Christianity, government troops versus paramilitaries, and militias versus civilians fails to capture the true scope, parties and factions of the conflict.

CAR has experienced four violent changes in political leadership across the past decades, most of which have been the result of coups. Ange-Félix Patasse was elected democratically in 1993 a development in CAR politics moving away from coups such as that in 1981 by General André-Dieudonné Kolingba, against the first president of CAR, David Dacko. Unfortunately Patasse was then ousted by François Bozizé in 2003. Bozizé in turn was ousted by Michel Djotodia who proclaimed himself president in 2013. Current president Faustin Touadera was elected democratically, after the caretaker interim government of Catherine Samba-Panza, although his rival Anicet Dologuele claimed there were irregularities. Apart from the democratically elected Patasse, the CAR has continually experienced violent political transition with the use of the military or militias; this violent confrontation with state

forces has increased since 2000. During this period an increasing number of militias can be observed in the various prefectures,[1] established by government and non-government forces, and in partnership or conflict with government forces, other militias or civilians.

This paper aims to demonstrate that there are two strands of violence and violent conflict in CAR. The first is the long-standing pattern that brings about change in political leadership by force in the form of coups. The second form, a corollary to the first, is a new and different path of violence that involves different types of non-state actors: civilians, defence units, and militias. This paper analyses the conflict and its dynamics between different types of actors, and explores the coalitions between these, and their regional distribution for different periods and in different prefectures.

Within the broad conceptual framework of extremely violent societies a descriptive case study method is used. The primary data source is United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) titled as news stories and briefing notes between 2000 and 2014. A total of one hundred documents were analysed. As a corpus, they provide a detailed and differentiated picture of the changing situation and violent activities in the CAR. The narrative follows the patterns according to which conflict and violence occurred over the four presidential terms. Each president's term features an escalation of violence, claims to political legitimacy and power, changing relationships between leaders, armies and militias, and ensuing conflicts after they are ousted. The movement of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees, as documented in the UNHCR reports and briefings reveals the trajectory of government troops, militias, and bandits attacking particular areas. These paths of persistent violence and attacks create an environment of fear, hopelessness, and desperation that elevates tensions within and between village and urban communities. The research reveals that the recent violence in the CAR is both a continuation of earlier patterns of violence and behaviours, coupled with a new dimension from September 2013. The article will first describe the fluid landscape of ethnic and religious groups, and then move on to the various state and non-state actors involved in the conflict and violence.

2. Data and Methods

This article offers a qualitative case study of a conflict that is still ongoing. Current information is largely limited to websites and news media, which are subject to bias and distortion. The main data source used here is a set of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports referred to as news stories and briefing notes covering the CAR during the period from 2000 to 2014. In line with its remit, the UNHCR reports are mainly about refugees and victims, but also cover perpetrators of violence. They provide a consistent, differentiated, and competent account of relevant events during the period. The reports often focus on a single event, for example an attack on a particular area or community: the armed groups involved, the violence perpetrated against civilians, and the movement of civilians, or entire communities, from the site of violence to areas perceived as safer or to refugee camps. Other reports place these events in a larger trend or timeline of increasing or subsiding conflict and violence. Often, accounts of violence are based on victims' reports, but the number of displaced individuals is tallied by the UNHCR. This provides a twofold narrative from the briefing notes. Firstly, the accounts of particular events are related by those who witnessed, experienced, or fled the violence, and secondly the UNCHR estimates give an impression of the intensity of the violence. Each report provides an event, a place, and an outcome and often, although not always, the number of people displaced, supported by maps. The reports describe antagonists in struggles for political leadership, political change, violence, conflict, displaced populations, refugee sites, and armed forces.

Reports were extracted for the period January 2000 to December 2014; up to seven briefing notes and news stories were selected for each year, for a combined total of

1 A prefecture is an area under the administrative jurisdiction of a governor or appointed prefect (Adrien-Rongier 1981).

one hundred. The potential limitations of this data should be noted: the UNHCR, like other organisations working with refugees, may elevate numbers of refugees in order to create a greater sense of urgency (Rice 2009, 27). However, specific numbers of refugees are of minor importance for the arguments made in this paper.

The UNHCR news stories and briefing notes also reveal the tensions that arise between ethnic groups within the refugee sites in the form of verbal conflicts and demands for exclusion and expulsion of particular groups, often mirroring events outside. Within the refugee camps this results in populations separating along ethnic and religious identities.

The period under discussion, 2000 to 2014, includes four presidencies, namely those of Patassé, Bozizé, Djotodia, and Samba-Panza. Patassé, the fifth president of CAR from 1993 to 2003, was the first democratically elected president since independence in 1960.[2] His second term in 2000 was marred by revolts that led to further conflict within the various prefectures.[3] This period marked the beginning of accelerated violence in the CAR. Links to political and armed forces in neighbouring states exacerbated internal conflict led to increasing numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) as well as refugees entering CAR from neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, and Chad (Vinck and Pham 2010). The UNHCR briefing notes and the news stories can thus be seen as a narration of trajectories of violence that include various actors with differing motivations, coalescing and parting again. The article is generally based on these one hundred documents.[4]

3. Identity, Religion, and Violence in the CAR

State formation and state-building remain complex in Africa due to persistent economic, political, and security fragility (Francis 2005). This can be partly attributed to the legacy of European colonialism, expansion, and resource extraction. These states, with borders determined by colonial administrators, were vulnerable from a security perspective. Many, including the CAR, were weak to begin with and descended into violence soon after independence. Political authority in Africa has mutated into an institution of personal power rather than institutional leadership. As leaders use ethnic and religious affiliations, in the form of client relationships, to maintain political power, this process has undermined the potential for nation-building and patriotism. The state has become the means by which political elites in Africa have for decades enriched themselves by prioritising their personal interests over the needs of the people and development. According to the Index of State Fragility the CAR is a fragile state, like numerous other states in Africa. Due to internal and external factors a series of governments have been unable (or unwilling) to protect all civilians. Instead there has been a retreat to using and manipulating identities to maintain positions of power.

In the African context, conflicts often begin at higher levels between elites and subsequently trickle down into the population. The political environment is conducive to use of violent means to gain and maintain access to political power. Where armed groups are incorporated into political processes, conflicts are transferred from the political sphere to the civilian environment and communities, where they are easily (re)interpreted as ethnic or religious identity concerns. Individuals and groups may show loyalty to a particular identity – ethnic, national, or religious – not because they were born into it but because there is an assumption of benefit associated with it (Eriksen 1996).

Conflicts begin when there are perceptions of exclusion, marginalisation, and preferential treatment of certain individuals and groups. Civilians receive information from government sources or militias that certain groups are being favoured or targeted. As identities are embedded in ethnicity, religion, or tribal allegiances people are easily

2 Patassé became the first democratically elected president in 1993 as a result of international donor influence on the need for elections to the government of General André-Dieudonné Kolingba. Kolingba seized the presidency in a coup against David Dacko in 1981 and served until 1993.

3 Patassé's leadership was plagued by conflicts, revolts, and failed coups. He was eventually ousted in 2003.

4 The news stories and briefing notes are available at www.unhcr.org.

convinced that their group is being exploited, excluded, targeted, or condemned. These sentiments have political and social consequences that in their extreme form can result in ethnic cleansing and expulsion (for ethnic cleansing in general, see Mann 2005). Yet others such as Stalyvas (2006) and Collier (1999) argue that these identities and social, ethnic, and religious divisions are not the sole reason for conflict; instead they need to be contextualised in broader economic and political developments. Ethnic groups can be defined as sharing common descent, history, culture, language, religion, or territory (Mann 2005) and experience. These groups, although embracing cultural, religious and behavioural traits, are defined by outsiders as possessing an inherited status and aligned to certain rituals and mythologies. They thus create boundaries between groups and within communities (Cohen 1985). Hale (2008) argues that this creates an emotional connection between group members that is conducive to the use of violence against members of the outgroup and even against those within the group who are seen as traitors to the in-group and its identity (for example by marrying a partner from the outgroup). Leaders then use these sentiments to evoke images of unity and blood connections to incite hostilities towards the outgroup and the 'Others' (Hughey 1998).

History demonstrates that it requires little effort for these sentiments to be translated into issues of self-defence, preservation, and opportunism (Weber 1998). Using these sentiments and traits of identity, ordinary civilians are capable of engaging in collective violence – in particular if such behaviour is supported by institutions, and thus seen as legitimate. Often this behaviour is interpreted as self-defence and, ironically, it is often the perpetrators that consider themselves the victims (Staub 1989). Alternatively, ethnic tensions may lead perpetrators to consider their violence a necessary pre-emptive attack, as they perceive, or are led to believe, that their lives are inevitably in danger (Mann 2005).

Like ethnic violence, religious violence stems from perceptions and interpretations of humiliation and exclusion, according to general studies on discrimination and violence. While these humiliations can be real, in the form of discrimination, poverty, and exclusion, it can also be ideological and a mere perception (Jones 2008, 39–40). These feelings of humiliation provide the psychological motivation, but not the justification, for a radical polarity of good and evil, and finally for violence. Ethnic and religious identities are then perpetuated through the violent process, and seen as fixed and incommutable. The ethnic and religious framework thus forms an "ethical" framework and purpose for the militias, government troops, and armed civilians.

However, general scholarship about solidifying ethnic or religious identities causing violence applies with some qualification in the case of the CAR. Ethnic groups in the CAR are fluid and change due to social and economic circumstances (O'Toole 1986). In 1952 the French colonial authorities defined eight distinct ethnic groups based on administrative perceptions of differences and similarities. Later studies recognised thirty-one distinct ethnic groups (Lumba, Van Dyk, and Van Dyk 2009, 86). These included the Gbaya Manja (or Manza), Banda (many of whom converted to Islam under the sultanate of Dar al-Kuti), Ubangians (a riverine population living between the Kemo and Mbomu rivers), Sara (and co-ethnic NzaKara originally from south-western Sudan), Zande, and Muslims (a group of traders that are not an ethnic but a religious group and popularly termed Hausa), as well as Cameroonian refugee groups in the northwest mountains (O'Toole 1986, 75; Kalck 1971, 11). The main groups are divided further; for example the Ubangians are comprised of Mbaka and Yakoma. Both O'Toole (1986) and Falck (1971) note that while the Muslim minority represented a distinct group, the other ethnic groups did not distinguish themselves according to religion. The form of Christianity was enmeshed with traditional beliefs and many, even today, continue to adhere to animist faiths (distinguishable by talismans and amulets).[5] The society was and remains based on kinship and lineage relationships and this social pattern is exploited by the political regime.

5 For extensive, although dated, histories of the CAR, see O'Toole 1986 and Kalcke 1971.

While ethnic groups remain distinct with underlying tensions, the CAR has not had a lengthy history of ethnic conflict, and almost no religious conflict, even as it has faced continuous economic difficulties, deprivation, and marauding banditry in the rural areas. Since 2002 much of the conflicts and violence has been popularly attributed to competing political elites rather than to strife between communities of different ethnic identities (Vinck and Pham 2010, 13). As Lumba, Van Dyk, and Van Dyk (2009, 87) note in their study, the general opinion amongst respondents was that ethnicity had been abused by "outside groups" and this was amongst the causes of the continuous conflicts in the region. Groups with diverse interests – like the coalitions described below – joined together to target others (for example Muslims) leading to assaults, murders, and expulsion of individuals and groups, as occurred during the period 2013 to 2014 (see Cohen 1985 and Gerlach 2010).

4. Conflict Landscapes in the CAR: State and Non-state Actors

In the complex political, ethnic and religious environment of CAR, the 2013 to 2014 conflict defies simple and dichotomous portrayals of ethnic and religious strife. For example, attacks against Muslims, who are assumed to be Séléka supporters, are seen as a defence, and not an attack, by "Christian" civilian defence units known as the anti-Balaka, thus creating a good versus evil scenario, bad Muslim Séléka versus good Christian anti-Balaka. Such perceptions severely underrate the nature, role and activities of militias and armed groups in the conflicts.

Militias are non-state military actors. They are thus not part of – or only loosely connected to – the conventional armies and security forces of a state, but may be part of a rebel military organisation. In Africa they are overwhelmingly formations of armed men and youth who are linked either to the regime or to militias. Militias operate outside of the military and security forces of the state, but they are often created and led by senior government officials, and receive weapons, training and other support from the regular army. Although militias operate outside institutional frameworks they can cross over into the legitimate political environment, become auxiliaries to political parties, and usurp political leadership. Created in the rural areas, militias are often, although not always, based in a dominant ethnic or religious group; their rank-and-file members consist of ex-soldiers, mercenaries, bandits, and unemployed youth. These groups form and disintegrate quickly, seeking access to material gains first in the locality where they monopolise violence (from which they often originate) (Alden, Thakur, and Arnold 2011; Gerlach 2010). While the interests of militias vary, one of the elements they seek to protect is often a particular ethnic or religious identity. This allows the militia to assert ideological control over a region to the exclusion of competitors such as loyalists and government troops.

When governments are dominated by a single ethnic group whose interests they promote, they may purposely exclude other groups from accessing state institutions. In countries where economies are state monopolies, and access to employment and economic opportunities are limited, usurping control of the state becomes a goal, or "the" goal (Mann 2005, 31–32). This is an environment that is conducive to conflict over scarce resources and power, and encourages the formation and use of militias; with multiple groups and actors such conflicts become particularly violent, and involve all types of violence, against state institutions, against state employees, and eventually against civilians.

In the course of the conflicts and political turmoil, CAR has been a fertile ground for the development of a number of militias and armed groups, and various more or less fragile coalitions among these. The Séléka is a coalition of the largest militias in CAR: the Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix (CPJP), the Convention Patriotique pour le Salut wa Kodro (CPSK), the Union des Forces Démocratiques pour la Rassemblement (UFDR) and the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain (FDPC). Each of these armed groups controlled parts of particular prefectures, and the coalition formed in December 2013 exercised virtually complete control of the northern and eastern prefectures. The fragility of these relationships and the instability of the militias is illustrated by the defection of segments of the CPJP militia to support the government forces. These armed groups in the CAR exhibit loose social affiliations and shared ethnic, religious and regional iden-

tities. The origins of the anti-Balaka armed group are like those of any militia. It is reported that it was created by Bozizé, but its origins most likely lie in the 1990s as a self-defence group responding to attacks by both bandits from the north of CAR and the Armée pour la Restauration de la République et al Démocratie (APRD). In addition, they sought to expel Chadian cattle farmers from lands belonging to villagers (Layama and Nzapalainga 2014, 8). It is argued that many former soldiers and ex presidential guards joined the anti-Balaka in order to regain their previous civil employment. Like the Séléka, the anti-Balaka became, and remains, a coalition of interest groups. These associations are more about convenience and pursuing a particular aim than acknowledging conscious identity: for the leaders of these groups there appears to be no ideology other than material gain and access to political power. The Séléka militia faced little resistance from government forces as it moved toward the capital, Bangui, in 2013.

This advance was halted by the Libreville peace agreement in 2013, in which it was agreed to allow President Bozizé to serve until 2016. However the agreement collapsed in what the opposition perceived as the government's deliberate foot-dragging and reneging on agreements. Members of the Séléka rebelled and continued to fight, as they opposed the peace agreement. There was no religious or ethnic component to the conflict at this stage. When Séléka entered Bangui and President Djotodia resigned, the militia broke up into Séléka and anti-Séléka; the latter proceeded to attack civilians and turned against Séléka forces in the capital.

This led to revenge attacks by communities and individuals on the basis of religion. From March 2013 Djotodia was portrayed as a Muslim and the militia was given a religious identity. Anti-Séléka attacks on civilians created a narrative that Muslims were targeting innocent Christian civilians. Christians, characterised in positive terms, were portrayed as having had little choice but to react. However, attacks took place against all civilians, Muslims, Christians, and animists alike. Misreading, and therefore misunderstanding the conflict in the CAR mainly as motivated and driven by religion fails to recognise the complex pattern of temporary coalitions that emerge and disappear under different leaderships, and then coalesce against a perceived new enemy or enemies – usually the existing government (Rubin 2006, 17). The formation and division of the Séléka are exemplary for these developments.

In the ensuing violence, often including mass violence, communities become participants (active or passive) in ways that often destroy social bonds (Mudge 2013). The hostilities between armed groups, including regular government forces, armed militias, bandit groups, and civilians remain haphazard (Rice 2009, 27; see also Gerlach 2010; Kalyvas 2006; Hale 2008; UNHCR 2006b, 2009e; UNICEF 2009), as is the behaviour of militias and forces loyal to the government. These groups recruit from the localities and regions where they operate, and use ethnic identity to identify and recruit potential followers. As violence escalated in this conflict it becomes easier to recruit along religious, cultural and ethnic identities. As a result it became easier to create dichotomy in recruitment and identify individuals and groups as either Christian or Muslim.

5. Identity, Power Politics, and Trajectories of Violence.

The CAR possesses large reserves of natural resources and its ongoing political instability accompanied by weak state institutions and controls make the territory a prospect for entities seeking economic gain, including existing elites, competing armed groups, and external interests (Flichy de la Neuville, Mezin-Bourgninand, and Mathias 2013). Ethnic identities, like religious identities, are used in these conflicts to serve political interests and increase material gains, rather than triggering them. The UNHCR documents reveal a fragmented country experiencing a multi-polar conflict (Gerlach 2010). Patterns of escalating violence emerge, both in the rural and urban areas (UNHCR 2001d, 2002a, 2002c). The data also reveals a consistent pattern of coerced emigration and displacement (UNHCR 2002b, 2005a, 2005b, 2005e, 2005f, 2006d, 2006e). Patterns of rioting, looting, rape, assault, property destruction and murder occurred throughout the period under discussion (UNHCR 2007c, 2007g, 2008a, 2009e). The outbreak of violence, which resulted from the failed 2012 peace treaty with former president Bozizé, added another dimension. Since 2013 the escalation of violence and forced emigration has been aggravated by foreign government troops from

the neighbouring countries of Chad, Libya, and Sudan (UNHCR 2006f, 2008c, 2010a).

5.1. Identity Politics and Trajectories of Violence

The first trajectory of violence began in 2001 when political strife between André-Dieudonné Kolingba (from the Yakoma ethnic group) and Ange-Félix Patassé (Sara-Kaba group) resulted in unsuccessful coup attempts in 2001 and 2002.[6] In the aftermath of these failed coups government troops used excessive force against civilians, particularly villagers, accusing them of supporting Kolingba or Patassé or because they shared ethnic identity with either individual. In 2001, in the south of Bangui, 60,000 to 70,000 civilians were displaced when they fled violence orchestrated by government forces and armed groups loyal to Kolingba. These armed groups stormed the presidential palace in Bangui in an attempt to wrest power from Patassé. Civilians were killed in reprisal attacks when government forces loyal to Patassé killed ethnic Yakoma civilians and armed militias, and in retaliation those loyal to Kolingba killed ethnic Sara (UNHCR 2001b). Chaos ensued with civilians, ex-government forces, and armed militias fleeing to the Democratic Republic of Congo (UNHCR 2002f, 2001g, 2002a, 2002c). In this chaos, armed groups often moved with civilians, concealing their weapons to pose as refugees. Approximately 1,250 armed fighters posed as civilians in refugee camps. They often fuelled tensions between different ethnic groups fleeing from the same areas and violence, who had by then become hostile toward each other. (UNHCR 2001a, 2001d, 2002a, 2002b, 2003a). Communities that had previously coexisted became hostile towards, and suspicious of, members of ethnic groups outside of their own (Broch-Due 2005, 25; UNHCR 2005g, 2013e).

In 2002 government air strikes raised ethnic tensions amongst civilians. A civil war ensued when Bozizé, in his attempt to secure the presidency, launched an attack against his former ally Patassé (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2012).[7] In this conflict, Patassé relied on his own ethnic group of northern Sara-Kaba (also found in southern Chad), and also sought support from transnational militia. The latter had a Ugandan background, and were located in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and headed by Jeane-Pierre Bemba – *the Mouvement de Liberation du Congo* (MLC). On the other hand, Bozizé, from the Gbaya ethnic group, had military support from Chad and the Banyamulenge militia from the DRC. Both Patassé and Bozizé used state resources and armed groups, and reinforced notions of stable and unchanging ethnic ties amongst the population.

The second trajectory of violence began with Bozizé seizing power in a coup in 2003. In this period continuous fighting between militias and government forces included the targeting of civilians. In the same year conflict erupted between the armed groups led by Bozizé and those led by Michél Djotodia, who was the leader of the Forcés Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR) and would later hold the presidency from 2013 to 2014.[8] President-in-exile Patassé and former general Kolingba's supporters merged their militias to oppose Bozizé's regime. The change in political leadership resulted in a change of ethnic dominance, for both the government and its civil servants, and triggered a change of militia alliances. Members of the military, the Forces Armées Centrafricaines (FACA), who were members of the Yakoma ethnic group, revolted against Bozizé (UNHCR 2001a, 2001b, 2003c, 2005a)

Several ceasefires and peace agreements failed to reduce the fighting as politically interested militia groups and including the military FACA proposed political appointments from within their own ranks. This represents the third path of violence, when internal displacement as a result of various internal conflicts reached critical levels in the period 2005 to 2006. The regular armed forces FACA

6 Kolingba was self-appointed president from 1981–1993 followed by elected Patassé 1993–2003.

7 François Bozizé participated as an officer alongside Patassé in a coup to overthrow Kolingba. He conducted a coup against his ally Patassé in 2003, and served as the sixth president of CAR between 2003 and 2013.

8 Demonstrating the fluidity of these arrangements, the UFDR coalition in 2003 comprised the Groupe d'action Patriotique pour la Liberation de Centrafrique (GAPLC), Convention des Patriots pour la Justice et la paix (CPJP), Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricaines pour la Justice (MLCJ), Armée pour la Restauration de la République et al Démocratie (APRD), and the Front Démocratique Centafricain (FDC).

were accused of orchestrating mass violence against villagers, equalling, if not surpassing the atrocities of the militias. Like many armies elsewhere in Africa FACA is understaffed, poorly trained, ill-disciplined, and ill-prepared to confront rebel movements and militias. Furthermore their erratic behaviour was, and continues to be, compounded by the Presidential Guard, also drawn from the membership of FACA, that acts outside of military command structures as a security force of its own and commits atrocities against civilians.

In 2005 increased fighting in the northernmost part of the country forced 6,000 refugees into Cameroon and 27,800 into Chad (UNHCR 2006a, 2006c, 2006f, 2007a, 2014a). In September 2005 the town of Markounda in Ouham prefecture was attacked by militias, forcing the inhabitants to flee across the border. In 2005 violence erupted between the Armée pour la Restauration de la République et al Démocratie (APRD) and other militia groups in the northwest; in 2006 the Forcés Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR) led a rebellion in the northeast (Vinck and Pham 2010, 7–10). In October 2006 and March 2007 the UFDR attacked Barao in Vakaga prefecture, resulting in the mass exodus of the entire town. More than seven hundred homes were razed; all food supplies and farming stocks were destroyed. In June 2007 villagers fled from the north to northwest CAR as a result of fighting between government forces and militias where houses were looted and burned. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2007a, 2007b, 2007c) estimated that 212,000 civilians from the north were forcibly displaced in the eighteen months after December 2005. It was common for houses and crops to be razed; all along the Ouham-Pendé to the Vakaga prefectures. Few IDPs returned to their homes (UNHCR 2010d, 2011, 2013c, 2013d, 2013e, 2013f). Facing a lack of security and increased food shortages and fearing a return of militias to the region, many IDPs moved to the intensely contested northern areas of Bangui.[9]

The fourth trajectory of violence relates to the history of flight, security, and shelter of CAR (Martin 1998, 18). It is further compounded by refugees from neighbouring countries fleeing violence and famine in Sudan and Chad (Buijtenhuis 1998, 35). In 2010 herdsmen and militias clashed in Ouham prefecture, resulting in 1,500 IDPs and the destruction of thirteen villages (UNHCR 2010a) and in 2011 the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a militia that operates across the state borders of Uganda, the DRC, and Sudan, continued to attack, murder, and kidnap villagers in the CAR (UNHCR 2010b, 2012b, 2014b, 2014c). In 2011 the United Nations observed militias, international groups, and bandits involved in criminality in the east and northeast of the CAR (UNHCR 2014a, 2014d), and the area experienced inter-community and inter-group/ethnic violence. The conflict here largely involved the UDFR and the CPJP in the Vakaga, Haute-Kotto, and Bamingui-Bangoran prefectures bordering Chad and Sudan, where militias share the same religion but are of different, and often opposing, ethnic identities. Conflict between armed groups, displacement of civilians, and levels of violence raised ethnic tensions and brought the northern-southern divide to the fore. This trajectory culminated in the successful coup by Djotodia in 2012.

5.2. Leadership Changes and Political Power

The greater the violence perpetrated by militias, the greater the opportunity to enter negotiations with those who control central power structures. This is the rationale and calculation of militias, which underlies their dual purpose. In CAR the recruitment and formation of militias follows two patterns. Firstly, self-defence units are established to protect villages and communities from the bandits – *zaraguinas*. Secondly, when these units are absorbed into militias many of the young recruits are often motivated by poverty, deprivation, exclusion, and fear. For them the militias represent opportunity and security.

Many residents in Bangui have long been a target for marauding groups of youths who terrorise residents and

9 The failure of the 2007 and 2008 peace agreements was attributed to Bozizé reneging on promises made to militias like the UFDR to integrate their fighters into the state army; this was one of the goals and expected rewards of many militia members as it remains one of the few stable employment opportunities in the country.

target foreigners (UNHCR 2003a, 2003d, 2005f, 2013e). Looting and vandalism are widespread, along with murders, assaults, rapes, and kidnappings. Without a respite from violence, the communities experience – and possibly themselves perpetrate – extensive and continuous property and violent crime.

Integration of refugees and IDPs into existing CAR communities remains problematic. By 2009, all the participating militias had reneged on the 2008 peace treaty, and the Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricaines pour la Justice (MLCJ) launched an attack against villages and state troops. Clashes between militias such as the UFDR and the CPJP transformed into conflicts between communities, resulting in widespread displacement in the Haute-Kotto prefecture. Villagers claimed that violence was retaliatory; militias would attack towns in the northern prefectures and government forces would then (re)capture the towns by performing sweeps (UNHCR 2006a, 2006b, 2007a, 2007b; Caux 2007; UNHCR 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2009e; Vinck and Pham 2010, 17). In this environment of a complete lack of security and mounting fear, villages were abandoned, economic activity ceased, and unemployment was widespread (UNHCR 2010c, 2013a, 2013b). Many fled into the forests and only returned to the villages sporadically during the day. Not only did villagers fear armed groups but they also feared, and were suspicious of, other communities of different ethnic and religious affiliations. The conflict led to hostilities in various neighbourhoods of the city of Bangui. Unlike the rural areas where communities formed loosely collective units of varying religious and ethnic identities, Bangui is comprised of neighbourhood *kudros*. The kudros are fragments of the rural kinship structure transferred to the city and thus create ethnically stratified neighbourhoods (see Adrien-Rongier 1981 for a detailed explanation of the Kudros). As self-contained units there is limited interaction between members from other kudros so ethnic, regional and religious identities become fixed.

5.3. 2013: The Séléka, Ex-Séléka and Anti-Balaka Militias

In wresting power from Bozizé in March 2013, Michel Djotodia, an ethnic Gula, was identified in media reports as the first Muslim leader of the CAR. As with preceding presidents, Djotodia usurped political power through the militias loyal to him. By incorporating loosely organised armed groups with poor resources into the coalition, Djotodia attempted to include various members of the Séléka into the state institutions, particularly the military and civil service bureaucracy, thus rewarding them with employment and security. This practice was meant to secure and continue armed support for the political leadership. However, an inability to please all members, and particularly the various leaders within the coalition, soon led to fragmentation and division.

The Séléka recruited militias from Sudan and Chad, as groups moved across borders seeking new coalitions and economic opportunities. As neither the Séléka nor the anti-Balaka are coalitions based on religion, any religious dimension to the conflict is overshadowed by the trajectory of pre-existing conflicts. Religious affiliation was irrelevant to the militias as they targeted civilians in an attempt to deprive other militias of resources, particularly food, medicines, and potential recruits. The Séléka set the precedent by moving beyond their original prefectures in the north, targeting the southern areas and Djotodia's political base. Djotodia's very short presidency introduced the Gula, with ethnic links in Chad, to political power and institutional access. The Séléka was, and remains, a heterogeneous opportunistic militia, opposed to the Gbaya communities from which Bozizé hails. It is not religion that is the salient linkage here, but trajectories of political power and ensuing conflicts.

The authority of the warlord does not translate into universal loyalty. As he attempted to disband the Séléka and bring the fighters under his control, Djotodia's influence and authority over the coalition faltered. Disintegrating into factions so quickly and easily implies that the group lacked a bond beyond material interests, or a shared grievance; in particular shared ethnic or religious values were missing. The new factions (splinter groups) became known in the media as the ex-Séléka. This chaotic period allowed Bozizé, while in exile, to recall the Front pour le Retour de l'ordre Constitutionnel en Centrafrique (FROCCA) to support the anti-Balaka militia (International Crisis Group 2013) as a manoeuvre to oust Djotodia from political office.

By invoking religious identity Bozizé's actions created a new dividing line in the conflict, now mainly based on religious rather than ethnic and regional identity. He thus altered the nature of the conflict, preventing any future Muslim candidates, who often come from the northern prefectures of Vakaga or Ouham, from seeking political office.

5.4. Militias and the Lack of Ideology

In CAR militias are usually composed of particular ethnic groups due to their recruitment strategies. Militias generally recruit in areas where they are supported and trusted, and as a consequence they are fundamentally structured around ethnic identity (Fjelde and Hultman 2014). For example the Armée pour la Restauration de la République et al Démocratie (APRD), which emerged in 2005, is composed of members of the Sara-Kaba ethnicity including former ex-Presidential Guards from the Patassé regime. The Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR) and the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafrique (FDPC), formed in 2006, feature predominantly Muslim Gula. These groups operate in the Vakaga and Haute Kotto prefectures. The Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix (CPJP) are Arabic-speaking Runga from the Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture. These militias work together or against each other depending on the changing interests, power and coalition arrangements of their leaders. There are tensions based on ethnicity between various militia groups in neighbouring prefectures of the CAR. Thus the UFDR and the FDPC are antagonistic toward ethnic Kara, and the CPJP toward the ethnic Gula (IRIN 2009). Yet these three groups, all originating from the northeastern prefectures, were nonetheless united in the Séléka coalition.

Political leadership in the CAR has used militias as tools to support and maintain the legitimacy of political leaders. The population provides support, in the form of new recruits and logistics, for militias such as the anti-Balaka. To date militias have had little focus on or interest in national or regional issues (Rubin 2006, 12). Utilising mobs that identify themselves in terms of a particular religious identity is a new element to the trajectories of violence in CAR.

6. Conclusion

The trajectories of violent conflict in CAR are exemplary of an extremely violent society as conceptualised by Gerlach (2010). Most CAR citizens are affected by the violence in their country, and the tensions and conflicts created by the regular army, militias, and armed bandit groups. As agreements between armed groups are temporary, there is no specific targeted group of victims, and these groups change from region to region and across time; all civilians are fair game for armed groups from all sides. Changes in alliances result in different groups becoming victimised, independent of ethnicity and religion of victim and perpetrator groups. Coalitions are easily entered into and dismantled, with little or no ideological, ethnic or religious rationale. Instead these alliances are fuelled by self-interest, self-preservation, and material gain. Nonetheless, the pervasive violence raises suspicions and uncertainty between ethnic groups and communities, and also promotes ethnic conflicts, which then are used by political and military leaders. Further to this, internal conflicts in CAR are shaped by ongoing conflicts in the neighbouring DRC, Sudan, South Sudan, and Chad, as well as regional conflicts in Nigeria, Mali, Uganda, and Cameroon. The current violence, which is portrayed as a religious confrontation between Muslims and Christians has its roots in the 2003 conflict between Bozizé and Djotodia, and their access to competing militias and the regular armed forces. The empirical material used here demonstrates that the use of militias and rebel armies was a practice of influential individuals to gain power, political as well as economic, to stabilise their authority and to increase their military strength as a power base. Attacks on what each militia perceived to be the locus of support for a rival group – communities, villages, or ethnic groups – were attempts to deprive the other group of resources, recruits, and political support.

When alliances were formed these new coalitions comprised ex-soldiers, unemployed youth, aggrieved peasants, and professional soldiers. These coalitions exhibit different aims, different enemies, different agendas, and the support of different leaders. The complexity of the conflict is due to the fact that the aims are temporary, as are the coalitions, and today's brothers in arms become tomorrow's enemies.

The formal military has a dual role in the violence. It seeks to eliminate political opposition to the state, and therefore particular leaders, but many within the ranks seek personal and material gains; militias join in this enterprise according to their own allegiances and interests. Both then contribute to the devastation of villages and communities, and heighten discord and fear amongst the population. The violence usually begins with actions by the legitimate armed forces and militias and then trickles down to communities where it becomes widespread and often personally motivated (see Kalyvas 2006, 111–45). When conflict and strife mount within and between communities, this is often done with the tacit consent, cooperation or even instigation of armed groups. The rationale for the violence differs, though. Communities claim their violence is defensive and pre-empts attacks from potential enemies. More recently, communities have claimed to be defending religious identity.

However, Muslims and Christians are neither represented by the militias (Séléka and anti-Balaka respectively), nor do Muslim and Christian communities support them. The anti-Balaka movement as it presently exists in the CAR is not the community-based response initiatives against other militias such as the Séléka. Like the Séléka, the anti-Balaka itself is a militia, composed of various factions of ethnic and other origin. Like the other militias, it fights for political access and material gain hiding behind the façade of self-defence and self-preservation.

The latest round of violence in CAR is different in that the scale of the operations has grown, and more individuals seek access to political power (Waugh 2014). The fighting and looting escalated beyond villages, infiltrating the rigidly ethnically defined neighbourhoods of Bangui, including the PK-12 kudros that is home to refugees fleeing disputes in neighbouring prefectures and states.[10] Currently, it appears that the violence is between villages and neighbourhoods in Bangui, and the role played by militias has faded. The violence has morphed into private and personal grievances between individuals and communities. Differences between community members, however slight, led to conflict as identity boundaries shifted. Portrayals of these communities living together peacefully are not completely true as they have always been segregated by ethnic, religious, and social differences; like other groups in CAR, underlying tensions and suspicions made them vulnerable to manipulation by interest groups. What is currently termed a "religious" conflict is just another trajectory of violence in the extremely violent society of CAR.

10 PK-12 is a kudros in Bangui inhabited by displaced persons, particularly refugees. Unlike the other kudros that are established in terms of kinship structures and ethnic affiliations (and are in fact replicas of the social hierarchy and structures in the villages), PK-12 is a refuge for groups and individuals that have no place to go.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016130
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Violent Mexico: Participatory and Multipolar Violence Associated with Organised Crime

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

Violent Mexico: Participatory and Multipolar Violence Associated with Organised Crime

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From 2007 to 2012 Mexico experienced a wave of violence and an unusual spike in homicides, much of it associated with organised crime and the state's response. While state actions were a significant trigger, violence in Mexico became participatory as many other actors came into play. Likewise, violence became multipolar as groups involved in the conflict became simultaneously victims and perpetrators. This paper examines the participatory and multipolar nature of the violence in Mexico using the "extremely violent societies" approach, considering not only the features and intensity of the conflict, but also changes in the type of violence and the participation of different actors and groups over time. With no single narrative about the violence in Mexico, this paper understands a series of "violences" converging simultaneously, and finds government policies both unsuccessful in tackling the violence and ineffective in addressing its social dimensions.

Mexico suffered a wave of insecurity stemming from the extreme violence in the six-month period from 2007 through 2012, where more than 120,000 deaths occurred,[1] a large number of which were caused by organised crime and the state's efforts to combat it in the so-called "drug war." Violence has targeted not only antagonistic members of criminal groups and state security personnel, but also public servants, journalists, and in many cases bystander citizens. In total, it is estimated that intentional homicides increased over 200 percent from 2007 through 2012, primarily provoked by violence associated with organised crime, which is considered to have caused at least 50 percent of all intentional homicides in the country.

The nature and characteristics of this wave of violence are complex because victims are not formally "combatants" in a large-scale armed conflict, and because there is no clear ideological, religious, or ethnic component as a driving factor, and because the conflict goes beyond political influence. This latter feature is extremely relevant because it marks a shift in the type of violence the country has otherwise experienced in its recent history.[2]

"Extremely violent societies" (EVS) is an approach used when traditional terms are too narrow to describe the causes of violence where various groups, along with the state, participate in and become victims of violence (Gerlach 2010). Under this framework, the objective of this paper is to expose the participatory and multipolar nature of violence largely associated with organised crime in Mexico, as a plurality of actors independently engage in violent actions despite state responses, becoming simultaneously victims and perpetrators.

1. Violent Mexico

The unusual increase in violence after 2007 shifted the characteristics of violence in Mexico's recent history. Certainly, the twentieth century was turbulent and full of

1 This analysis encompasses a six-year period from 2007 to 2012. The timeframe coincides almost entirely with the administration of President Felipe Calderón (December 2006 – November 2012), when violence related to organised crime activites abruptly intensified.

struggles of different kinds. The first half of the century was marked from the very beginning by major armed conflicts,[3] while the second was rather characterized by state repression of social movements, political dissidents, guerrilla groups, and any active opposition to the authoritarian model adopted by the state.[4] In all the latter cases, physical "mass violence" occurred against civilians outside formal armed conflicts,[5] with the state playing a direct role as the main orchestrator of violence.

By the 1980s Mexico was seeking to project an image of stability and development in a consolidating democracy, in a context of a sustained drop in homicide rates and modest economic growth. Nevertheless, by the 1990s the map of violence began to change as criminality and violent crime escalated due to economic instability and crisis (Ríos Cázares and Shirk 2007), and other types of violence emerged amidst the depletion of the authoritarian model adopted by the Mexican state (Márquez and Meyer 2014).

A series of economic crises between the 1980s and the 1990s were accompanied by sharp increases in certain forms of crime such as robbery and theft (Ríos Cázares and Shirk 2007), and by the mid-1990s violent crimes such as rape, other sexual offenses, and assault, started to steadily increase (Echarri Cánovas 2012).[6] The effects of growing crime reached beyond economic, physical, and psychological harms to victims. Since mid-1990s Mexican society has been in the grip of a collective sense of insecurity that led to a decrease in crime reporting, individual and mob vigilantism, mass protests, and the overall erosion of social capital (Parás 2007).[7]

Also in the mid-1990s, amidst one of the largest economic crises Mexico has experienced, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, EZLN) emerged in the southern state of Chiapas, as an insurgent group demanding freedom, democracy, and autonomy for indigenous peoples (Cuninghame and Ballesteros Corona 1998). The state response was direct confrontation and paramilitary tactics to deter community support and sympathizers (DIA 1997, 1999; CIA 1998).[8]

The 1990s were also a breaking point for organised crime-related activity and violence, after the dismantling of the Guadalajara cartel in the late 1980s and the decline of its hegemonic leadership over drug trafficking in Mexico.[9]

Although drug trafficking groups in Mexico were traditionally rather small in size and influence, by the 1980s such organisations had grown stronger with just a few controlling most of the trafficking business in the country. The Guadalajara cartel, headed by Miguel Ángel Felix Gallardo and Rafael Caro Quintero, was the most powerful organisation at the time; while other smaller groups coexisted relatively peacefully controlling particular routes and territories

2 We should acknowledge arguments from Piccato (2013) and Knight (2013) regarding the political dimensions of homicides – or at least some homicides –. Piccato explores interconnections between crime and society in Mexico, and affirms all "homicide in post-revolutionary Mexico is political homicide" (Piccato 2013). Likewise, Knight explains the relationships between "mercenary violence" and political violence, where organised crime, despite being geared to economic profit, "cannot remain apolitical" (Knight 2013, 44).

3 Such as the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) or the *Cristero* War (1926–1929).

4 Examples of this kind of violence include the reactions of the Mexican government against the railroad strikes (1958–59), with mass arrests of hundreds of workers (Stevens 1974); the student massacre in Tlatelolco (1968) at hands of the military, members of the intelligence police (Dirección Federal de Seguridad, DFS) and an elite paramilitary group formed and trained by the government (*Batallón Olimpia*); or the systematic torture, forcible disappearance and killings of dissidents and political opponents in the 1960s and 1970s, known as the Dirty War (Doyle 2003, 2006).

5 Gerlach (2010, 1) explains mass violence as "widespread physical violence against non-combatants, that is, outside of immediate fighting between military or paramilitary personnel".

6 According to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), violent crime is defined as those offenses which involve force or threat of force: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (FBI 2010).

7 The substantial social degradation and community harm can be seen in the mass murders by unknown perpetrators against specific types of victims. One example is the femicides in Ciudad Juárez, where more than four hundred young women – the exact number is still unclear – ranging in age from 16 to 24 have been mutilated, tortured, and raped, and their bodies left abandoned in the desert (Monarrez 2008).

8 The paramilitary presence eventually led to other religious, ethnic, social and political conflicts, as seen in the Acteal Massacre on 22 December 1997, when an alleged paramilitary group stormed a church in Acteal, Chiapas, and opened fire on the congregation, killing forty-five people, including fifteen children and four pregnant women, and injuring twenty-five others. The victims were from Las Abejas, a pacifist civil society organisation dedicated to protecting the rights of the indigenous people (Justice in Mexico 2013e).

9 For a more complete overview of this topic see: Grillo (2012); Astorga and Shirk (2010); Corcoran (2013), InSight Crime (2014a), among others.

(Astorga and Shirk 2010). These included the Gulf cartel founded by Juan Nepomuceno Guerra – and inherited by Juan García Abrego – and the Sinaloa cartel headed by Hector Palma "El Güero" (Blondie), who broke away from Guadalajara in the late 1980s (Astorga and Shirk 2010).

After the arrests of Caro Quintero in 1985 and Félix Gallardo in 1989, and the dismantling of the Guadalajara cartel, a new generation of organisations consolidated during the 1990s and early 2000s. The new drug powers were the Sinaloa cartel, led by Joaquin Guzmán Loera "El Chapo" (Shorty) and Ismael Zambada García "El Mayo" (following the capture of "El Güero" Palma in 1995); the Gulf cartel, led by Osiel Cárdenas Guillén (after García Abrego's arrest in 1995); and two emerging organisations, the Tijuana cartel, led by the Arellano Félix family, and the Juárez cartel, led by Amado Carrillo Fuentes (Astorga and Shirk 2010, 32–39).

Leadership transitions within criminal organisations and the reconfiguration of trafficking networks during the 1990s occurred relatively tranquilly, although peaceful coexistence was not to last, and the newly restructured organisations soon started fighting one another. Meanwhile, Mexican criminal organisations were gaining power as interdiction efforts by the United States to stop cocaine flows from South America through the Caribbean targeted Mexico as a strategic route for cocaine, and Mexican drug trafficking groups as key partners for Colombian cartels (Corcoran 2013).

Government counter-narcotic efforts since the 1980s contributed to the fragmentation of criminal organisations and, consequently, to a scattered distribution and integration of their structures, which eventually led to an intensification of violence. In 2000, Vicente Fox, the first president from an opposition party – the National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional, PAN) – succeeded to the presidency after seventy-five years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI), following a series of victories by opposition parties at the local level and in the federal congress. While the equilibrium of political power was shifting, large criminal syndicates also started to break into smaller organisations due to competition and conflicts among rival groups, but also internal disputes intensified by imprisonment and/or killings of drug barons (Astorga and Shirk 2010, 40). At this stage the lines of participation in violence were blurring.

Certain forms of crime had been on the rise since the 1990s, and by the late 2000s the number of intentional homicides reached new and unprecedented levels, and violence invaded the daily life of Mexico, posing a serious internal security crisis.[10] In 2006, Mexico elected a new president, Felipe Calderón (2006–2012) also from the PAN, who had a clear intention – but not always a clear strategy – of dismantling criminal organisations by dismantling their leadership structures in order to fragment them into minor and more manageable groups. This "strategy" intensified pre-existing conflicts and generated others by creating smaller, less predictable, and more violent groups fighting fiercely for smaller turfs.

The upsurge in violence entirely changed the narrative of the country: large criminal organisations openly fighting against each other; a military-based security strategy; the use of heavy weaponry; and high profile victims were among the features of a tumultuous reality for Mexico at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

2. The Problem of Defining the Problem

Violence escalated to an unprecedented level, transforming Mexico from a generally non-violent supplier of drugs into a country where several regions have become war zones in a "very literal" way (Ríos 2013, 153). The situation began to seem less a metaphorical war, and more as a legitimate armed conflict within the meaning of international humanitarian law (Gallahue 2011, 39). The Conflict Barometer for 2012 prepared by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (Heidelberger Institut für Internationale Konfliktforschung, HIIK), for example, categorised the situation as a "war" (HIIK 2013), while, the

10 Homicide has been used as a typical proxy to measure violence as a readily measurable, clearly defined and comparable indicator (UNODC 2014).

Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) documented at least ten non-state armed conflicts within the Mexican borders, at least four of them among the most intense worldwide (Sundberg, Eck, and Kreutz 2012). In all such conflicts, criminal groups play a fundamental role, in most cases independently of any state action or influence.

However, a rush to categorise the situation may risk turning it into a "rhetoric war" (Gallahue 2011). While public opinion, media, and sometimes the official discourse are increasingly inclined to refer to a "war," other more "traditional" approaches conceive the problem rather as an extreme – yet internal – situation of crime (Gallahue 2011). Given the great relevance of criminal structures, other experts have explored different approaches to categorising the nature of the conflict. Bunker and Sullivan (2010), and Grillo (2011), for example, have made the case for criminal insurgencies, where criminal "insurgent" groups subsist in low intensity conflicts, where appropriate responses by the state include the use of the armed forces and other elements of national security (Bunker 2013).

Certainly, criminal groups play an important role in this type of violence, despite a clear state influence in most cases. Violence in some forms and against some groups is not state-organised, it is rather caused by non-state actors, when even the state is not often a monolithic entity (Gerlach 2010, 280). Thus, a framework of study has to bear in mind that violence in certain regions could occur without or despite the state. In the case of Mexico, despite state action being a significant trigger of violent events, violence cannot be considered exclusively state-generated, as many other actors participated independently. Violence in Mexico became participatory and multipolar.

As well as broad participation and multi-victim groups, the types of violence increasingly used in Mexico, such as beheadings, public exposure of mutilated bodies, the extensive use of torture, and massive executions, and the number of resulting casualties coincide with the features of an EVS. The emerging concept of EVS is used to trace the social roots of mass violence when traditional terms are too narrow to describe causes of violence in its different forms and intensities (Gerlach 2010).

2.1 Mexico as an Extremely Violent Society

Gerlach (2006, 2010) explains EVS as "formations where *various population* groups become victims of massive physical violence, in which, acting together with organs of the state, *diverse social groups participate for a multitude of reasons*" (Gerlach 2010, 1). This approach understands mass violence as depending on broad and diverse support, based on a variety of motives and interests, spreading violence in different directions, forms, and intensities (Gerlach 2010, 1–2). This idea differs from a traditional conception of mass violence as carried out by the state, often called state-generated violence (SGV).

Structural violence and criminality occur often – but not always – in conjunction with EVS. Societies are not extremely violent in principle or by nature, rather they become violent through a temporary process – crisis – during which four characteristics are typically present (Gerlach 2006, 460):

a) Various victim groups,
b) Broad participation,
c) Multi-casualties, and
d) Great amount of physical violence.

Certainly the EVS framework is more descriptive than analytic. However, it is not just a vague definition of high-level or a general culture of violence, nor a description of cultural, systemic, or structural violence, nor a simple classification of ordinary criminal activity *per se* (Gerlach 2006, 460). Instead, it is an approach to think differently about mass violence relying on the analytical gains produced by empirical case studies. The case of Mexico exemplifies Gerlach's description of EVS, taking into account not only the features or intensity of the conflict, but also changes in the type of violence, and the participation of different actors and groups over time.

2.2 Violence and Organised Crime

Societies like Mexico face a kind of violence unrelated to state or religious violence, or racial conflict. Karstedt (2012, 505) explains that violent societies that did not suffer mass atrocities have certain common characteristics, such as high levels of state violence, high levels of organised crime (OC),[11] and/or on-going low-level political and ethnic con-

flicts. While many countries, especially in Latin America, have featured high levels of violence mainly because of armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, or state violence, others maintain high levels of violence largely caused by excessive homicide rates (Karstedt 2012, 507).

As homicide has been used as a reasonable proxy for violent crime as well as an indicator of levels of security within states (UNODC 2014), it has become a central element of the debate on the terminology used in relation to OC. Despite the widespread use of terms such as "drug-related homicide" or "organised crime-style homicide" there is no fundament or formal definition for them under current legislation that helps to differentiate them from common "intentional homicide"[12] As such, experts and authorities have opposed those classifications and have largely contended tallies of victims purportedly linked to organised criminal activities. (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014).[13]

Finckenauer (2005, 68) explains that defining OC is important because how the problem is defined determines how laws are framed, how investigations and prosecutions are conducted, how research is carried out, and how bi-national legal assistance functions. Certainly, the widespread use of terminology associated with OC by the media, government officials, scholars, and the public, brings significant challenges, since labelling violence based on specific characteristics not contemplated in legislation depends on some degree of subjective interpretation, particularly when the base definitions for a given classification are unclear (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014).

Van Dijk (2007, 41–42) suggests that the rate of unsolved homicides is an objective measure of OC activity, since perpetrators of regular homicides are in most cases arrested, but those responsible for "cool-blooded killings executed by organized crime" are not. Thus a good proxy of OC or "mob-related" violence can be calculated by deducting convictions for homicide from police-recorded homicides. While this proxy is certainly helpful for statistically determining the presence of OC in a society, it is still insufficient to determine the actual influence of OC in the death toll.

It is thus relevant to distinguish, at least analytically, certain homicides that bear distinctive features and patterns common amongst OCGs as OC-related. Characteristics include excessive physical violence, use of heavy weaponry, widespread use of torture, decapitation, mutilation of bodies, among others (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014). Indeed, there is a potential margin of error in classifying homicides as OC-related, although the analytical advantages are greater, especially considering that most homicides in the country will not be successfully investigated or prosecuted by authorities.[14]

3. Violence Associated with Organised Crime in Mexico

Official information suggests a decades-long downward trend in homicide rates in Mexico, a steady decline that reached its lowest values by the mid-2000s and until 2007, when there were just above 8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.[15] However, after 2007 killings increased significantly, maintaining a rising trend up until 2011 – the most violent year in Mexico's recent history with over 27,000 people killed and a murder rate close to 25 per 100,000 inhabitants (see Figure 1).[16]

11 Organised crime is referred hereafter as OC, and homicides presumably associated to organised crime as OC-style or OC-related homicides. An organised crime group will henceforth be referred as an OCG.

12 The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2001) has defined an "organized criminal group" as "a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences … in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit". Article 16 of Mexico's constitution also formally defines OC *(delincuencia organizada)* as "a de facto organization of three or more persons, [existing] in permanent or recurring form to commit crimes, according to the terms of the relevant area of the law" (CPEUM 2008). This situation do not, however, ease the problem of other crimes committed in connection with organised crime, especially homicide.

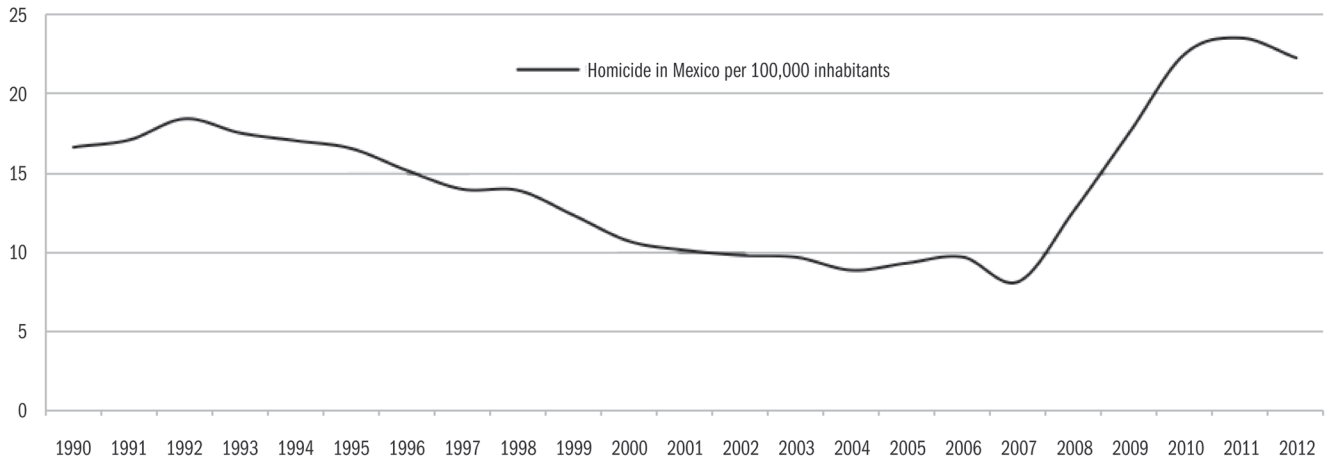
13 For instance, Molloy (2013) argues that tallies of OC-related homicides – mainly those generated by the government – are "politically-influenced and methodologically flawed". She states that the government started using "arbitrary criteria" and terms such as OC-related to legitimize the extremely high rate of homicides in the country. Since homicides occur for many reasons and with many distinctions, she believes that it is necessary to address all types of homicides instead.

14 As Van Dijk (2007, 40) explains, in countries where organised crime is most prevalent, investigations into such crimes will be affected and fewer prosecutions will be initiated or successfully completed. In this case low rates of investigations, prosecutions and convictions for organised crime – or corruption – may point to high prevalence of such crimes.

15 Data presented by the Global Study on Homicide 2013 (UNODC 2014) confirms the steadily declining trend in homicide rates in Mexico from earlier highs in the mid-1950s, and the further sudden increase since 2007.

16 This was a little above the average homicide rate in the region of about 21.4. Nonetheless, levels of violence are relatively lower in Mexico than in other countries in the Americas, and about average for the Western hemisphere. However, no other country in the hemisphere has seen such a large increase in the number or rate of homicides over the last decade (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014).

Figure 1: Homicide Rate in Mexico from 1990 through 2012



Sources: INEGI (2013); CONAPO (2014).

Based on official data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, INEGI) and population estimates by the National Population Council (Consejo Nacional de Población, CONAPO), Figure 1 illustrates homicide rates in Mexico for a twenty-three-year period (1990–2012), showing a declining trend starting in the early 1990s up until 2007, and then a sudden increase.

Struggles between OCGs and the federal government strategy of direct confrontation appear to be two of the main factors for the dramatic intensification of violence. However, attributing increasing violence to OC can be complicated, because the widespread perception by itself provides no conclusive proof of OC activities, hence the need for proxy indicators (Van Dijk 2007, 41).

3.1 Organised Crime-style Homicides

Using datasets that distinguish regular homicides from those presumably linked to OC based on the abovementioned characteristics, we find that violent activities related to OC were relatively low before 2007. According to data from the National Commission on Human Rights (Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos, CNDH) OC-style homicides in 2001 represented only about 10 percent of total intentional homicides. In the six-year period from 2001 to 2006, CNDH reported a total of 8,901 OC-style killings, about 21 percent of all intentional homicides.

The year 2007 marked the beginning of a spike in homicide rates that reached its peak in 2011, when OC-style killings accounted for between 12,000 and 16,000 deaths – depending on the source – and total intentional homicides exceeded 25,000.[17] Overall, OC-style homicides could represent – depending on the source – around 40 percent to 60 percent of the more than 120,000 homicides from 2007 to 2012 (See Figure 2).

17 By 2012, however, homicides declined about 5 percent.

Figure 2: Comparison of OC-style with all intentional homicides.[18]

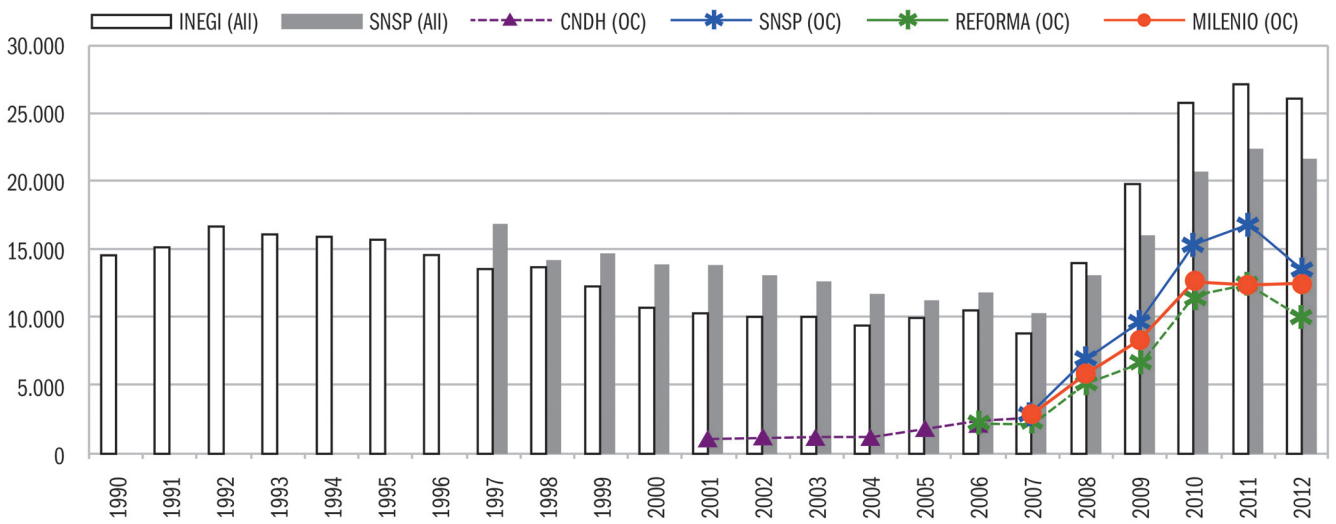


Figure reproduced from Heinle, Rodríguez and Shirk (2014).

Figure 2 illustrates overall numbers of homicides from two sources, the National Statistics Institute (INEGI) and the National System of Public Security (Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, SNSP) (both governmental agencies, each represented by bars); and OC-style homicides tallied by different sources, such as the CNDH, national media outlets such as *Milenio* and *Reforma*, and the SNSP (each represented by lines). As the figure shows, the escalation of OC-style violence correlates closely with the increase in overall homicides. The total number of OC-style homicides documented by the Mexican government and other independent sources in the six-year period from 2007 to 2012 could reach between 45,000 and 65,000, representing more than half of all homicides.[19]

3.2 Turf Conflicts and Geographical Dispersion of Violence

Violence associated with OC spreads across times and regions, mainly triggered by the proliferation of internal conflicts and territorial disputes among OCGs. While in the past violence derived from OC and drug trafficking was largely concentrated in the northern region of the country, especially in the border municipalities with the United States, the intensification of conflicts also led to a geographical dispersion of violence to previously largely peaceful regions. Shifts within OCGs' operational structures and expansionist tendencies of criminal groups generated instability and fomented violence (Corcoran 2013).

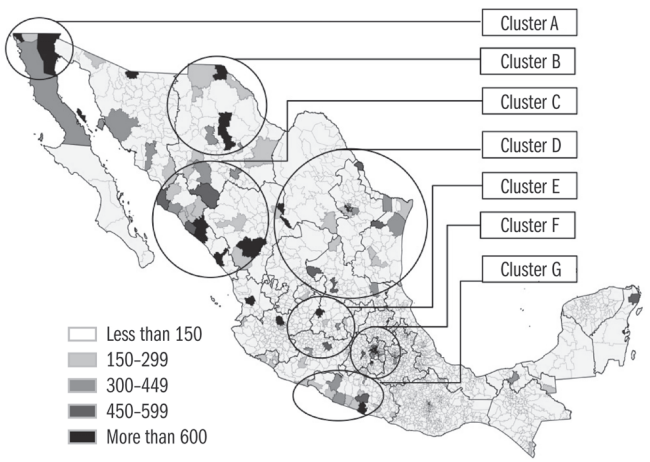
18 Figure 2 presents data from different governmental and independent sources. Data from the National Statistics Institute (INEGI) shows cases of deaths by homicide – either intentional or unintentional – as reported by coroners, and the National System of Public Security (SNSP) shows cases of crime investigations *(averiguaciones previas)* for intentional homicide as reported by State Attorney General's offices. Both sources represent all homicides without distinction based on characteristics or perpetrators, and are labelled in the chart as "all". The SNSP, the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH) and Mexican national newspapers *Reforma* and *Milenio* also tally homicides presumably related to organised crime. Such sources count homicides with features that suggest their connection with OC, and thus are labelled in the chart as "OC". For more information on how government sources count and classify homicides see Echarri Cánovas (2012).

19 It should be acknowledged that data provided in Figure 2 might also suggest an increase in homicides not related to OC. An explanation for such variance could be hard to determine, as it could be attributable to different methodologies for data collection (Echarri Cánovas 2012), or even a more structured process of crime data reporting. Causes for an increase in homicides with no connection to organised crime could be related to other types of interpersonal violence which raise a completely different set of questions, because it represents a "more detached phenomenon, with its own autonomous dynamic" (Knight 2013, 15), even independent from upsurges in general criminality. For example, Piccato (2013) explains that homicide in Mexico in the twentieth century followed a downward trend, contrasting with the escalation of other crimes closely related to economical instability.

The number of municipalities with high rates of homicide also increased significantly starting in 2007, yet only about 10 percent of the 2,457 Mexican municipalities concentrated most of the country's homicides. The ten most violent municipalities contributed on average 40 percent of all intentional homicides each year (Molzahn, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2013). Municipalities throughout the country started to record unusual numbers of homicides and, in most cases, violence spilled over to neighbouring municipalities forming regional clusters sharing similar patterns..

Figure 3 shows clusters of municipalities that recorded significant levels of homicides in the timeframe between 2007 and 2012, followed by a description of events that might have caused such concentration of violence.[20]

Figure 3: Concentration of homicides by municipality from 2007 through 2012.



Map by author. Source: INEGI (2013).

Cluster A comprises Tijuana and neighbouring municipalities including the state capital Mexicali, in Baja California, on the border with California. For most of the 1990s and 2000s the Tijuana cartel, also known as the Arellano Felix Organization (AFO), was in control of this region.[21]

Major conflicts with the Sinaloa cartel started in the early 1990s, and against a federation of cartels – including Sinaloa – in the 2000s. Amidst the conflict, violence in this region was triggered by arrests and killings of top leaders of the AFO in the 1990s and 2000s (Astorga and Shirk 2010). The federal government responded to increasing violence by launching a major security operation named "*Operativo Conjunto Baja California*" or "*Operativo Tijuana*" in January of 2007, where the military took control of public security in the region (Merlos and González 2007), contributing to a generalized state of violence and insecurity.

In 2008 an important AFO lieutenant, Teodoro García Simental "El Teo", split from the organisation and launched an intense battle against former allies for control of the region (Astorga and Shirk 2010). At that time homicides spiked about 350 percent as compared to 2007, while complaints of violations of human rights by law enforcement and military personnel were also on the rise (Daly, Heinle, and Shirk 2012). The "El Teo" faction was soon dismantled by the capture of its leaders by Mexican authorities in early 2010, and after a brief spike, homicide rates started to decrease (Corcoran 2013).

While it is widely claimed – mainly by the government – that the decrease in violence was a result of a successful strategy by the authorities (Bailey 2010), it is believed that a truce negotiated by the Sinaloa cartel with still active AFO cells (InSight Crime 2014c) could be the real reason for the decrease in violence in the region (Corcoran 2013).[22]

20 Certainly a more in-depth spatial analysis – which is not the purpose of this study – would be needed to generate empirical proof on the causes of such clustering, especially to rule out other socioeconomic and demographic factors that have been shown to correlate with different types of homicide (Kubrin 2003). However, such an unusual concentration of homicides in certain regions suggests some connections to internal conflicts and territorial disputes among OCGs.

21 After the dismantling of the Guadalajara cartel, criminal regions and trafficking routes in Mexico were divided into smaller units by Félix Gallardo, with the idea that each "capo" would pay a quota to operate in another territory. The control of the region was not initially given to the AFO , however, the organisation asserted control over it, establishing its stronghold in Tijuana, the most important border crossing in Mexico (Corcoran 2013).

22 The Sinaloa cartel is considered the most powerful organization yet, and one of its leaders, "El Chapo" Guzmán, was once considered by the Forbes magazine one of the most wealthy and powerful men in the world. Based in the coastal state of Sinaloa in the North-Pacific region it is also one of the oldest organisations in Mexico. It is believed that the Sinaloa cartel controls most of the trafficking routes and criminal territories in Mexico. Its incursions into new markets and regions, and the aggressiveness to assert control over those territories generated some of the most violent conflicts throughout the country. "El Chapo" Guzmán was one of the most wanted criminals in the world until he was arrested in 2014 by the Mexican Navy. A year later, in July 2015, he escaped for the second time from a Mexican "maximum security" prison.

Cluster B includes Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and neighbouring municipalities in the northern state of Chihuahua, sharing a border with the U.S. state of Texas. For most of the 1990s and 2000s, this region was under the control of the Juárez cartel, a group based in Ciudad Juárez and considered in the 1990s – along with its leader Amado Carrillo Fuentes, "The Lord of the Skies" *(El Señor de los Cielos)* – the most powerful in Mexico, famous for their large aircraft fleet (Astorga and Shirk 2010).

The group was believed to be part of a criminal federation promoted by the Sinaloa cartel to set rules for territories and organisations (Astorga and Shirk 2010). However, the 2004 killing of two Sinaloan operatives in Ciudad Juárez by members of the Juárez cartel and further retaliation by Sinaloa broke the pact and started a conflict that escalated dramatically by the late 2000s (InSight Crime 2013a).[23]

It is believed that the Sinaloa cartel formally entered territory of the Juárez cartel in 2008, starting an open conflict for the city that incorporated ruthless operations conducted by small groups and local gangs utilized by cartels (Jones 2014). We find the enforcement arm *La Línea* (The Line) – composed mostly of former police officers – and the U.S. and Mexican street and prison gang *Barrio Azteca* or *Los Aztecas* (The Aztecs) fighting on behalf of the Juárez cartel, against gangs supported by the Sinaloa cartel such as the *Mexicles* and the *Artistas Asesinos* (Assassin Artists) – (El Diario 2014).[24]

In March 2008 the federal government launched another major security operation, "Operación Conjunta Chihuahua" (Joint Operation Chihuahua), followed by "Todos Somos Juárez" (We are all Juárez), where first the military and then the Federal Police took control of public security in the municipality, causing yet more outbreaks of violence (Castillo 2011) and complaints about human rights abuses (Daly, Heinle, and Shirk 2012).

Homicides saw an unprecedented increase, from 136 in 2007 to 2,738 in 2010, the bloodiest year. By 2011 the fight between Juárez and Sinaloa was considered the most intense armed conflict worldwide (UCDP 2012a). Homicides started to decrease suddenly in 2012 – with only about eight hundred that year – when the Sinaloa cartel reportedly managed to assert control over Juárez's territory, causing a general decline in violence (El Diario 2014).

Cluster C includes several municipalities of the states of Chihuahua, Durango, and Sinaloa. This tri-state area is birthplace to the most important Mexican drug traffickers, also comprises the region known as the Golden Triangle, the epicentre of drug cultivation in Mexico, and is also the power base of the Sinaloa cartel (Astorga and Shirk 2010).

While the Mexican government conducted counter-narcotic operations in the region for decades,[25] violence here is not generally associated with state action, despite recent operations contributing to the intensification of conflicts (Corcoran 2013).[26] Struggles between the Sinaloa cartel, its former ally the Beltran Leyva Organization (BLO), and other OCGs trying to gain influence over the region are believed to have been the main reason for the increase in violence (InSight Crime 2013b).

The most violent municipality in the region is Culiacán, in Sinaloa, with an average population of 817,101 and an average homicide rate of over 63 from 2007 through 2012; overall the municipality recorded 2,614 homicides during this period.

Cluster D incorporates the northeast region comprising the border municipalities of the state of Tamaulipas, the metropolitan zone of Monterrey, and other municipalities in the states of Coahuila (principally Torreón) and San Luis Potosí. Violence in this region is largely associated with the

23 Astorga and Shirk (2010, 42) believe that the split between the Beltran Leyva Organisation (BLO) and the Sinaloa cartel also contributed to the conflict between Sinaloa and Juárez, though it is not clear how. They believe that actions by the Sinaloans might have posed a threat to both of their then partners, enabling the BLO to enlist the indirect support of Juárez. They also argue that Sinaloa's need for access to the Juárez-controlled smuggling routes might have simply became more intense, thus intensifying the fight to control them.

24 For a more thorough analysis of this topic see Jones (2014).

25 State actions in this region started back in the 1930s with anti-drug missions launched under President Lázaro Cárdenas, to destroy marijuana and poppy crops (Astorga and Shirk 2010).

26 The Mexican government launched an important operation in January 2007, the Golden Triangle Operation *(Operativo Triángulo Dorado)* to conduct surveillance of mountain roads and regions (El Siglo de Torreón 2007).

conflict that arose after the split between the Gulf cartel and its former allies the *Zetas*.

The Gulf cartel – also known by the acronym "CDG" from its Spanish name *Cartel del Golfo* – was created in the 1970s and is the oldest criminal organisation in Mexico. After the dismantling of the Guadalajara cartel, and the rise of Osiel Cárdenas Guillén as its leader, the CDG grew stronger and came to control drug trafficking routes in the Gulf of Mexico and into Texas. The CDG became more powerful with the incorporation of elite soldiers from the Mexican Army as an enforcement arm, a group known as *Los Zetas*. Nonetheless, the arrest of Cárdenas in 2003 and his subsequent extradition to the United States in 2007 caused a rift between the CDG and the *Zetas*, which eventually started to fight over control of territories in the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere (InSight Crime 2014b).

The original *Zetas* were former members of a Mexican Army special operations elite squad, initially recruited by the CDG and its leader Osiel Cárdenas as bodyguards and enforcers. Due to their military training and discipline, they quickly became famous and started to move up the ranks within the organisation. Using a recruitment system borrowed from the special forces, the group also expanded by incorporating former *Kaibiles* – members of the Guatemalan Special Forces trained by the U.S. military to fight guerrillas. Its methods were unusual and unique in Mexico at that time, particularly the use of beheadings and the use of the letter "Z" left on their victim's bodies as a signature for branding and positioning strategy. After splitting from the CDG, the *Zetas* started a turf war for control of the Gulf coast and other regions around 2010 (Astorga and Shirk 2010). As the group grew stronger, it engaged in many regional conflicts in Mexican territory and into Central America, mainly – but not exclusively – with the Sinaloa cartel (InSight Crime 2012). Around 2010 the *Zetas* were considered to be amongst most powerful OCGs in Mexico.

Responses by the federal government as "Operativo Laguna Seguro" (Operation Safe Laguna), "Operativo Tamaulipas" (Operation Tamaulipas), and "Operativo Nuevo León Seguro" (Operation Safe Nuevo Leon) failed to alleviate the situation and actually intensified the conflict between the CDG and the *Zetas* by removing leaders and operators from both groups (Heinle, Molzahn, and Shirk 2015a).

The cities of Torreón in Coahuila, Monterrey in Nuevo León, and Nuevo Laredo in Tamaulipas were the most violent in the region and amongst the most violent nationwide. From 2007 to 2012 the average homicide rate in Torreón was close to 42 per 100,000 inhabitants (with an average population of 612,428); Monterrey had an average homicide rate of 30 (with an average population of 1,136,720); and Nuevo Laredo an average homicide rate of 35 (with an average population of 391,146). Altogether the three cities recorded 4,369 homicides from 2007 to 2012. As mentioned above, the concentration of violence in this region is largely associated with the conflict between the CDG and the *Zetas*, and in 2011 was considered to be among the ten most intense non-state armed conflicts in the world (UCDP 2012a).

Cluster E includes several municipalities in the states of Michoacán and Guanajuato. Violence in this region is associated with conflicts with and within the Michoacán Family (La Familia Michoacana, LFM),[27] and the Knights Templar Organization (KTO).[28] LFM was one of the organisations most affected by the strategy of President Calderón – a native of Michoacán – and was close to being completely dismantled by the government. After a series of operations by the federal government, including the

27 The "Michoacán Family" is an ideology-influenced group based in the central Pacific region of Michoacán, created from lieutenants that deserted from other OCGs. To assert control over the territory, the deserter cell created a "vigilante-style" group with a pseudo-evangelical indoctrination that ultimately gained control of Michoacán and the surrounding region. As the LFM became the reigning OCG in the state and other regions, they also used brutal tactics and abusive behaviour towards local population as other OCGs did, which was one of the main reasons for the creation of the LFM in the first place (InSight Crime 2013c).

28 Known in Spanish as *"La Órden de los Caballeros Templarios"* or simply *"Caballeros Templarios"*, this group formed after a split from the LFM, but retained the same ideological background and the same violent and brutal tactics. The KTO practically crushed their former LFM allies and asserted control over the regions they formerly commanded.

claimed killing of its top leader,[29] a group of former LFM lieutenants split to create the KTO that eventually reduced the LFM to scattered cells around the state of Michoacán and neighbouring states (InSight Crime 2013c). Like the LFM, the KTO engaged in violent practices against rivals and civilians, which led to the creation of small community-based vigilante groups known as *grupos de autodefensa* (self-defence groups), in an effort to expel the KTO and other OCGs from Michoacán (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014).

Cluster F includes Mexico City, municipalities of the State of Mexico and the state of Morelos. The most prominent organisation in this region was the BLO. The Beltrán Leyva brothers – founders of the BLO – were once part of the top leadership of the Sinaloa cartel, but split after the arrest of Alfredo Beltrán Leyva "El Mochomo" – whose capture was believed to have involved a betrayal by "El Chapo" Guzmán, leader of the Sinaloans. In retaliation the Beltran Leyva family ordered the killing of Guzmán's son. Within the Sinaloa cartel the BLO faction was in charge of financial and security operations, mainly coordinating money laundering and fighting with the Gulf cartel and the *Zetas* (InSight Crime 2013b).

A series of splits within the BLO after the 2009 killing of its top leader – Arturo Beltrán Leyva "El Barbas" (The Beard) – by the Mexican Navy in Morelos, created numerous smaller groups engaged in fighting over control of different municipalities (InSight Crime 2013b).

Violence in this particular region is associated with conflicts with and within BLO splinter cells, specially in the state of Morelos (Corcoran 2013) while in the other surrounding municipalities of the State of Mexico and in Mexico City groups including LFM, KTO, the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generación, CJNG), and other groups are believed to have caused – and be causing – violence (Ramírez 2014).[30]

Cluster G is in the coastal region of Guerrero, and includes one of the Mexico's most important ports, Acapulco, and parts of Michoacán on the Pacific coast. Violence in the region has been associated mainly with conflicts with and within BLO splinter organizations (Justice in Mexico Project 2012g), the LFM, and the KTO, especially in Acapulco. The splinter organizations include: *Los Negros* (The Blacks), *Los Rojos* (The Reds), *Los Mazatlecos* (demonym for inhabitants of Maztalán in the state of Sinaloa), *Cartel del Pacífico Sur* or CPS (South-Pacific Cartel), *Cartel Independiente de Acapulco* or CIDA (Independent Cartel of Acapulco), and *La Barredora* (The Sweeper). The conflict between the last two was also considered one of the ten most intense non-state armed conflicts in 2011 (UCDP 2012a). In Acapulco alone, homicides exploded from 65 in 2007 to 1,152 in 2012.

Certain municipalities with similar or higher homicide rates were not clustered, while others were considered violent even though their violence levels were lower. For example, the Metropolitan Zone of Guadalajara had more than 2,200 homicides from 2007 to 2012, and the municipality of Tepic accounted for 850 homicides in the same period, in both cases mainly attributable to the fight between the *Zetas* and the CJNG (a splinter group of the Sinaloa cartel). This conflict was also considered one of the ten most intense non-state armed conflicts in 2011 (UCDP 2012a).

3.3 Fluctuation of Violence across Time and Regions

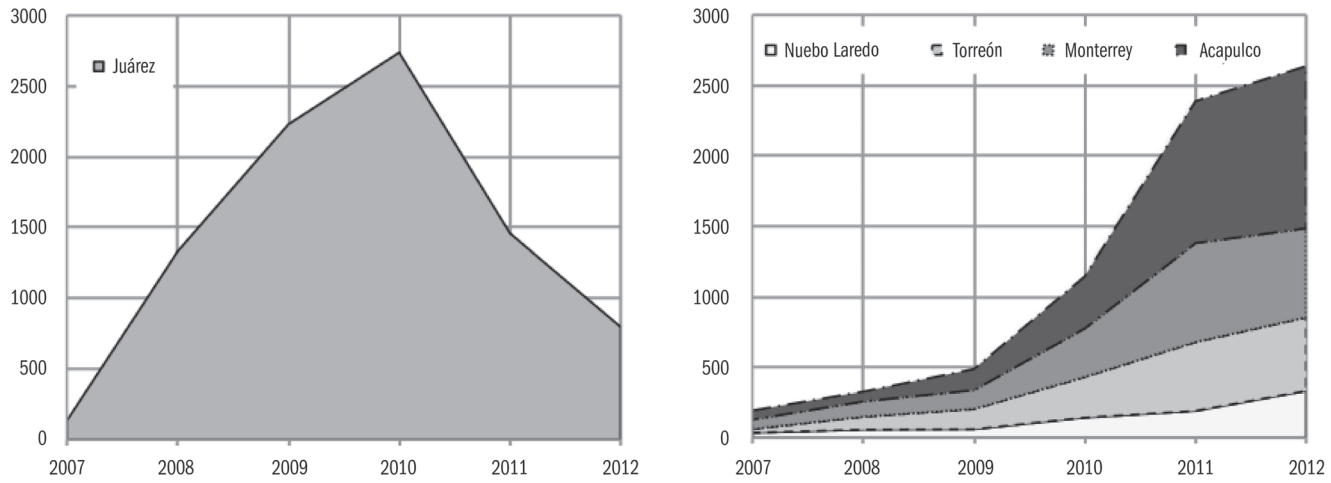
The geographical dispersion of violence into new regions coincided with decreasing levels in others. This illustrates the dynamics of OC-style violence that often concentrates in certain regions during particular periods of time and depending on situations such as arrests or killing of leaders, pacts, or invasion of territories. Moreover, a decrease or increase in violence in particular regions also significantly modifies the map of violence nationwide. In the case of Ciudad Juárez, for example, with only 1 percent of the national population, the number of homicides

29 The Calderón administration officially announced the killing of Nazario Moreno González "El Chayo" in December 2010, although the Mexican Army did not actually finally locate and kill him until 2014.

30 It most be noted that Figure 3 shows total number of homicides rather than rates. Thus high concentrations of violence in certain regions can also be attributed to high population density, especially in Mexico City and neighbouring municipalities of the State of Mexico, which is the most populated region of the country. This also has to be considered in the cases of Guadalajara and Monterrey, as the second- and third-largest cities.

between 2008 and 2010 represented 10 percent of the national total. The conflict that generated the escalation in Juárez thus represented a significant share of the violence nationwide, and its decrease indeed represented an important share of the drop in violence starting in 2012. However escalation in other regions such as Acapulco – the most violent municipality by 2012 – along with Torreón, Monterrey, and Nuevo Laredo (which altogether almost reached the levels of Juárez) overshadowed what could have been a more dramatic change in violence trends (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Municipalities with sudden increase and decrease in homicides from 2007 through 2012



Source: INEGI (2013).

Figure 4 presents a comparison of overall intentional homicides in five municipalities: Ciudad Juárez, Acapulco, Monterrey, Nuevo Laredo, and Torreón. The first chart shows a sharp increase in homicides in Juárez followed by a sudden decrease in 2010, whereas the second shows a dramatic increase in the other four municipalities starting around 2009. Such examples are paradigmatic. While Juárez accounted for more than 10 percent of the national total of homicides in 2010 and only 3 percent in 2012, Nuevo Laredo, Monterrey, Torreón, and Acapulco together represented only 4 percent of the national total in 2010, but 10 percent in 2012. As such, the sudden and dramatic diminution of violence in one place – Juárez for instance – did not represent a dramatic decrease in violence at the national level because of the upsurge of other conflicts apparently unrelated.

Violence associated with organised crime does not necessarily follow a clear pattern. While in some regions violence increases or drops suddenly, in others the tendency is more stable in spite of upward or downward trends. Moreover, drops in violence in one region coincide with increases in other – whether connected or not. Thus, despite being widespread, violence associated with OC is not homogeneous and often independent from region to region. Moreover, while intensified by state actions, conflicts seem to have subsisted independently from the state, as many of the bloodiest feuds have been precipitated not by state actions, but primarily by rivalry between OCGs (Corcoran 2013).

3.4 Transnational Nature

While violence has largely remained within national boundaries, the conflict has certainly been fuelled by illegal activities of a transnational nature. For example, most of the drugs trafficked in and through Mexico are intended for the U.S. market, and a significant portion of the actual drugs or their precursors come from other countries

(UNODC 2010). As a direct consequence, large amounts of cash are believed to cross the border southbound from the United States to finance OCGs' activities in Mexico (Farah 2010).

One of the best indicators of the transnational nature of the Mexican crisis of violence is the increasingly modern and sophisticated weapons, including high-calibre rifles, hand grenades, rocket launchers, and many other types of weapons, that are widely traded within illegal networks despite being forbidden in Mexico. Variants of the AK-47 and AR-15 and other high-calibre weapons are amongst the most widely used by Mexican criminal organisations, and most of them are trafficked from the United States (Goodman 2013).

It is estimated that between 2010 and 2012 around 253,000 firearms were purchased annually in the United States for the sole purpose of smuggling to Mexico. Only 14 percent were seized, almost entirely in Mexican territory by Mexican authorities (McDougal et al. 2013). According to the Mexican Ministry of Defence, between December 2006 and December 2012, a total of 387,007 weapons were seized in Mexico (SEDENA 2012, 38). Likewise, between 2007 and 2011 the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) received nearly one hundred thousand weapons seized in Mexico, of which about 70 percent where bought in the United States (ATF 2012).

The connection between transnational arms trafficking and violence in Mexico is simple; most of the victims of OC-style violence were killed by firearm. Estimations suggest that guns were used in around 95 percent of the OC-style homicides in Mexico (Justice in Mexico Project 2014).

4. Multipolar and Participatory Violence in Mexico

The participatory character of violence is "one of the main characteristics of an extremely violent society" (Gerlach 2010, 88). In some cases violence is not necessarily universal, but participation is widespread and diverse, with different groups having different motivations, often overlapping, as part of a web of interests creating a network of massive violence (Gerlach 2010, 21–87). As Karstedt (2012, 502) explains, the bulk of physical violence in an EVS occurs against several groups rather than one, and in a range of different forms that contribute to and merge into severe incidents of mass violence. Different groups join violent actions with different motives, where the state and its agencies are no longer predominant actors (Karstedt 2012). Likewise, in the context of EVS the traditional concept of victim blurs. "Victims and others are part of one interactive process, in which the former are not just passive or even reactive, but seek support, alliances or counteraction" (Gerlach 2010, 5).

Understanding the multipolar and participatory nature of the different situations of violence in Mexico through the EVS methodology helps to disregard common assumptions of two-sided violence between the state and criminal organisations, bearing in mind the different dynamics of victims and perpetrators. The EVS framework describes situations of violence where traditional terms are inadequate to describe the various causes, forms, and intensities, and covers societies like Mexico in which various groups, along with the state, participate for a multitude of reasons and become simultaneously perpetrators and victims of violence (Gerlach 2010).

4.1 State Responses to OC and Violence in Mexico

The upturn in violence in Mexico coincided with a series of actions carried out by the government. On 1 December 1 2006, Felipe Calderón assumed the presidency, and made clear from the very beginning his intentions to directly confront OCGs by increasing the involvement of the armed forces and federal security agencies. Just a couple of weeks after the new administration took office, forces from different agencies were deployed mainly to the states of Baja California, Guerrero, and Michoacán to restore order and counter rampant corruption among local public security agencies (Justice in Mexico Project 2006). This was the first move toward a large-scale strategy to fight organised crime head on, and the first signal sent by the new administration to OCGs growing in influence and power throughout the country.

Joint operations were conducted by the Mexican Army, the Federal Investigations Agency (Agencia Federal de Investigaciones, AFI), and the Federal Preventive Police (Policía

Federal Preventiva, PFP), entities considered less vulnerable to corruption and better trained and equipped than municipal and state police forces (Justice in Mexico Project 2006).[31]

The public security strategy headed by Calderón focused on strengthening federal security forces, specifically the army and the navy, whose budgets were almost doubled, and the Federal Police whose budget and personnel were tripled (García 2011). By deploying large numbers of forces from different agencies in different regions of the country the government hoped to directly confront OCGs, and to increase and improve – at least in theory – "intelligence work" to trace and crackdown on such organisations.

The government deemed it necessary to conduct special operations in certain regions of the country where the impact of violence and OC was higher. The Calderón administration launched more than ten special operations in specific regions, deploying a still unknown number of federal law enforcement and military operatives, taking over local public security in some cases, establishing social development programs, and assisting local law enforcement and governments. Meanwhile, the federal government kept the armed forces in charge of assisting local law enforcement agencies in other parts of the country.

Actions by the government did lead to relevant achievements in anti-narcotics efforts, such as crop eradications, drug seizures, and busts of tunnels along the U.S. border, and most importantly the capture – as of July 2012 – of 190,543 suspected criminals: 112,889 for drug related crimes, 8,453 for kidnapping, and 69,201 for other related crimes (Presidencia de la República 2012). Most importantly, around twenty-five of the most wanted kingpins were either arrested or killed during the Calderón administration (Gutiérrez 2012).

While war rhetoric became common in public and official discourse, the open use of the military in law enforcement became one of the most heavily criticised aspects of the federal strategy. President Calderón portrayed the actions of the federal government as a "war" against OC immediately after assuming the presidency (Becerril 2011),[32] perhaps as a misuse of the word or perhaps to switch the discourse after a highly contested and criticised election campaign. The tone of the discourse identified the state as the main motor of the so-called "drug war", and thus all achievements and fatalities were consequences of "effective" actions by the authorities. Likewise, on the other side of the spectrum, the state was also to blame for the results of a "failed war" that exacerbated the problem. The discourse was centred on the role of the state, and all the violence was somehow state-driven or state-generated.

Nevertheless, violence cannot be simply and solely explained by looking at the state (Gerlach 2010, 1), and while the Mexican state bears significant responsibility as an important generator of violence, violence did not subside exclusively as a result of state actions. Violence related to OC in Mexico goes far beyond a context of SGV, as other factors have influenced the violence dynamics.

4.2 Groups and Actors of Violence Associated with Organised Crime

In the context of violence associated with OC in Mexico, many groups became intertwined; from the members of OCGs to law enforcement authorities – including those colluding by means of corruption. Even the citizenry and popular culture play a role – albeit indirectly – by condemning or idolizing the actors in the conflict, or by engaging in illicit markets or joining an OCG. Yet the main actors of the conflict are still considered to be the OCGs and their members.[33]

OCGs are highly vulnerable to fragmentation. In the case of Mexico, structures that previously featured a significant

31 The PFP became the Federal Police and was one of the agencies that received more support and attention during the presidency of Calderon, significantly extending its powers (Rodriguez 2012). The AFI was eventually dismantled in 2012 and the Federal Ministerial Police (Policía Federal Ministerial, PFM) created in its place with different and smaller powers (JMP 2012a). Both the AFI and the Federal Police ended the Calderon administration amid scandals and serious allegations of corruption (JMP 2012b, 2013a).

32 President Calderon corrected himself and started to use the more neutral expression "fight" instead.

33 About 468,000 people reportedly work in drug trafficking in a variety of activities. Around twenty major and mid-level OCGs and countless lower level groups operate in Mexico (Garduño 2013).

degree of hierarchy and cohesion switched to a new scheme of fierce competition characterised by extreme violence, leading them to suffer major disruptions (Cockayne 2013, 14). As such, their internal structures and power lines became increasingly blurred, horizontal, and atomized.[34]

This process of disintegration of hegemonic networks diversified criminal organisations into different and varied organisations, such as big transnational groups often labelled cartels, mid-level gangs (often splinter groups from larger organisations), and street gangs, most of which are unknown to the general public (Corcoran 2013). Along with other specialised and hermetic groups, and individuals operating independently, this network of groups and organisations act in a sort of extended "supply chain" (Astorga and Shirk 2010, 40).

A new phenomenon appeared in Mexico after 2012. As a result of a growing crisis in the South Pacific coast – particularly in the Tierra Caliente region of Michoacán – armed groups claiming to be grassroots self-defence organisations *(autodefensas)*, primarily from the agriculture and livestock sectors, started to clash with OCGs in response to relentless criminal activities and intimidation of local communities (Heinle, Molzahn, and Shirk 2015b).[35]

Hence, due to constant change within OC structures, unceasing fragmentation caused in part by government's efforts to dismantle criminal networks, along with other inner dynamics of criminal rivalries and related factors, the plethora of actors of OC-related violence have collectively grown far more violent.

4.3 Types of Violence Associated with Organised Crime

The escalation of homicides associated with OC in Mexico was associated with unusual features of extreme violence such as torture, decapitations, bodies hanging from bridges, victims burned, human heads and limbs dispersed in public places. Mass burials, arson attacks, mass executions, open street fighting, and other forms of high-intensity violence became regular occurrences during the most intense years of the conflict.

OCGs use extreme violence against their rivals, often as a way to send a message or to cause fear in the society. According to an independent tally by the Mexican newspaper *Reforma*, the number of victims of homicide showing signs of torture and decapitation increased dramatically between 2008 and 2012, with more than 4,000 victims of torture and almost two thousand decapitated (increases of 190 percent and 260 percent respectively). The percentage of bodies left with a "narco-message" directed to government officials or rival cartels also grew by almost 220 percent to a total of 3,117 during the same period. Such brutality has been interpreted as an attempt to intimidate rival cartels and public security forces or as a way to send messages (Molzahn, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2013).

Features of violence amidst the drug war crisis have also included forms of SGV against members of OCGs and the citizenry through the use of torture or forced disappearances. Mexico registered a staggering increase in the number of complaints of human rights abuses after President Calderón took office and stepped up the deployment of troops throughout the country. In 2007 the CNDH registered 367 complaints against the Mexican Army, but in 2008 the number escalated to 1,230, and went on to reach 1,626 in 2011 (Daly, Heinle, and Shirk 2012).

4.4 The Victims of Violence Associated with Organised Crime

In Mexico, the majority of victims are still believed to be persons with ties to OC. However, this assumption is complicated and even dangerous since in most cases a proper investigation has not been initiated or concluded, and most cases are neither reported nor investigated. Inef-

34 Beittel (2013) suggests that such organization adapted and transformed themselves "from hierarchical and vertical organizations to become more multi-nodal and horizontal in their structure … [some adopting] … a more decentralized and networked model with independent cell-like structures that made it harder for law enforcement to dismantle" (33).

35 The Mexican government has since tried to incorporate such groups into local and federal law enforcement agencies, but at the same has systematically arrested some of their leaders for violations of federal laws (such as possessing military-grade weaponry). For more details on the *autodefensas* see: Heinle, Molzahn, and Shirk (2015).

fective actions by the state leave substantial lack of information, and thus a larger number of unknown victims; therefore no classification can be properly assigned to them. Nonetheless, data from government tallies of OC-style killings suggest that at least 90 percent of the victims are presumed to have some level of connection with OC (SEGOB 2013).

However, OC-related violence has also targeted high-profile public officials and other prominent figures, such as forty-five mayors or former mayors from various municipalities and seventy-four journalists and media workers killed between 2006 and 2012 (Justice in Mexico Project 2014).[36] Likewise, from 2008 thorough 2012, at least 2,700 police and members of the armed forces were killed – 2,539 members of various police forces and 204 members of the military (Molzahn, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2013).

Still, there are many gaps in the data on the victims of violence associated with OC. Both government and independent data exclude finer details that would lend a better understanding of violent crime. For example, there is no information about the authorship of killings, making it impossible to determine whether the victims were killed by the military or the police, or in clashes between OCGs.[37] Additionally, there are still many missing persons whose fate remains unknown.[38] Such blanks in information leave officials, experts, and the public with an incomplete picture of the violence, thus impeding a more accurate diagnosis of the problem and its possible solutions.

Therefore, the particular case of Mexico does not have clear victims or perpetrators. On the one hand, OCG members commit violence against rivals, law enforcement agents, and/or citizens; on the other, OCG members and their families are often victims of forced disappearances, torture, and/or extrajudicial executions conducted by law enforcement agencies and the military. In response to the state's inability to tame violence, civil society has taken up arms to form vigilante groups and community police forces to protect communities against OCGs, although they occasionally also target public officials. Meanwhile, OCGs frequently clash with vigilante groups, which in turn may find themselves persecuted by the authorities like any other OCG. Moreover, the number of complaints of violations of human rights by security forces in charge of combating organised crime has increased dramatically, in most cases targeting suspect criminals and innocents indiscriminately. Sadly, in many of these occurrences, citizen bystanders, undocumented migrants, minors, and other populations not related to the conflicts have been injured or killed. It is therefore clear that the case of Mexico blurs the lines of the traditional concept of a victim.

5. Conclusions

There is no single narrative about the violence in Mexico. Rather than defining the situation, it is essential to understand the different "violences" converging simultaneously, some of them connected and some of them not, some solvable and some not. Government actions significantly contributed to the rise in violence and conflicts throughout the country, though other actors played an even stronger role in the development of the series of conflicts. The dramatic increase in the number of intentional homicides in Mexico from 2007 to 2012 occurred in a context of actions carried out by the government to combat OC while OCGs battled to control territories and markets.

Mexico's reality is still plagued by violence. Even though the trajectory of violence appeared to reverse by 2012, OCGs still pose a significant problem; and even if the rate of homicides appears to have decreased, other crimes such as extortion and kidnapping are increasing (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014).

36 The phenomenon of homicides of mayors and former mayors is significant because as Mexico enjoys much greater political pluralism, and significant decentralization, the dynamics among OCGs have changed in ways that contribute to greater competition for influence at both the national and sub-national level (Shirk 2010). Competition for influence leads to corruption, and in many cases to killings of officials who resist the interests of OCGs.

37 As Van Dijk (2008) suggests, the number of homicides not cleared is a particular corollary of organised crime.

38 A widely cited estimate suggests more than twenty thousand persons missing from 2006 through 2012 (Heinle, Rodríguez, and Shirk 2014), yet it is still impossible to calculate the total number.

Furthermore, the situation started to evolve significantly in 2013. Following election of President Enrique Peña Nieto, which marked the return to power of the hegemonic party of the twentieth century, the PRI, geographical dispersion continued to be one of the most predominant features of the violence in Mexico, entering into territories that did not suffer from it in the past, but most strikingly returning to regions that were considered to have been pacified by the government, such as Ciudad Juárez or Tijuana. The network of violence however, reached new dimensions when the citizenry felt the need to take action by creating vigilante and self-defence groups, fighting to reduce the influence of OC in various regions in the states of Michoacán and Guerrero.

Certainly, violence in Mexico is not mainly state-driven. Several groups become victims at different times and under different circumstances. In cases like this, participation does not follow a clear pattern; motives include profit, social status, or a simple *modus vivendi*. There are not defined groups, and the line between victim and perpetrator blurs. Due to its features and intensity, its different types, and the participation of different actors and groups over time, in Mexico, violence associated with OC became participatory and multipolar.

The participatory character means that violence is not necessarily universal, and the participation is extensive and diverse, with different groups, different objectives, creating a network of violence. As we have seen, participation in violence ranges from the state to OCGs and even the civilian population. Causes for this participation are multiple, but some of the main factors are – though maybe not limited to:

a) The inner dynamics of OCGs, characterised by competition for markets, territories or feuds, personal rivalries, and internal fractures (Edmonds-Poli and Shirk 2012, 262);
b) Changes in the equilibrium of political power, mainly due to the reorganisation of public security institutions, and political alternation that generates new regional power realms (Astorga and Shirk 2010, 40);
c) Inner dynamics of domestic illicit markets (Ríos 2013); and
d) The context of shifts in the global geography of drug consumption, and changes in trafficking routes for creating new access to emerging markets (Sánchez 2012).

Furthermore, under certain conditions and environments, violence becomes multipolar insofar as various groups become simultaneous victims and perpetrators of massive physical violence. Often these environments are linked closely to forced disappearances, torture, and weapons and drug trafficking, and involve both military and paramilitary groups (Karstedt 2012). "Mass participation in these events spreads across the boundaries of different groups and blurs the lines between different types of involvement and non-involvement, as well as between the victimized and the persecuting groups" (500). Thus, given the changes in the nature of mass atrocity events, conceptualizations and perspectives have shifted.

Mexico's policies against OC have been unsuccessful, and simultaneously ineffective in addressing the social dimensions of violence and criminality as a whole. Despite the apparent downward trend in homicides, there has not been a reduction in insecurity and violence; moreover the country is experiencing a rise in other types of crimes. Thus it is fundamental to acknowledge that there are no effective general and short-term solutions to the web of violence in Mexico, although some of it could indeed be solvable. Each "violence" in this network follows a different logic, and thus any state and civil society response can only address part of the problem; moreover, any response could even escalate or generate more problems, as has been seen in Mexico. Hence, efforts are needed to lead current and future security policies to address the situation from a different perspective, considering the different actors, the different "violences" and their motifs independently, but comprehensively.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016147
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Violent Caracas: Understanding Violence and Homicide in Contemporary Venezuela

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

Violent Caracas: Understanding Violence and Homicide in Contemporary Venezuela

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Venezuela has recently experienced soaring rates of violent crime, in particular homicides; Caracas presently ranks among the cities with highest homicide rates globally. This article moves beyond established explanations and suggests an alternative approach to the problem of homicide in contemporary Venezuela. In particular, it explores political and institutional causes of violence in a polarized society under the government of Hugo Chávez (1999–2013) and his Bolivarian Revolution. The research focuses on the city of Caracas, as the epicenter of the political life of the country with highest levels of socio-economic segregation, urban poverty, and homicide. Both the city and the country are "paradoxical" cases, as violence soared while programs addressing social inequality, exclusion and poverty were quite successful. The results show that political polarization during the Bolivarian Revolution, institutional weakening, delegitimization of civilian security forces, and absence of a coherent public security policy were more closely linked than social exclusion to homicidal violence.

1. Homicidal Violence in Venezuela and Caracas

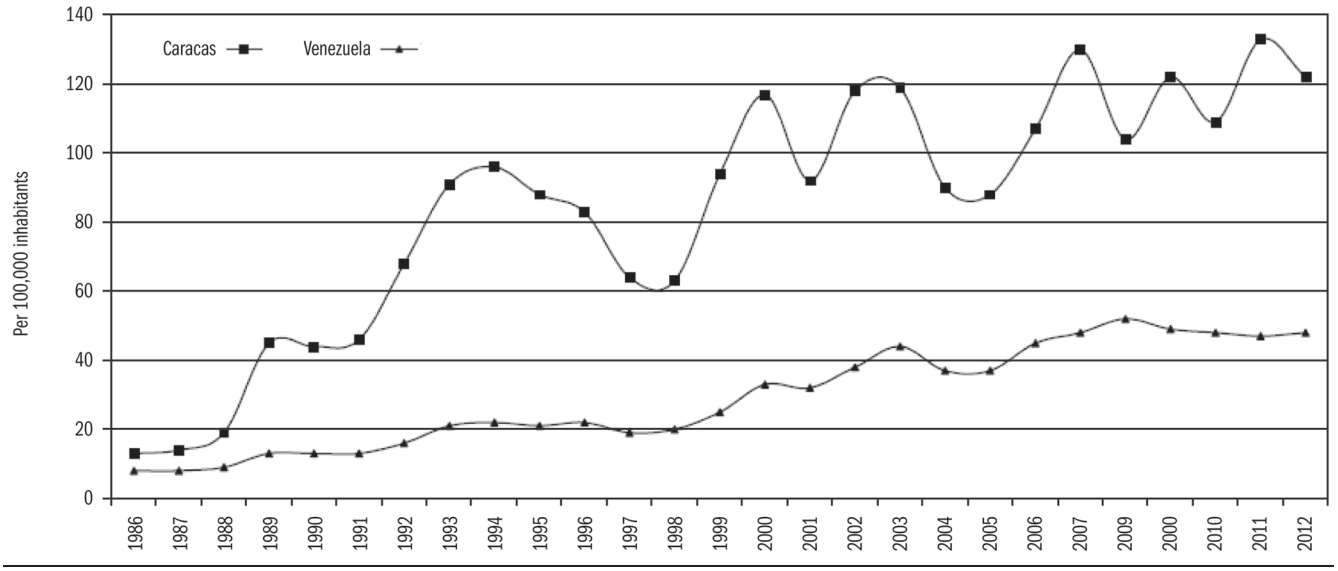
Caracas is one of the three most dangerous and violent cities in the world based on crime and homicide rates, according to media reports and international and non-governmental organizations (for example, UNODC 2014, WHO 2012). In 2012 the homicide rate in the Venezuelan capital was 122 per 100,000 inhabitants,[1] over twenty times the global average of 6.2 (UNODC 2014, 12). The homicide rate in the Metropolitan District of Caracas was three times the national rate, which recorded 48 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants for the same year (see Figure 1).[2] From 1986 to 2012, homicides in Caracas increased by 838 percent, while during the same period the national rate rose by 500 percent. The homicide rate in Caracas is the highest in the country, and in general homicidal violence is mainly concentrated in the most urbanized and industrialized states located in the north-central part of the country: Capital District, Miranda, Vargas, Carabobo, and Aragua (see Figure 2). Caracas thus epitomizes a process of relentlessly increasing violence that Venezuela has experienced over the past decade.

The author would like to thank the reviewers and particularly the focus section editor, Professor Susanne Karstedt, for valuable comments and support.

1 Measuring homicidal violence in Venezuela is challenging. On the one hand, since 2006 no systematic and disaggregated official data on homicide and violence statistics have been published by any institution within the Venezuelan government. On the other, most of the data provided by private sources cannot be relied on as they lack information on sources and measurement. Given this, the paper is based mainly on carefully selected data from non-governmental and international organizations, as well as media reports.

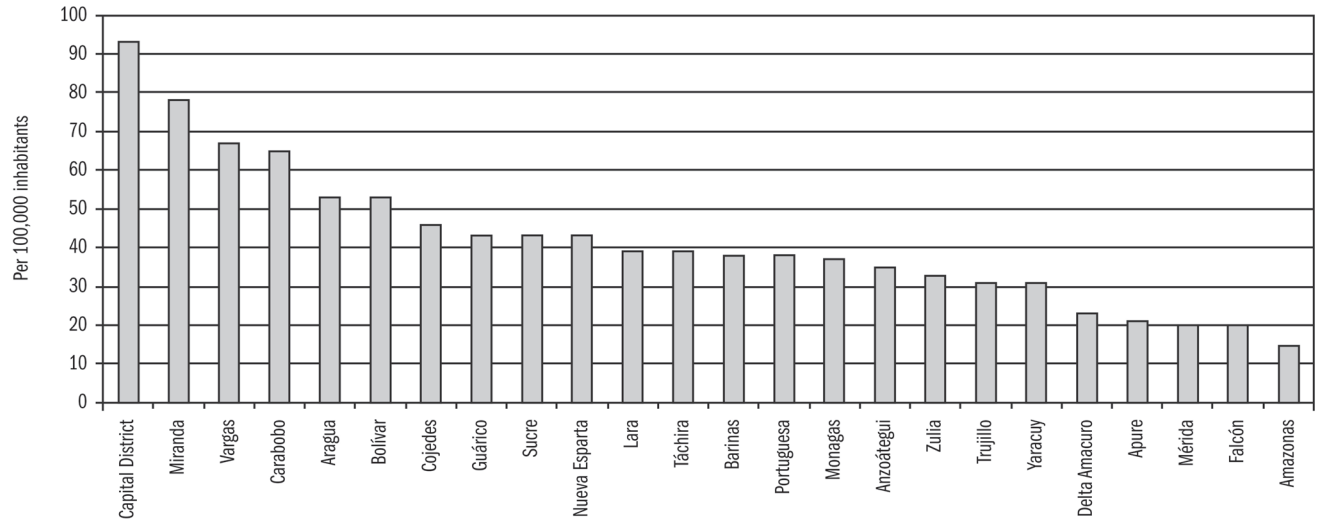
2 The Metropolitan District of Caracas is home to 3.25 million people and comprises the Capital District (and its only administrative division, the Libertador Bolivarian Municipality) plus four municipalities of the neighboring Miranda State (Chacao, Baruta, Sucre, and El Hatillo). In contrast, the Metropolitan Area of Caracas or "Greater Caracas" is not an official administrative entity, but a conurbation including adjacent municipalities, home to most of the population economically and socially involved in the capital city. This area is comprised of the Metropolitan District of Caracas itself, and the communities Guarenas, Guatire, Altos Mirandinos, and Valles del Tuy. "Greater Caracas" is home to 5.3 million people, approximately 18% of the Venezuelan population.

Figure 1: Homicide rates in Venezuela and in the Metropolitan District of Caracas (1986–2012)



Source: Based on data from Sanjuán (2008, 152) and Cedeño (2013, 3), and the Statistics Division of the Scientific, Penal and, Criminal Investigative Police; own computations.

Figure 2: Homicide rates in Venezuelan federal states, 2011



Source: Paz Activa Asociación Civil (2012, 4); own computation.

Figure 2 shows that the homicide rate in Caracas exceeds all other states, but is also mirrored by neighboring Miranda thus testifying to the violence in the greater metropolitan area of Caracas. The high levels of violence in Venezuela and in particular Caracas defy general notions of and explanations for violence in Latin America. As Kasang (2014, 201) points out, "the Venezuelan capital is particularly notable since local violence cannot be predominantly attributed to the illicit drug trade and cartel wars that consume Mexico, nor is it due to the civil conflict

and gang violence that has largely characterized Central America since the 1990s." Nor has Venezuela seen the civil conflicts and prolonged armed confrontation between government forces and non-state groups witnessed in neighboring Colombia. Venezuela's increase in lethal violence is exceptional even within the Latin American context, and the fact that five of its cities were among the fifty most violent cities in the world in 2012 speaks to both the high level of violence in the country and its concentration in its major cities (see Table 1).

This paper aims at unravelling this process through a case study of Caracas. Caracas represents and epitomizes this process for several reasons: It is "the symbolic center of the state, the political capital and the economic center as well as the site where urban poverty is most concentrated, where urban segregation most clearly maps class and political divisions, and where the incidence of violence is the highest" (Humphrey and Valverde 2013, 148–49). However, the capital city also constitutes an exceptional case, since no other city in Venezuela reports such high figures for crime and homicide (see Table 1). In the 2012 ranking of the world's most violent cities by homicide rate, published by the NGO Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y la Justicia Penal, Caracas ranks third, topped only by San Pedro Sula (Honduras) and Acapulco (Mexico). Moreover, five of the world's fifty most violent cities are Venezuelan. The paper starts with an in-depth description of violence in Caracas. It then moves on to the exploration of the drivers behind the violence, with a focus on political and institutional processes. It concludes with an assessment of these processes in the development of violence in Caracas and Venezuela.

Table 1: Ranking of Venezuelan cities among the fifty cities with highest homicide rates globally in 2012

Place	City	Federal state	Population	Number of homicides	Homicide rate per 100,000
3rd	Caracas	Capital District/Miranda	3,247,971	3,973	122.32
9th	Barquisimeto	Lara	1,120,718	804	71.74
20th	Ciudad Guayana	Bolívar	1,050,283	578	55.03
31st	Valencia	Carabobo	2,227,165	977	43.87
39th	Maracaibo	Zulia	2,212,040	784	35.44

Source: Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad Pública y la Justicia Penal (2013, 16–17); own computations.

2. Violence in Caracas: Scope, Distribution, and Characteristics

Zubillaga (2013) characterizes homicidal violence in Venezuela as urban, social, and armed. It is an urban phenomenon because it occurs mainly in the most industrialized and populous cities, where most of the wealth and economic growth are concentrated. Thus, one of the origins of homicidal violence in Caracas might be found in the accelerated and unplanned urban growth caused by the oil boom in the mid-twentieth century.[3] This is what caused the emergence of the *barrios*, the large shantytown settlements at the margins of rich neighborhoods, particularly in the western and eastern parts of the city, and in peripheral areas. As Table 2 shows, homicidal violence in Caracas is mostly concentrated in these impoverished and overpopulated marginal districts, such as the municipalities of Sucre and Libertador. In contrast, Chacao and El Hatillo, where most of the middle- and upper-class neighborhoods are located, account for less than 1 percent of the total of nearly 4,000 homicides.

Violence in Venezuela can be described as intra-class crime, as it is mostly committed among the middle- and lower-class citizens (Antillano 2014, 258). According to available data from the National Institute of Statistics (2010, 70), 56.5 percent of all homicide victims in Caracas

3 In 1950 the Venezuelan population was 46.8% urban, increasing to 93.6% sixty years later (Briceño-León 2007; ECLAC 2012).

come from social stratum D, which is over-represented, whilst 27.2 percent are from stratum E.[4] This reflects the fact that in Caracas 83.7 percent of the victims are from the two lowest socio-economic groups. The majority of them lived in the municipalities of Libertador and Sucre and, as Table 2 shows, 97 percent of all homicides occur in the two poorest municipalities of Caracas, where 85 percent of its citizens live.

Table 2: Homicides by municipality in the Metropolitan District of Caracas, 2012

Municipality	Number of homicides	% of the total in Caracas	Population	Homicide rate per 100,000
Libertador	3,185	80.17	2,114,871	151
Sucre	679	17.09	665,203	102
Baruta	83	2.09	323,758	26
Chacao	14	0.35	71,244	19
El Hatillo	12	0.30	72,895	17
Total	3,973	100	3,247,971	122

Source: Cedeño (2013, 4); based on information from the Statistics Division of the Scientific, Penal and Criminal Investigative Police.

Homicides in Caracas are committed mainly with firearms. According to data for 2011, 91 percent of all homicides were committed with guns, and 5 percent with bladed weapons (OMSC 2012, 22). The exponential growth in homicide rates in the last two decades has coincided with an increase in brutality (Zubillaga 2013). Victims were shot multiple times in public during daylight; 30 percent of all victims murdered with firearms were shot more than six times, and 16 percent received more than eleven gunshots (OMSC 2012, 23).

A further characteristic element of homicidal violence in Caracas is that it involves mainly young men both as victims and perpetrators. In this respect, Caracas does not differ from other cities in Latin America and the Global South (UNODC 2014, 22–28). In 2011 93 percent of victims were male, of which the 15–24 age group represented more than 40 percent, and together with the 25–44 age-group accounted for almost 80 percent of all victims (see Table 3). Among the female victims, 66 percent were between 15 and 44 years old. Thus, the average age of homicide victims in Caracas is around twenty-eight years (Magallanes 2010, 164).

Table 3: Homicide victims in the Metropolitan District of Caracas, 2011: Gender and age

Age range	Gender (%)			Total (%)
	Male	Female	No data	
0 – 14	1.27	0.64	0.07	1.98
15 – 24	39.38	1.91	0.21	41.50
25 – 44	35.78	2.40	0	38.18
45 – 64	6.56	0.85	0	7.41
65+	2.75	0.49	0	3.25
No data	7.48	0.21	0	7.69
Total	93.23	6.49	0.28	100

Source: OMSC (2012, 20).

In Caracas during 2011, lethal violence was related to other types of crimes, as Table 4 demonstrates. Almost 40 percent of cases involved armed robberies, in particular when victims struggled or resisted. Confrontations between slumlords (gang leaders who control a neighborhood/shantytown) and their gangs, and quarrels and revenge attacks *(las culebras)* were responsible for 24 percent of murders.[5] Police officers

4 Social stratification in Venezuela is classified by the National Institute of Statistics (2010) in four groups (A-B, C, D, and E); stratum A-B represents the upper-middle class and 2 percent of the population, stratum C typical middle class (15 percent of the population), stratum D the lower class (37 percent), and E the poor (46 percent). This classification is based on variables such as occupation and education level of the household head and his/her partner, main source of family income, housing conditions, and neighborhood context like ease of access, security level, urbanization, proximity to health services, etc.).

are also targets of homicidal violence. According to media reports, 106 public security employees were murdered in Greater Caracas in 2012, an increase of 26 percent over 2011, year in which 84 law enforcement agents were killed (*El Universal* 2014a). Women are mostly victims of intra-familial and domestic violence, which accounts for 22.7 percent of victims, ten times more than male victims. They are also 2.5 times more often victims of stray bullets than men. However, the lack of official and disaggregated statistics and cause of death records leaves almost 50 percent unaccounted for. In figures from the NGO Venezuelan Prisons Observatory, "no data" includes the number of prison inmates murdered (mainly during prison riots), which accounted for 560 deaths in 2011, and 591 in 2012 (OVP 2013, 10).

Table 4: Contexts of lethal violence: Male and female homicide victims in the Metropolitan District of Caracas, 2011

Context	Gender of victim (%)		Total (%)
	Male	Female	
No information	44.36	28.26	43.47
Information available	55.64	71.74	56.53
Context	Male	Female	
– Robbery	40.70	24.24	39.94
– Settling scores	24.77	15.15	23.96
– Stray bullet	9.94	25.76	11.23
– Clashes with police	7.62	0	6.99
– Gang clashes	1.37	1.52	1.37
– Hired assassins	1.10	0	0.99
– Intra-familial violence	1.36	7.57	1.87
– Partner or ex-partner	0.68	15.15	1.87
– Other	11.84	10.61	11.73
Total contexts	100	100	100

Source: OMSC (2012, 21), own computations.

Violence and insecurity in Caracas also result from the high prevalence of other types of violent crime. According to the 2009 National Survey of Victimization and Perception of Public Safety, robberies represented 70 percent of all crime incidents, followed by personal injury and threats (see Table 5). On average, seven out of ten robberies in the Metropolitan Area of Caracas are committed by armed motorcyclists, mainly during rush hour in traffic jams on the main traffic arteries. This modus operandi also applies to homicide with six out of ten incidents, and contract killings – known as *sicariatos* – with nine out of ten incidents (*El Universal* 2015, *Últimas Noticias* 2015). Other violent crimes also increased over recent years, i.e. kidnappings in the form of "express kidnapping", where the victim is just temporarily taken away just for few hours and released after the payment of a ransom in cash by family members (Briceño-León 2007, 562). The public sees street criminals (55.1 percent) and youth gangs (16.9 percent) as the main perpetrators of crime. Interestingly, police and members of the National Guard rank third as perpetrators (4 percent) (National Institute of Statistics 2010, 119).

Table 5: Types of crime in the Metropolitan District of Caracas, 2009

Crime	Total	Percentage
Homicide	8,047	1.82
Threat of violence	14,224	3.21
Assault	14,798	3.34
Sexual assault	1,483	0.33
Robbery	308,971	69.79
Kidnapping	7,017	1.59
Extortion	1,967	0.44
Corruption	3,713	0.84
Burglary	69,716	15.75
Fraud	12,765	2.88
Total	442,701	100

Source: National Institute of Statistics (2010, 115).

Even against the background of high homicide rates in the Western hemisphere, Caracas (and in fact Venezuela with second place) stand out. Latin America and the Caribbean is the world's most violent region in terms of intentional homicides, with twenty-nine of the region's thirty-three independent countries exceeding the global average in 2012; the highest rates are found in Central American and Caribbean countries (see Table 6). In 2012 Latin America

5 *La culebra* – the snake – is Venezuelan slang referring to antagonisms between male youth, particularly settling of scores or struggles for influence or respect, which are commonly solved through direct physical confrontation (Zubillaga 2008).

accounted for 36 percent of all deaths by homicidal violence in the world (equivalent to 437,000 murders) (UNODC 2014, 11). The main causes of homicide in the region are criminal activities, organized crime, and gang warfare.

Table 6: Homicides in Latin American and Caribbean countries in 2012

Country	Rate per 100,000	Count
Honduras	90.4	7,172
Venezuela	53.7	16,072
Belize	44.7	145
El Salvador	41.2	2,594
Guatemala	39.9	6,025
Jamaica	39.3	1,087
Saint Kitts and Nevis	33.6	18
Colombia	30.8	14,670
Bahamas	29.8	111
Trinidad and Tobago	28.3	379
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	25.6	28
Brazil	25.2	50,108
Dominican Republic	22.1	2,268
Saint Lucia	21.6	39
Mexico	21.5	26,037
Dominica (2010 data)	21.1	15
Panama	17.2	654
Guyana	17.0	135
Grenada	13.3	14
Ecuador	12.4	1,924
Bolivia	12.1	1,270
Nicaragua	11.3	675
Antigua and Barbuda	11.2	10
Haiti	10.2	1,033
Paraguay	9.7	649
Peru	9.6	2,865
Costa Rica	8.5	407
Uruguay	7.9	267
Barbados	7.4	21
Global average homicide rate: 6.2 per 100,000 inhabitants		
Surinam	6.1	33
Argentina (2010 data)	5.5	2,237
Cuba	4.2	477
Chile	3.1	550

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2014, 125–27), own computations.

Even against the backdrop of high rates of violence in the region, Venezuela and in particular Caracas stand out as a kind of "paradox," as Zubillaga (2013) termed it. Homicide rates have soared unprecedentedly despite undeniable improvements in the socio-economic situation, and this increase coincided in particular with declining social inequality during the fourteen years of Chávez's presidency. Understanding the true causes of urban violence in Caracas requires a critical review of the political and institutional context of contemporary Venezuela. For this reason, the period covered by this study focuses on the changes under the left-wing political movement led by President Hugo Chávez (1999–2013) and his successor, Nicolás Maduro (since 2013), the so called Bolivarian Revolution.[6]

According to Venezuelan historiography, the Bolivarian Revolution ended forty years of elite domination (1958–1998), with parliamentary democracy under the rule of the social-democratic party Democratic Action and the social-Christian Independent Political Electoral Organization Committee (COPEI, by its Spanish acronym). The Bolivarian Revolution project essentially aims to build a "twenty-first century socialism," characterized by direct and participatory democracy in the management of public affairs and a strong social welfare state. In terms of economic policies it involves the promotion of a mixed economy with state control over key industries and the support of cooperatives and so-called "social enterprises" (*Proyecto Nacional Simón Bolívar: Primer Plan Socialista para el Desarrollo Económico y Social de la Nación 2007–2013*, 2007). The question arises how this policy might have contributed to the increase of violence in the country and Caracas.

3. Inequality, Social Exclusion, and Violent Crime in Caracas

Research on cross-national determinants of homicide rates has found that one of the main causal determinants of levels of lethal violence is social inequality and economic discrimination (Messner 1989, Sun et al 2011). As inequality engenders patterns of exclusion, exacerbates personal frustrations, and sharpens disparities among social groups,

6 The adjective "Bolivarian" refers to Simón Bolívar (1783–1830), military strategist and political leader born in Caracas and liberator of the present-day territories of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia from Spanish colonial rule.

violent conflicts between individuals and groups arise (Chamlin and Cochran 2006). In its extreme forms, inequality implies marginalization of parts of the population who are excluded from opportunities to enjoy the benefits provided by the social order, or from establishing productive channels of communication, interaction, and exchange within the system of a society. Exclusion from economic resources leads to the denial of fundamental rights like education, health, access to public services, and political participation (Schroer 2004). Within this framework violence is seen as the consequence of the structural imbalance between potentially available and actual capabilities and opportunities for groups of individuals to realize their potential and standards of living; Galtung (1969) has termed this as "structural violence" built into the social and economic structure of a society.

The Chávez government prioritized reducing social inequality as a way to improve citizens' security, as a public policy that Humphrey and Valverde (2013, 155) call the "Bolivarian urban security model." This included a policy of redistributing oil revenues through a diverse range of anti-poverty and social welfare programs targeted mainly toward the lower-income strata of the population, with the aim of reversing the negative consequences of the neoliberal economic restructuring programs adopted during the 1990s; these had increased poverty and widened the social divide. The cornerstone of the Bolivarian urban security model were the *misiones* (social missions), a range of nationwide social welfare programs launched from 2003, managed directly by central government and funded by revenues from the oil state company, Petroleum of Venezuela S.A (PDVSA). To name some examples, the *Misión Barrio Adentro* (mission inside the neighborhood) and the *Misión Mercal* (mission market of food) stand out in particular. The former addresses health care needs, with Cuban and Venezuelan doctors providing medical treatment in poor quarters, while the latter focuses on "attending to basic alimentation needs through the provision of subsidised food in government-sponsored cooperatives" (Daguerre 2011, 842). Over a period of ten years, forty-two different social missions were launched, in areas including education and vocational training, land reform, housing, employment, indigenous rights, culture, environment, and social enterprises, representing a total investment of approximately US$71 billion (*Últimas Noticias* 2013, 13–14).

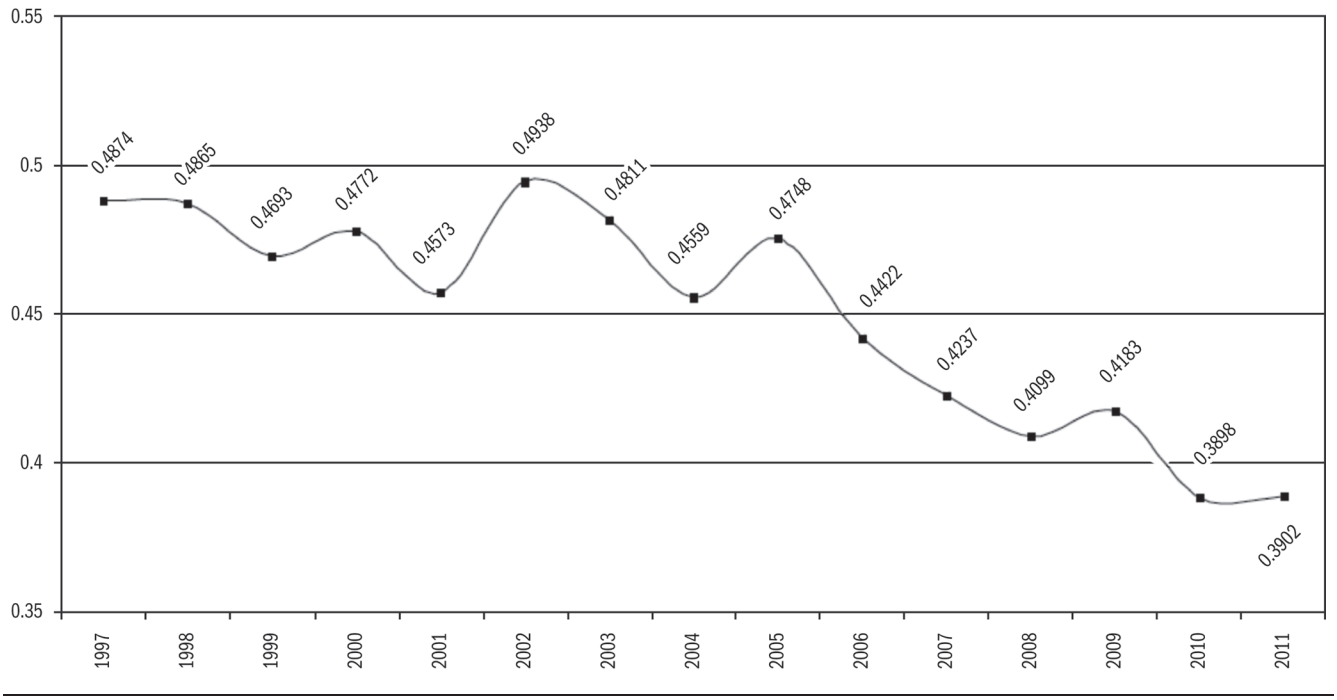
The improvement in living standards in Venezuela under the Chávez government has been internationally recognized in several occasions by institutions like the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, mainly because of the outstanding results of the social missions in terms of poverty reduction, employment rate, health assistance, and literacy (see Table 7). The social missions worked as an effective fast-track poverty alleviation strategy, since they were grounded in a multi-dimensional approach and targeted several dimensions at once (Daguerre 2011, 841). Chávez's social policy seemingly contributed to a significant reduction in social inequality, according to the Gini index (see Figure 3). Over the course of eight years of implementation of social missions, the Gini index fell from 0.48 in 2003 to 0.39 in 2011, which means that inequality gap in Venezuelan society was reduced by one fifth.

Table 7: Key social indicators for Venezuela, 1999–2012

Indicator	1999/2002	2011/2012
Population in poverty	49.4%	23.9%
Population in extreme poverty	21.7%	9.7%
Unemployment rate	13.4%	7.0%
Literacy rate	93.0%	98.5%
Net enrollment in secondary education	50.9%	78.2%
Gross enrollment rate in tertiary education	28.3%	78.1%
Social expenditure, as proportion of GDP	8.8%	19.7%

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2012), own computation and compilation.

Figure 3: Gini index in Venezuela, 1997–2011



Source: National Institute of Statistics (2011, 8); own computation.

However, while the indicators in Table 7 demonstrate an improvement in basic living conditions of the most vulnerable parts of the population between 1999 and 2012, during the same time period homicidal violence has increased, and in exactly the social groups that most benefited from such programs. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) notes, in its *Human Development Report 2013*, that in some cases "there is a small negative correlation between homicides rates and HDI [Human Development Index] values" (UNDP 2013, 39), meaning that as countries improve on the Human Development Index their homicide rates increase. Venezuela is among these few exceptional cases, with a high level of human development and a rank of 71 out of 186 selected countries. There are two possible explanations for this negative correlation in the case of Venezuela: First, efforts to promote social inclusion have not been effective in delivering social change because they are in essence welfare programs with a strongly paternalistic approach. This means that the Chávez government did not really eradicate the core of structural violence in Venezuelan society, but merely replaced it with an assistance-based policy and "a populist mode of discretionary spending" (Hawkins 2013, 230). Although several of these schemes formed the basis of People's Power in the participatory democracy promoted by the Bolivarian Revolution, most of them actually functioned with high levels of dependency and corporate patterns in state-society interactions.

Second, the focus on social exclusion in the Chávez government's "Bolivarian urban security model" more generally ignored the groups most involved in violence, young men aged between 15 and 24 from the poorest neighborhoods and shantytowns. The Venezuelan labor market offers few incentives and very limited opportunities for social advancement to this group of unskilled workers, and many young people "experience intense frustration with obstacles to social mobility, disparities in the quality of education, and lack of job prospects" (Berkman 2007, 17). On the one hand, the Chávez government designed special programs to offer equal opportunities and access to the educational system to adolescents

from the *barrios*. In 2003, three initiatives were launched in the educational field; the Missions Robinson, Ribas, and Sucre offered literacy programs and technical training for adults at the three levels of schooling – primary, secondary, and higher education. On the other hand, the programs aiming at facilitating access to the labor market, such as the *Misión Vuelvan Caras* (Mission Turn Faces) seem to have failed in their expected goals: "individuals were mainly attracted by the monthly allowance and because Vuelvan Caras did not create a network of economically sustainable cooperatives or social enterprises" (Daguerre 2011, 842). Programs for cultural and sport activities for young people that explicitly targeted violent behavior were only launched very recently in 2013, with the *Movimiento por la Paz y por la Vida* (Movement for Peace and Life) initiated by Chávez's successor, President Nicolás Maduro. It was piloted in the poor neighborhoods of Caracas most affected by homicidal violence, and aimed at building sport facilities in five of the nineteen cities with the highest crime rates (*El Universal* 2013a).

The economic policies of the Bolivarian Revolution did not come without costs, in particular when the oil price plunged; this left Venezuela in a critical economic situation which has continued to worsen. The exchange controls in force since 2003 have produced an artificial valuation of the national currency, hardly concealed price speculation, and an accumulated inflation of around 1,000 percent compared to 1999 (*El Mundo* 2013). For citizens of Caracas, costs of living have hugely increased as did local price inflation, making it the sixth most expensive city in the world (*The Economist* 2014). Did the mounting economic crisis contribute to the violence? One indicator is the link between the availability and cost of "luxury goods" and the number of robberies in Caracas. As already mentioned, robberies represent 69.7 percent of all crimes committed in the capital city, with a very high rate of 5,076 assaults per 100,000 inhabitants (National Institute of Statistics 2010, 67). About 40 percent of all armed robberies target mobile phones, and offenders are linked to black markets and organized crime networks (*El Universal* 2014b).

4. Political and Institutional Causes of Homicidal Violence in Caracas

As the socio-economic contexts give few clues as to why violence rose in this way, we now turn to the political and institutional context created by the Bolivarian Revolution. Several authors (Álvarez 2010; Crespo 2006; Boeckh 2011; Humphrey and Valverde 2013; Jácome 2011) suggest exploring the links between violence and the complex process of political, social, and economic transformations taking place in Venezuela since the mid-eighties, and in particular this article reviews the interrelation between the mounting homicide rates and the changes in the political-institutional system that the Bolivarian Revolution set in motion. During the Chávez's government, radical changes in the social structure of the country ensued from the attempt to move from a capitalist to a socialist economy and society. These changes weakened basic rules of social life and community cohesion through political polarization and thus increased levels of tension and hostility among the population.

During the fourteen years of Chávez's presidency, Venezuelan society was increasingly divided into two distinct and irreconcilable groups: one supported the revolutionary process – known as *chavistas* – and one in opposition, called pejoratively *escuálidos* – "the thin ones". This originally political polarization fueled antagonism between social classes, as it was associated with stereotyping and derogatory remarks by Chávez in his public speeches. He and his followers portrayed the Bolivarian Revolution as a decisive class struggle, in which the people – understood just as the poorest classes – were called "to defeat" the oligarchy, a notion that included the middle and upper classes (García-Guadilla 2003). In addition, Chávez's military training and his personal political style of directly confronting his adversaries contributed to a large degree to an "advocacy of violence" (Jácome 2011) in the political arena and beyond.

In the everyday life of Caracas, this generated violence in two ways: first, it divided the city along the lines of territorialized political conflict; second, it increased the levels of physical violence during mass demonstrations. Today, Caracas is not only divided along the lines of socio-economic strata, but also along political allegiances, with zones of violent clashes between supporters and opponents. These include the *chavista* territory, composed of downtown and some of the poorest shantytowns located on the western margins of the city; and the opposition territory, in the east and southeast, where the upper and middle class neighborhoods are located (García-Guadilla

2003). Overlap in some areas which are not clearly assigned to one side or the other increases the possibility of conflict and physical confrontation. Thus both political groups clashed in these spaces, in particular during 2002/2003 when political tensions reached high levels.[7]

Political polarization has particularly affected the management of public security in the Metropolitan District of Caracas. It has led to institutional fragmentation of long-standing political alliances, incompetence, and incapacity to establish a coordinated security policy addressing the problem of urban violence across different levels of governance and all Caracas municipalities.[8] The capital city is "the heart of pro- and anti-Chávez divisions in Venezuela and in fact has two governments" (Gratius and Valença 2011, 13): the elected mayor is from the opposition party *Alianza Bravo Pueblo* – Fearless People's Alliance – while the head of the government of the Capital District was appointed by the president himself.[9] As a consequence, the political fragmentation has generated a lack of coordination among mayoralties and local law enforcement agencies. Moreover, it has severely affected the functioning of policing functions, often creating an institutional vacuum in which lawlessness and impunity could thrive in the absence of a properly functioning civilian police force.[10] This institutional vacuum came with a dissolution of the Metropolitan Police and the transfer of civilian policing functions to the National Guard, which as military police is a branch of the National Armed Forces (Birkbeck 2011). It comes as no surprise that the Venezuelan public, as outlined above, saw police and National Guard members as themselves highly involved in criminal activities.

Caracas has suffered particularly from weak governance in the security sector, due to these upheavals and changes in the organization and management of urban security. This resulted in failures to develop and implement a policy focusing on the particular local security needs of citizens. The National Commission for Police Reform started a comprehensive restructuring process of the country's 123 regional and municipal police bodies in 2006. The changes for Caracas included the merging of the five municipal police forces of the Metropolitan District of Caracas in 2009 under a unified command, the National Bolivarian Police. Another significant step was the creation of the Presidential Commission for Arms Control, Ammunitions, and Disarmament in May 2011; in June 2013 the Disarmament Law was adopted, which among other measures includes programs of voluntary surrender of small arms by gangs and other groups, without prosecution.

These changes coincided with a lack of stability and continuity in the state security apparatus. During the fourteen years of Chávez's presidency, twelve ministers of interior were appointed, who issued twenty-two plans for citizen security, with little continuity between them (*Últimas Noticias* 2013). Among these, the Integral Plan of Security Mission Caracas, launched in 2003, and the Safe Caracas Plan five years later addressed the security situation in the city. Many of the newly introduced policing strategies lasted less than a year; activities mainly included motorcycle patrols on the streets, roadblocks with heavily armed National Guard officers at hotspots, and early morning police raids in the shantytowns. Thus, security deteriorated in Caracas because of the lack of a coherent government security policy, but also due to the poor performance of the institutions responsible for the oversight and management of the whole criminal justice system. A high level of impunity for homicides is an indicator of widespread incompetence, inefficiency, and corruption in the system;

7 These clashes took place during or close to a coup d'état attempt in spring 2002 and a general strike between December 2002 and February 2003. They include an incident on April 11 when as yet unidentified snipers shot into a crowd of protesters causing nineteen casualties; an incident on December 6, when three civilians were killed and other twenty-eight wounded during an opposition rally. Due to the failure of police investigations, not all perpetrators have yet been identified.

8 Just one out of the five administrative divisions of Caracas, the Libertador Bolivarian Municipality, is under the rule of a mayor belonging to the ruling party, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela. The other four ones are governed by mayors from different opposition parties.

9 The post of Head of Government of the Capital District was created by presidential executive decree in 2009 as an additional and parallel authority to the municipalities.

10 As a result of the participation of police officers in the 2002 coup d'etat attempt and mounting reports of abuse of force by the police, the central government intervened and transferred oversight over the Metropolitan Police from the Mayor of Caracas to the Ministry of Interior (Gabaldón 2004, 71). Later, the Metropolitan Police was dismantled during the process of restructuring starting in 2008.

in 2003 just 6.9 percent of all homicide cases were duly investigated, solved, and closed. Notoriously high levels of distrust towards the police and justice system seriously impact on the level of reporting by the public, and only one third of all crimes (31.4 percent) are reported to the police; most of those surveyed said that "nothing would happen anyway even if the case went to court" (National Institute of Statistics 2010, 69).

As demonstrated by the transfer of civilian policing responsibilities to the National Guard (as a branch of the Armed Forces), Bolivarian Venezuela saw an increasing militarization of society and in the police service delivery. The Armed Forces (renamed National Bolivarian Armed Forces since 2007) were repeatedly called upon to intervene and act as guarantor and protector of the Revolution against domestic threats. Chávez's government also encouraged the establishment of armed pro-government militias – known as *colectivos* – as community-based defense units after the 2002 coup d'etat attempt. This strategy was aimed to promote civilian participation in the integral defense of the political process of the Revolution, in a sort of alliance between citizens and the military.[11] Some of these *colectivos* are paramilitary groups, purportedly armed by state security forces.[12] Groups like the *Colectivo La Piedrita*, *Tupamaros*, and *Grupo Carapaica* have publicly paraded their arsenals in the media, and reported links with high-ranking government officials or insurgent forces in neighboring Colombia. Like other militias on the continent, they act with little oversight; in Venezuela, they are blamed for violent assaults and murders of civilians during mass demonstrations, in particular during the wave of protests in February and April 2014 (*El Universal* 2014c). The strategy of installing pro-government militias has certainly counteracted any efforts to reduce the availability of firearms, and has certainly also increased membership of gangs and other illegal armed groups. Presently, the number of firearms in legal or illegal civilian possession is estimated at approximately eight million (Jácome 2011).

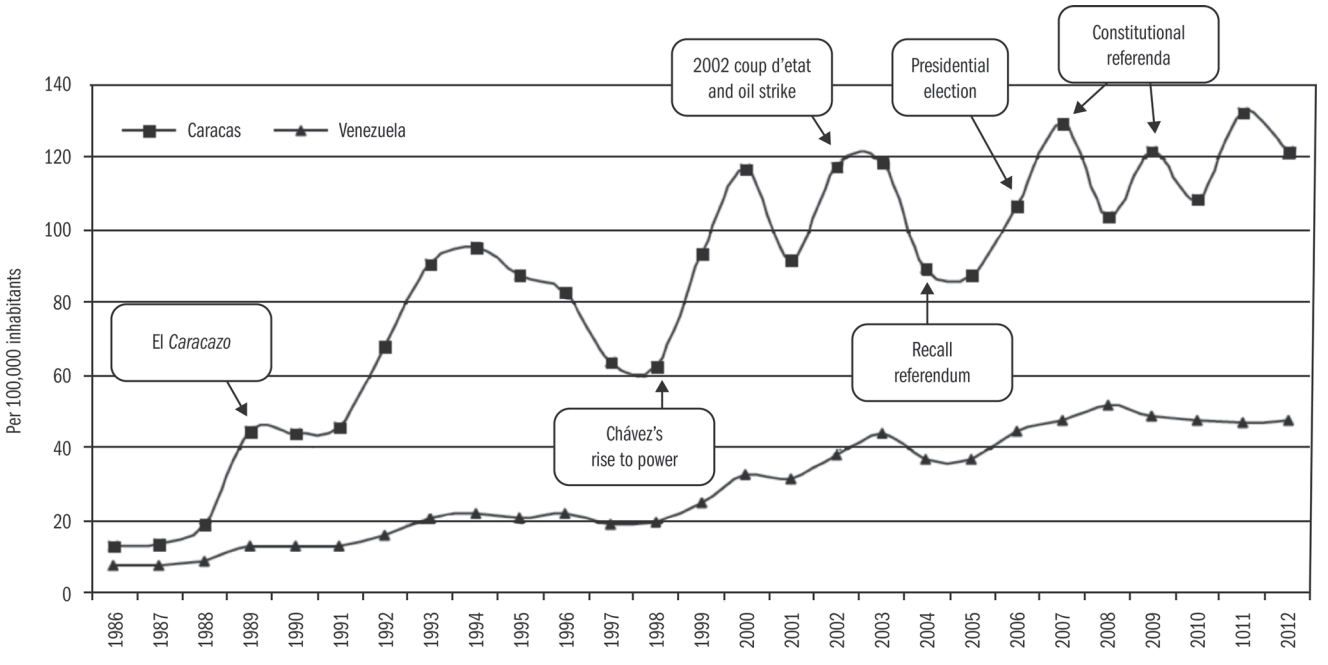
Furthermore, the Bolivarian Revolution followed a period of great political instability beginning with the February 1989 uprisings, known in Venezuelan historiography as *El Caracazo*. Nivette (2014, 103–105) suggests that in societies affected by periods of political crisis and loss of institutional and political legitimacy, social bonds are loosened and levels of crime and violence tend to rise as citizens withdraw compliance from institutions and rules: "What leads citizens to break from normative compliance and ignore obligations to violate moral rules and laws may be the *delegitimization* of authority. Legitimacy offers a direct link between the institutions that hold authority and demand obedience (in particular political institutions) and individual rule-breaking, crime and violence" (ibid, 106). Citizens' satisfaction with democracy in Venezuela is notably low with 49 percent satisfied, while 35 percent are not (Latinobarómetro Corporation 2010, 38). Venezuela ranks fourteenth on government approval out of eighteen polled countries in Latin America with 47 percent approving, 9 percent lower than the regional average. Political instability and polarization have created accelerating vicious circles of uncertainty and distrust of institutions, thus facilitating the legitimacy of violent crime and the use of violence. The positive correlation between political instability and higher homicide rates is examined by Chu and Tusalem (2013, 257), who state that "in societies with high levels of political instability, the institutionalization of violence becomes entrenched in the polity, causing citizens not to respect life vis-à-vis societies where political stability provides an opportunity for citizens to value the importance and significance of human life." In line with this, Álvarez (2010) points out that in periods of high political tension and social confrontation (such as during elections and institutional crises), homicide rates in Venezuela increased considerably. As Humphrey and Valverde (2013, 147–48) note: "Elections provoke fear because they involve the public mobilization of supporters in a polarized struggle for power between fiercely antagonistic national imaginaries and the specter of possible defeat."

11 Launched under the 2009 New Bolivarian Military Doctrine.

12 In October 2010, in his regular television Sunday broadcast, *Aló Presidente*, Chávez ordered the National Guard "to arm these militiamen." However, there is no official evidence to prove the armament of these groups by any state institution.

According to Álvarez (2010), the weakening and delegitimation of institutions increases violence throughout society, and not only in the political sphere. He compared homicide figures in Venezuela during the course of the mounting institutional crisis over two decades. Figure 4 shows that shortly before *El Caracazo* in 1989 homicide rates were already building, and have risen exponentially since then. Political events of the kind that multiplied in the political atmosphere of the Bolivarian Revolution, for example during the 2006 presidential elections and the 2007 and 2009 constitutional referenda, seem to have been triggers for violence.[13] Figure 4 shows that in Caracas in particular homicide rates tended to increase around contested political events like the referenda, and around episodes of political violence and economic unrest like the coup attempt and strike in 2002/2003.[14] In contrast, events that are seen as positive by a majority coincide with decreasing violence in Caracas, and a more stable level in the country. This was the case for the 1998 presidential elections, in which Chávez rose to power, and when the government won a major victory as in the 2000 "mega-elections" and the 2004 recall referendum, when Chavez's party achieved nearly 60 percent of the votes.[15]

Figure 4: Political events and homicide rates in Venezuela and Caracas, 1986–2012



Source: Álvarez (2010, 105), own computation.

13 In December 2007 President Chávez called a referendum to change the 1999 Constitution and transition the Venezuelan economy and political system to a socialist regime. The governmental proposal was rejected by 50.7 percent of votes cast. Two years later, in February 2009 a second constitutional referendum was held with the aim of abolishing term limits for all elected offices, which was approved by 54.9 percent of voters.

14 Between December 2002 and February 2003, the Democratic Coordinator – a coalition of opposition parties – together with business associations and trade unions called for a national strike in order to force President Chávez to call extraordinary presidential elections. This event is known as the "oil strike" because its core element was bringing the operational functioning of the state oil company PDVSA to a halt.

15 After the new Constitution came into force in 1999, all elected offices were subject to re-election. National and regional elections were held simultaneously in July 2000, the so-called "mega-elections". As expected, President Chávez was confirmed in office by 59.8 percent of voters and the majority of the ruling party candidates were reelected. The 1999 Constitution also provides for the possibility to recall elected office holders after they had served half their term. This provision was used by the opposition to request a referendum to recall President Chávez from office, held in August 2004. However, the recall attempt was rejected by 59.1 percent of the voters.

When President Chávez died on 5 March 2013, Venezuelan society descended into a severe political, economic, and social crisis. Scarcity of basic staple foods and galloping inflation coincided with rising homicide rates. According to information provided by the then minister of interior, in the first three months of 2013 homicide figures rose to 3,400 in Venezuela, 1,364 of which occurred in Caracas, representing an increase of 7 percent compared to 2012 figures (*El Universal* 2013b). The presidential election in April 2013 started a new cycle of political legitimacy crises, and the ensuing violence was mainly concentrated in the city of Caracas. The electoral results, with a narrow victory for the candidate of Chavez's party, Nicolás Maduro, were followed by street protests demanding a recount, clashes between police and demonstrators, and burning of government buildings. The unrest left nine civilians dead and seventy-eight persons injured during a week of protests (*La Voz*, 2013). The events following Chavez's death clearly demonstrate the impact of political legitimacy on violence and homicide, as argued by Nivette (2014), and in particular testify to the role of Caracas in leading these processes.

5. Conclusion: Equality, Legitimacy, and Violence

The level of urban violence and homicide in Caracas seems to have altered the dominant perception of peaceful democratic coexistence and inclusive non-violent politics in modern Venezuela. The deteriorating security situation in the city has negatively affected citizens' lives. The wave of violence that turned Caracas into a threatening and hostile city impacted on the lives of thousands of young men and women, and on economic activity. Likewise, it has undermined democratic values and the rule of law.

The Venezuelan case demonstrates that policies aimed at socio-economic inclusion in particular of the poorest strata of society do not necessarily result in the reduction of violence. The programs launched during the Chávez government were part of a nationwide strategy for fighting social inequality. However, they were not designed to attend to the particular needs and realities of those sectors of society most affected by violent crime, or the very particular conditions of the capital city. Moreover, policies of social inclusion were not supported by a coherent policy at all levels aiming at addressing crime and insecurity. To the contrary, continuous changes in the civil security forces and their militarization in this process led to institutional instability, incompetence, and ineffectiveness in fighting the rising crime and violence in the capital city and the country. Police brutality increased during this time, leading to extraordinarily low levels of public trust in the police and justice system, which further weakened law enforcement capacity and exacerbated impunity for offenders. Thus in the case of Caracas and Venezuela a loss of legitimacy of the security apparatus seems to be closely related to a surge in violent lethal crime.

During the Bolivarian Revolution political polarization thrived, and in its wake norms of social solidarity unraveled and generated an environment of animosity and confrontation. This was fertile ground for crime and interpersonal violence to flourish. However, it was also legitimized by political actors. Chávez's political project encouraged violent behaviors among citizens, and the permanent discrediting of his adversaries was a common pattern of his confrontational political and governance style; in addition, during periods of political tension an appeal to violence was a common strategy of this project. In combination with the weakening of law enforcement, support for pro-government armed groups was detrimental. These militias and groups are to a large extent responsible for political and other violence.

It was also demonstrated that political and institutional legitimacy has an impact on violence and homicide in society, as argued by Nivette (2014). Interpersonal violence peaked at times of heightened political tension and when opposition forces seemed to be strong, thus indicating low levels of government legitimacy. During these periods an appeal to violence was a common strategy of the leadership of the Bolivarian Revolution project, which obviously was not confined to political confrontation alone but had spillover effects into society, which were particularly visible in Caracas itself.

Importantly, processes of delegitimization that affected both the civilian security forces and the political system seem to have been more powerful than the successful policies to reduce poverty and social inequality, and promote social

inclusion. The failure and delegitimization of institutions played a major role in the descent into violence that occurred in Caracas, and Venezuela as a whole. The challenge for government and civil society in Venezuela is now to rebuild institutions with sustainable strategies for reducing urban violence, and generally to strengthen and relegitimize law enforcement. These are necessary preconditions for a renewal of citizenship values and peaceful community life.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016151
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

Torture as Theatre in Papua

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

Torture as Theatre in Papua

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Despite international and national exposure, torture in Papua remains widespread and systematic; it is also surrounded by virtually complete impunity and denial. This article analyses torture through a Foucauldian perspective and conceptualizes torture as "theatre" in order to fill the gap of understanding state violence in Papua. Theatricality proffers a new analytical lens to examine the phenomenon by exploring the interplay and dynamics of four interrelated elements: the rationalities that underpin the web of power relations, the techniques of domination, the actors with their multiple and fluid identities, and finally their motivational postures. Taking a Foucauldian perspective, the article analyses the way the Indonesian state exhibits sovereign power to govern Papua as a docile body, and conceptualizes torture as an element of "the art of government". The analysis is based on 431 cases of torture in Papua during 1963–2010 as well as 214 testimonies of torture survivors, perpetrators and spectators.

Notwithstanding a growing number of NGO reports on the state of human rights in Papua, there remain large gaps in the scholarly analysis of the anatomy of state violence there (Kirksey 2012, Rutherford 2012, Braithwaite et al. 2010, Stanley 2014).[1] This article aims to fill the gap, specifically through examining the practice of state-sponsored torture in Papua, Indonesia, in the last half century. Given a wide variety of scholarly perspectives on torture, the term "torture" used in this article is influenced by Paul Kenny's redefinition. It broadly refers to the act of state authorities in committing "the systematic and instrumental infliction of severe physical pain on a person over whom the perpetrator of the act has physical control" (Kenny 2010, 18). As a working definition, this approach is more useful than the UN definition of torture to assess four key elements of torture, namely pain, intentionality, instrumentality and control as they feature prominently in the case of Papua.

In contrast to the commonly known pattern of torture as a hidden crime, the present analysis and the data set it is based on reveals the opposite. It discloses the practice of torture in Papua as theatre, an act that is intended to be performed with an audience and even in a spectacular manner, not hidden. The pattern is designed to convey the message of terror from the Indonesian state authority to the Papuan public. This pattern is in a stark contrast to the torture in the Abu Ghraib prison, for example, which was also displayed as theatrical performance in front of the torturers but was not designed for the public audience. Rather, it was deliberately designed for a specific audience in a highly secretive location until it was leaked to the public. In a similar manner, torture by state forces in Latin America during the 1980s and 1990s was largely hidden and secretive (Huggins et al. 2002)

Foucault's concepts of governmentality and sovereignty and their nexus will first be explored as the analytical

The author would like to thank the Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in the Netherlands for its support for the work of finalizing this article.

1 The term "Papua" in this article refers to the western half of New Guinea Island, which belongs to Indonesia's jurisdiction. It has been known to the Western world by various names, such as West New Guinea, West Irian, Irian Jaya, and West Papua. It shares a international border with Papua New Guinea.

lenses to conceptualize the phenomenon of torture as theatre in Papua. Second, the context of Papua will be discussed in order to locate a specific historical and political background in which torture has been performed as a public display of state terror. Third, there will be a brief reflection on the methodological issues that confronted the researcher in order to illustrate the complexity and intricacy of conducting research with a vulnerable group of people who live in a militarized situation such as Papua. Finally, the theatricality of torture will be discussed in the context of "the art of government". This includes technologies of domination, the rationalities of sovereignty, as well as complex dynamics of relationships and posturing between three key actors (survivors, perpetrators, spectators), which respectively represent three different narratives (suffering, domination, witnessing).

1. Foucault's Theory of Governmentality and Sovereignty

The concept of theatricality I use here is inspired by Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1991). In his genealogical analysis of the transformation of public punishment into a prison system, Foucault illustrates three basic dimensions of power: sovereignty, governmentality and bio-power. In the case of Papuan torture, the concepts of sovereignty and governmentality are much more relevant than bio-power. They refer to the elements of the public sphere and spectatorship that are central to the theatrical nature of torture.

In Foucault's view, power relations are concerned with the question of *how* power is executed and works rather than *who* wields it. For Foucault, the practices, techniques and strategies of power – or "the art of government" – are considered much more important for an understanding of modern politics than the identity of the rulers (Foucault 1982, 778).[2] Philosopher Barry Hindess argues that Foucault is more concerned with "a structure of actions" than with the "legitimacy of governmental power" (Hindess 1996, 97). Foucault believes power is everywhere in the form of domination. By domination, he refers to multiple forms of relations of subjugation between persons, groups and organizations; those forms are "perpetually asymmetrical and allow an extremely limited margin of freedom" (Foucault 2003, 35). This understanding is crucial to my analysis of the phenomenon of torture in Papua.

The term "sovereignty" adopted in this article is different from that often used in the legal and political discourse on the formation of nation states. I employ the Foucauldian notion of sovereignty as first established in *Discipline and Punish* (1991) and later developed in *Society Must Be Defended* (2003b). While legal and political discourse conceives the question of sovereignty in relation to state boundaries and a geographical area, Foucault perceives of state sovereignty as the right over death and life. Sovereignty is manifested through the power of awe and only becomes effective in an action of killing and injuring. "The very essence of the right to life and death is actually the right to kill: it is at the moment when the sovereign can kill that he exercises his right over life" (Foucault 2003b, 240–1).[3]

The emphasis on the right to kill underlines the stark contrast with governmentality. If sovereignty targets the human body to kill or injure it, governmentality aims for the opposite. It keeps the human body alive but docile and tamed. In Foucault's view, governmentality does not necessarily require the state's involvement. In his essay *Governmentality,* Foucault explains that governmentality consists of three elements: [1] technologies of power; [2] various forms of rationalities that underpin the technologies of governing behaviours; and [3] multiple actors with their fluid identities and postures (Foucault 2003a). These three elements illustrate that in his view, governmentality is not only dynamic in nature but more importantly, purposive and transformative. It targets populations, develops and establishes technologies of control, and transforms a society. Therefore, governmentality is productive in nature, not destructive. Papua's torture experience, however, will challenge this premise.

2 This is one of the major distinctions between Foucault and other Western concepts of power that originate from different notions of agency and subjectivity. While Foucault understands power as a network or in his own words, as "the art of government" which assumes no agency, the Western tradition uses a contrary concept. In the latter tradition, power is conceptualized as the capacity or right to act, thus agency is directly assumed; see Hindess (1996), McCarthy (1990).

3 Further discussions on the relationships between the Foucauldian notion of sovereignty and torture can be found in Stephen Morton and Stephen Bygrave (2008).

Foucault himself illustrates the logic of sovereignty by describing the ritual of public torture and the execution of Robert Damiens in front of the Parisian public in 1757. Damiens had attempted to kill the king, and had been charged with regicide. The ritual was not designed simply to punish Damiens, the condemned, but more importantly to convey through the body of the condemned the sovereign's message to the Parisians who witnessed the ritual. The focus is not the body of the condemned but the sovereign himself. The public has to turn their attention to the sovereign and feel his terrifying power implanted into their minds. According to Foucault, torture is "a policy of terror: to make everyone aware, through the body of the criminal, of the unrestrained presence of the sovereign. The public execution did not re-establish justice; it reactivated power" (Foucault 1991, 49). In order to convey the policy of terror, torture has to meet three conditions: it has to be incrementally painful, scarring and spectacular.

The first and second of these Foucauldian characteristics of torture suggest that torture can be used in an utilitarian way, as was common practice of the European judiciary until the eighteenth century mostly in a hidden setting. However, the third criterion illustrates that inflicting pain on the body is only a means to achieve an objective beyond the pain itself. That objective is communicating the power of the sovereign in a spectacular way. Foucault further elucidates the ritual of torture which clarifies the notion of "being spectacular". The ritual consists of four consecutive stages by which the truth about the crime is revealed through the body:

1. *Self-proclamation of guilt*: the condemned has to announce his/her guilt to the public using his/her own body as a sign of guilt. Damiens was forced to carry a placard stating his offences. Foucault summarizes this step as: "[i]t [public punishment] made the guilty man the herald of his own condemnation" (Foucault 1991, 43). The visibility of torture begins at this stage.
2. *Self-confession of truth*: the condemned is forced to tell "the truth" to the public who witness the execution. The public execution mirrors the Christian confession. However, instead of delivering a confession voluntarily and privately, Damiens was coerced to acknowledge "the truth" as produced by the sovereign. Foucault states "the function of the public torture and execution was to reveal the truth" (Foucault 1991, 44).
3. *Inscribing a crime scene on the body of the condemned*: the public execution was designed not only to reenact the crime but to punish the particular part of the body that had been used to commit the crime. Damien, for instance, had to hold the dagger he had used to commit the crime while arm and dagger were covered with sulphur and burnt. Foucault refers to other examples: "the tongues of blasphemers were pierced, the impure were burnt, the right hand of murderers was cut off; sometimes the condemned man was made to carry the instrument of his crime" (Foucault 1991, 45). In his view, inscribing a crime on the body of the condemned gives torture "symbolic" significance. It is meant to make a visible reference between the form of execution and the nature of the crime. Therefore, this principle dictates the way in which punishment has actually to be performed on the body that committed crime.
4. *Agonising death as proof of guilt*: According to Foucault this final stage of the ritual of torture was designed to generate a slow and agonising death: "[T]he slowness of the process of torture and execution, its sudden dramatic moments, the cries and sufferings of the condemned man serve as an ultimate proof at the end of the judicial ritual" (Foucault 1991, 45). Damien's death not only proved him guilty of regicide, a crime against the king who received his legitimacy from God; it also precisely communicated the king's policy of terror to the Parisians.

Once all these rituals are completed, the body becomes "a synthesis of the reality of the deeds and the truth of the investigation, of the documents of the case and the statements of the criminal, of the crime and the punishment" (Foucault 1991, 47). For Foucault the meaning of the public execution is not only a punitive ritual; more importantly, it has a political meaning through which power is manifested (Foucault 1991, 47). The body of Damiens became an effective means to convey the awesomeness of the king to the Parisian public in order to tame the Parisian social body.

These Foucauldian conceptualizations of sovereignty and governmentality are pertinent to capture the practice of

torture and its logic of communication by the sovereign power, the Indonesian state against the Papuan public (see Rutherford 2012). While Foucault in the Damien case only analysed sovereignty, the case of Papua reveals a link between sovereignty and governmentality. In Papua the Indonesian state deploys both sovereignty and governmentality in order to injure and simultaneously to keep alive the Papuan body social and the individual bodies. The case will reveal the nexus between domination of the body of an individual and the targeting of a whole population in order to manipulate and tame it to become a docile body. The sites of torture and networks of actors involved in the torture setting are decisive for achieving this aim.

2. Genealogy of Torture in Papua

The phenomenon of torture in Papua is inseparable from the conflict in Papua, which constitutes one of the longest and unresolved conflicts in the Pacific (Parks, Colleta, and Oppenheim 2013). The conflict derives from the complex power relations that underpin the question of sovereignty in the context of Indonesia's de-colonization from the Netherlands in the late 1940s.

During the first two decades of the formation of the Indonesian nation-state from the 1940s to the 1960s, Papua seemed to be a "pebble in the shoe" of relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands. Three different clusters of power relations competed for territorial sovereignty. First, the Dutch attempted to create new boundaries of sovereignty over the former Dutch East Indies by proposing the union of Indonesia and the Netherlands in the late 1940s. Second, in the early 1960s, the newly emerging nation of Indonesia asserted its sovereignty over the former territory of the Dutch East Indies, including the then Dutch New Guinea (Soekarno 1962, Cholil 1971, Yamin 1956, Dinas Sedjarah Militer Kodam XVII/ Tjendrawasih 1971, Pusat Sejarah dan Tradisi TNI 2000). Third, almost simultaneously in the early 1960s, the embryonic Papuan state asserted its sovereignty over former Dutch New Guinea (Alua 2000, Drooglever 2009). These rivalries over territorial sovereignty have not been resolved, most notably the dispute over control of Papua (Chauvel 2005, Chauvel and Bhakti 2004, Rutherford 2012).

Dutch journalist Dirk Vlasblom (2004) documented torture committed in Papua by the Indonesian security forces as early as 1963.[4] These acts were committed in order to repress student protests in Manokwari that were calling for "one man, one vote". The protests concerned Article XVIII (d)[5] of the 1962 New York Agreement[6] stipulating that Papuan adults were entitled to cast a secret ballot during the referendum. Measures by the Indonesian military included arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture of many people, including university students. The use of these brutal methods increased on the eve of referendum (so-called Act of Free Choice) in 1969. Beata, one of the survivors of the selected Papuan representatives for the Act of Free Choice in Merauke, recounted her distressing experience:[7]

> I was interned with other young women in a dorm. Only women. Nobody was allowed to visit us, even a priest, although many of us were Catholics. My son and husband could only see me once and only from a distance. … Every night we were drilled by the army to repeat and memorize without any mistake the sentence that we had to say during PEPERA [*Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat*; the Act of Free Choice]:[8] we wish to join

4 In this article, I use an unofficial English translation of the original Dutch version provided by a source that wished to remain anonymous.

5 The eligibility of all adults, male and female, not foreign nationals to participate in the act of self-determination to be carried out in accordance with international practice, who are resident at the time of the signing of the present Agreement and at the time of the act of self-determination, including those residents after 1945 and who return to the territory to resume residence after the termination of Netherlands administration" (see Drooglever 2009).

6 The 1962 New York Agreement provided the legal basis to resolve the legal and political disputes between the Netherlands and Indonesia on the issue of sovereignty over Papua; it mandated the United Nations to supervise a referendum for Papuans. The final referendum was considered flawed, however (See Drooglever 2009, Saltford 2003, Alua 2000).

7 All names of interviewees are pseudonyms unless specified otherwise. Interview III/A14 in Papua on 20 July 2010.

8 PEPERA (*Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat*) is the Indonesian acronym for the Act of Free Choice.

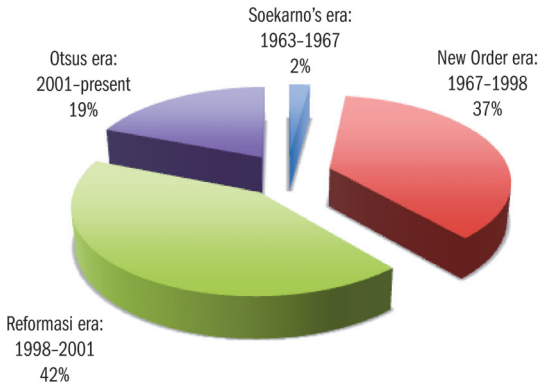
9 KODIM *(Komando Distrik Militer)* is a military command at the district level. The Indonesian military mirrors the government structure, for example KORAMIL *(Komando Rayon Militer)* for a sub-district level and KODAM *(Komando Daerah Militer)* for the provincial level.

> Indonesia. … Those who opposed them [the Indonesian army] had died in *KODIM*[9] from electric shocks.

Although Beata did not experience excruciating pain inflicted on her body, she was psychologically tortured every night with the drills that she received from the military. What happened inside the internment building was completely hidden from the public, however the internment building itself became publicly known as such and was turned into a symbol of intimidation for both the internees and their community. Thus it imposed obedience inside and outside, and turned the internees into docile bodies, as Beata testified. Everyone could see, feel and experience the awesomeness of the Indonesian sovereignty simply by passing by and gazing at the heavily guarded building. The climate of fear and control instilled by the Indonesian army spread to the broader community when the internees communicated with their families and relatives from a distance. PEPERA itself was designed as an act to publicly communicate the sovereignty of Indonesia over Papua and at the same time, control and tame the minds of Papuans.

Even if torture started during this time, the reported cases from the period 1962–1969 (Soekarno's era) constitute only a small proportion of the overall cases, that is 2 per cent of the total cases of torture in comparison with other political regimes. The modern history of Papua can be divided into four eras according to the political regimes, the Soekarno era (1963–1967), Soeharto's New Order era (1967–1998), the *Reformasi* (Reform) era (1998–2001), and the *Otsus* (*Otonomi Khusus*/Special Autonomy) era (2001–present). Figure 1 demonstrates that nearly half of all torture cases happened during the rather short Reform era whereas the second-highest proportion occurred during the New Order era. As it will be explained in Section 3 below, Figure 1 reflects the limitation of the data deriving from the general problem of keeping records in Indonesia as well as the militarization of Papua, both of which prohibit any accurate account of torture cases.

Figure 1: Regimes and torture



Source: *n*= 431; own database

However, the small figure for recorded cases may indicate more a lack of documentation rather than a small number of actual cases occurring in the 1960s; in contrast the high number during the Reform era might be the result of more intense international and national monitoring and scrutiny. Regarding the early period, one interviewee who was formerly a member of an intelligence unit deployed to Papua in 1967 explained: "My role was to identify and arrest OPM [*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*/Free Papua Movement] members and take them to *KODAM* [the provincial military command]. What I did was simply to ask them to take a walk with me and they would disappear. Other units did other stuff."[10] This suggests that he participated in operations involving arrests, kidnapping, torture, forced disappearances and killings of suspects. Some survivors confirmed their horrific experiences with the system during my interviews.[11] Some of those kidnapped were later released with physical injuries, and many never returned, with the military always denying that they had ever detained. In Foucauldian notion of symbolic torture, forced disappearances can be construed as a mode of public torture as the fact that a person has gone missing cannot be concealed and sends a clear message of state brutality to the families and to the wider public: forced

10 Interview II/E3 in Papua on 4 September 2010.

11 Interview IV/D3 in Sydney on 9 August 2009, I/D10 in Papua New Guinea on 15 May 2010, III/D1 in Papua on 18 July 2010.

disappearances confirm that the state is willing to destroy the bodies of the victims. However, forced disappearances also allow the security forces to deny any responsibility, and to conceal their actual atrocities.

Once Indonesia officially gained power over Papua's territory and was met with armed resistance in Manokwari and the Paniai area in 1965 (Djopari 1993), the use of torture and other brutal techniques intensified (Budiarjo and Liong 1988), as demonstrated by Figure 1. The Indonesian military operation during the 1970s in the central highlands of Papua caused at least 4,146 violent deaths, as recorded in *The Neglected Genocide* (AHRC and ICP 2013: 8). The practice was eventually institutionalized when Papua was declared a Military Operation Zone *(Daerah Operasi Militer/DOM)* in the 1980s (which lasted for almost two decades, 1980s–1998). Many torture survivors as well as former army soldiers explained that a number of military installations around the provincial capital of Jayapura, including Ifar Gunung, Kloofkamp and Dok V were designated to detain and torture anybody who was targeted as an OPM member or sympathiser. However, none of the survivors could verify whether the torture places still operated in the 1990s.[12] The local and national human rights organizations as well as a more recent field visit by the author (Hernawan and Sidoti Forthcoming) confirm that the Indonesian state authorities shifted their strategy from more hidden torture through forced disappearances to more public torture after they had fully established their military authority over the area by the end of 1998.

Following the dramatic events when President Soeharto stepped down in 1998, Indonesia entered a new phase of reconstructing its power relations with Papua in the spirit of democracy and the rule of law. *Reformasi* brought about a fundamental change in relations between the state and society in Indonesia, particularly on issues of civil-military relations. Together with Aceh and East Timor, Papua was granted special autonomy status by the MPR (People's Consultative Assembly), the highest legislative body within the Indonesian legal system. In the context of torture prevention, Indonesia ratified the UN Convention Against Torture in 1998, which opened doors to international scrutiny to assess the situation of torture in Indonesia. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Professor Manfred Nowak, was permitted to visit Indonesia and Papua in 2007. He found that torture was routinely practised by the Indonesian police; however, it was not defined and criminalized in the Indonesian Penal Code (Nowak 2008: 2).[13]

Whilst *Reformasi* paved the way towards de-militarization of the Indonesian political landscape, analysts found little change in the actions of the Indonesian military in Papua (Alagappa 2001, Mietzner 2009). A recent study by the Jakarta-based human rights NGO Imparsial (Araf et al. 2011) reveals continuity in the militarization of Papua with an expansion of the infrastructure and the powers of the army and BRIMOB (the Mobile Brigade of the Indonesian Police). This process of militarization contributed to an increase in violence by the state and human rights abuses across Papua. Three major events illustrate the interaction between national and international monitoring bodies and the responses by the Indonesian state.

In 2001 the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights took a major step towards addressing torture in Papua. Following the investigation of cases of torture and summary killings in Abepura,[14] the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights (KOMNAS HAM) declared that the police in Papua had committed crimes against humanity and brought the case before the Indonesian Human Rights Court.[15] The Court, however, failed to recognize command responsibility and acquitted all the accused because they were not directly involved in tortur-

12 Interviews III/D1 in Papua on 18 July 2010, III/D7 in Papua on 28 August 2010, and a focus group discussion with twelve relatives of the disappeared III/A45 in Papua on 29 August 2010.

13 At the request of the Special Rapporteur on Torture during his visit to Papua in 2007, the author hosted a private hearing with torture victims and Papua-based human rights organizations.

14 The city of Abepura was the place of major outbreaks of violence on 7 December 2000, when the police station was attacked by Papuan freedom fighters. Instead of conducting a proper investigation, the police raided university dormitories around Abepura as well as settlements of Papuan highlanders. More than ninety men and women were arrested and tortured. Two Papuan students died in police custody as a result of torture.

15 The author was a member of the investigation team established by KOMNAS HAM and worked with subpoena power in accordance with Law No. 26/2000 on the Human Rights Court in Indonesia.

ing or killing victims. In the second event, when the first review of Indonesia by the United Nations Committee Against Torture took place in 2008, Papuan civil society organizations claimed that torture remained widespread and systematic in Papua even after Indonesia had ratified the UN Convention Against Torture (CAT) in 1998 (Hernawan 2008). Finally, during the 2012 Universal Periodic Review by the UN Human Rights Council, some UN member states and international NGOs reiterated the underlying problems of torture and impunity in Papua (Tjahjono 2012). Even after signing and ratifying the Convention Against Torture, Indonesia has done little to address the ongoing practice of torture in Papua. Torture in Papua has thus been continuous and systematic for half a century, and has become deeply engrained in the polity and society of both Indonesia and Papua. It is in this context that the theatre of torture must be understood.

3. Researching Torture in a Militarized Zone

Collecting data on torture in a militarized context like Papua is challenging and at times dangerous, for the researcher and particularly for local respondents. Between 2009 and 2011, I established 431 cases of torture and conducted 214 interviews, which were then integrated into the Papua Torture Dataset. Twenty-five respondents declined my request for interviews. The interviewees can be divided into three groups: eighty-seven survivors, twenty-four perpetrators, and seventy spectators, based on the information that they gave in the interviews. Accordingly, interviews were divided into three major narratives: suffering, domination, and witness.[16]. The research was organized according to the principle of triangulation (Jick 1979: 26–27), with interviews cross-checked against secondary sources, especially written documents, and field visits by the author in order to establish validity and accuracy.

Collecting data in this manner suffers from problems with record-keeping, which are common across Indonesia. Very few government offices, NGO and church archives or university libraries in Papua have complete collections of relevant documents. Given my long-term professional and personal engagement with Papua, I was privileged to secure access to four personal archives and twelve public archives, including government offices, Papuan churches, and Papuan NGOs. The private archives contributed 17 percent of the total cases; 83 percent of the cases in the Torture Dataset are available in the public domain, and thus not secret. All materials used in this research were collected and coded the author.

In addition, ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in seven sites: Australia, Jakarta, Papua, Papua New Guinea, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The fieldwork had two objectives. Whilst the field visits to Papua and Jakarta aimed at revisiting the sites of torture as reported in the torture files, the visits outside Indonesia aimed at assessing the impacts of torture. Thousands of Papuans were forced to leave their homeland and seek asylum in other countries, particularly Papua New Guinea and the Netherlands, and it was assumed that a high proportion of torture victims were among them.

The torture files, i.e. the original documents including accounts of torture, were subjected to three different levels of scrutiny: first, by the reporting organizations and researchers that wrote those reports; second, by the Indonesian authorities that received the reports; and finally, by the public when the reports were circulated to wider audiences. These "torture files" do not record all (or even most) accounts of torture, and the record is biased. For example, many recorded events post-1990 are publicly available, but only very limited records on the events of 1960–1980. However, other historical materials including Indonesian military history (Cholil 1971; Osborne 1985; Pusat Sejarah dan Tradisi TNI 2000a; TAPOL 1983) suggest that Papua witnessed various intense military operations during these periods. It can be assumed that these operations resulted in a significant number of disappearances and torture victims that are not included in the database.

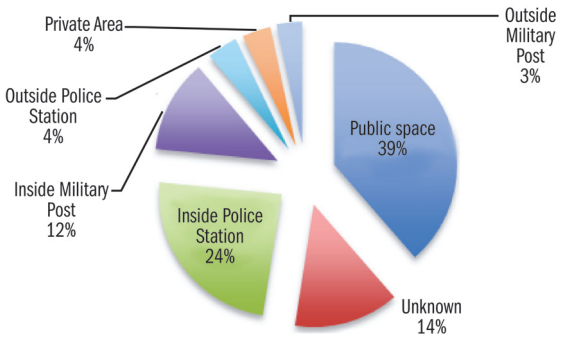
16 Two interviews do not fit into any of the three strands. Thirty-one mixed narratives and two exceptions were identified. I categorize the *exceptions* as *forgetting* (one interview) and *wandering* (one interview). The narrative of forgetting refers to the act of forgetting on the part of some survivors who purposely do not want to remember their torture experience. The narrative of wandering refers to both physical and mental acts of wandering in the border zone between Indonesian Papua and Papua New Guinea.

4. Cases of Public Torture

The Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and sovereignty equip us with two complementary analytical lenses to reconstruct the theatre of torture in Papua. Governmentality helps to identify key elements of the theatre or the "hardware" that establishes the organization of the practice of torture in Papua, namely technologies of power, and multiple actors with heterogeneous narratives and motives. The concept of sovereignty will enable us to make sense of the rationales or the "software" that underpin the organization of torture as public theatre. This will bring to the fore the element of public display of the Indonesian state power, which has a central role in governing Papuans. For the purpose of analysing torture as theatre, we focus on six of ten patterns identified in the research:[17] [1] location, [2] political regime, [3] the problem of impunity, and the characteristics of actors: [4] survivors, [5] perpetrators, and [6] spectators.

The first and the most important pattern that demonstrates the element of publicity is location. It reveals the notion of spectacularity as the underpinning rationality of torture and thus demonstrates *how* and *for what purpose* torture operates. The dominant pattern of torture in Papua is public presentation of state brutality, as demonstrated by Figure 2 below. Nearly 40 per cent of all cases took place in a public space.

Figure 2: Location of Torture in Papua



Source: *n*=431 Hernawan database

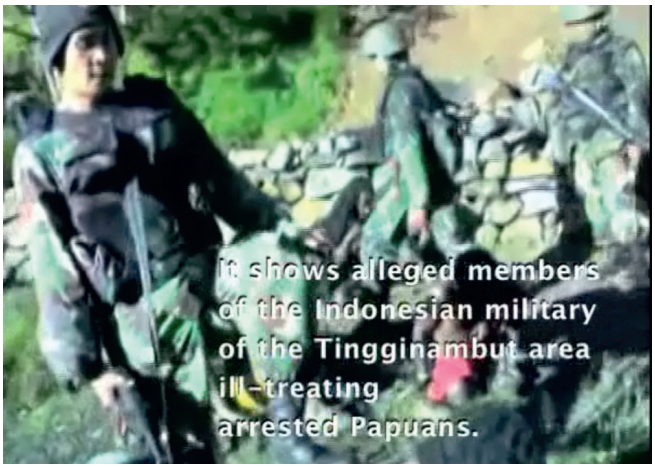
The term "public space" denotes all space to which the public has free access, such as streets, schoolyards, open spaces in villages, gardens. The term also includes open space within government and military/police facilities (lawns, backyards, parking area) that is visible to the public. As many military and police stations in rural areas of Papua are very basic wooden constructions, they do not have sufficient closed areas to store equipment and hold detainees. As a result, the public can also observe most activities that take place "inside the military/ police stations" and thus, this can be added to the category "public space". This also applies to spaces outside of police and military compounds. "Private area" here refers to hidden facilities within the military and police stations and private rooms (e.g. in homes) that are not accessible to the public.

Thus the majority of torture (82 per cent) was committed in public spaces whereas only 4 per cent occurred in a private area (for 14 per cent the location is unknown). 46 per cent were committed in public space (including events outside police and military stations) and 36 per cent inside the compounds of military posts and police stations. That does not mean that the crime was committed secretively inside the building. Rather, it was an event of public brutality that started in the public domain and was witnessed by the public and then often finished inside the military or police post. As this chain of events allowed the public to witness, it is counted as a public display. As the majority of these events could be witnessed by the public, this confirms the logic of spectacle and spectacular, and of the deliberate organization of torture as theatre, where the Indonesian state communicated shock and awe to the public. The so-called *YouTube* case is exemplary and illustrates this pattern (see Figure 3).[18]

17 For the full analysis of all patterns see Hernawan (2013).

18 The incident was broadcast by Asian Human Rights Commission, a Hong-Kong-based human rights organization (http://video.ahrchk.net/AHRC-VID-012–2010-Indonesia.html), and then widely covered by Western media, such as United Kingdom Channel 4 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kwFo7–3Wk0), ABC TV Australia (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEisR8rFLOo), Al Jazeera (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnCSh4cOvmA) (accessed 25 March 2016). For a detailed analysis see Hernawan (2015).

Figure 3: Torture video uploaded on YouTube



The video shows a case of torture committed against four Papuan highlanders by a group of Indonesian soldiers in the highland town of Mulia in October 2010. Besides being videoed, the event of torture was witnessed by the victims' community, including women and children. They were separated by only fifty metres from the gruesome scene, as the commandant later told the military court of Jayapura.[19] The soldiers forced the victims to confess that they were members of *Organisasi Papua Merdeka*, the Free Papua Movement (OPM), and that they had hidden weapons somewhere. The soldiers burnt the genitals of Tunaliwor Kiwo and put a knife on Telangga Gire's neck. The case immediately drew international attention and the Indonesian government took rapid action by charging five soldiers. They were found guilty and sentenced to jail for between five and ten months – not for torture but for disobedience. The appeal court later reduced the sentence of three of the soldiers to only three months.

The fact that most sites of torture are public space is inseparable from the pervasiveness of impunity in Papua. The high level of impunity enables and even encourages the Indonesian state and security apparatus to exhibit its brutality in public. The public has been so fully controlled, cowed and generally colonized that it sees little chance for any opposition, and deems reports and charges futile. The above-mentioned case illustrates this cycle of violence and impunity: the rule of law has been suspended as the state has turned law into a tactical tool. Law is manipulated in order to justify the acts of the state and to ensure they are successful (Oksala 2012: 112). Similar to Guantanamo, the suspension of law contributed to the application of increasingly aggressive methods of torture by the Indonesian state apparatus and its personnel. Impunity is a precondition for torture to be executed in a theatrical manner. Even when torture cases, such as the Abepura case of 2000, were brought before the Indonesian Permanent Human Rights Court,[20] the Court failed to address the torture element, thus confirming that in the context of torture as an instrument of governmentality Indonesian human rights laws were easily suspended.

Both torture and impunity reinforce each other in order to achieve the maximum production of state terror. The reign of terror, however, is not confined within the territory of Papua. Rather, it travels beyond Indonesian jurisdiction, as indicated by the spread of Papuan refugees and asylum-seekers in the countries like Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. This reflects the level of fear among Papuans, which led them to risk their lives to reach foreign soil for safety.

The second element of torture as part of governmentality refers to an ensemble of technologies of power. In the historical-political context of Papua torture the Indonesian state has introduced as a method of governing through terror and intimidation. Torture, however, does not stand alone. Rather, it is part of larger set of technologies of domination that include surveillance, killings and imprisonment and still continue today. All elements – torture, surveillance, killing, imprisonment, civil war and divi-

19 See Military Court Decision no. 187-K/PM.III-19/AD/IX/2010, which contains the case of Lieutenant Cosmos, the commander of the group, who was sentenced to seven months of imprisonment.

20 Under Indonesian Law 26/2000 on the Human Rights Court, the Court has a separate and independent jurisdiction from civil and military courts. The Court is only authorized to hear human rights cases presented by the Attorney General, who acts as prosecutor. In this legal procedure, KOMNAS HAM has a very important role because it is only KOMNAS HAM that has the authority to initiate investigations and collect preliminary evidence that the Attorney General will prosecute.

sion of the population – combine into an integral system of domination by which Papua has been governed since 1963. The system has changed little, notwithstanding the Reform Era *(Reformasi)*. As Figure 1 shows, it is during the Reform Era that the highest number and proportion of torture cases were recorded (42 percent); in the current era of Special Autonomy *(Otonomi Khusus/Otsus)* still 19 percent of all cases took place. The Papuan experience suggests that independent of changes in the forms of governance, the imposition of sovereignty through violence is an enduring feature of governmentality; thus these two forms of power relations are not alternatives, but complement each other. The technologies of power by which Indonesia has governed Papua have at their core technologies that are designed to turn the Papuan social body into a docile body, while keeping in place all other technologies of governmentality.

5. Characteristics and Involvement of Actors in the Theatre of Torture

The last element of governmentality focuses on the actors in this human tragedy. Three cases will be explored which illustrate the "art of government" and its link with sovereignty and governmentality in Papua. Instead of relying on the common binary of victims and perpetrators, I use a triangle of survivors, perpetrators and spectators, as they are equally important in constructing the theatre of torture. The term "spectator" identifies those who witness torture not only in a literal sense but also in a symbolic and abstract sense. Drawing on Graziano's (1992) study of what he terms an "abstract audience" of torture in Argentina's Dirty War, witnessing implies being present in a literal sense at an actual event, seeing it and even engaging with it. In a symbolic sense, witnessing is watching a representation of a torture event mediated and filtered by the media. In an abstract sense, however, witnessing can only draw on an idea of torture based on knowledge of sites and events of torture – despite this knowledge being suppressed or surrounded by denials (Graziano 1992, 78). The spectators, therefore, represent the narrative of witnessing.

The survivors are those who were targeted and who are the actual victims of acts of torture. In this database, most of the victims are highlanders living in rural areas, they are male, and by occupation farmers. Out of 431 cases of torture, only two survivors/victims were OPM members or OPM leaders. This demonstrates that the torture regime targeted civilians, not combatants or people actively involved in the struggle.

Both Alfons's and Bernard's stories illustrate this point. Alfons was arrested and tortured during the Biak incident in July 1998, when hundreds of Biakkers who raised the Papuan national flag in the Biak water tower were attacked by the joint Indonesian forces.[21] In contrast to similar incidents in other cities in Papua at the same time that remained peaceful, the Indonesian security forces attacked the crowd with maximum force. Alfons recalled his distressing memory:

> The army entered the houses and herded people to the *harbour*. They *hit* us on our backs with rifle butts and wooden sticks. Once we arrived at the *harbour*, we were forced to lay down facing the sun and one by one they [the army] *jumped* on us repeatedly. … Then we were brought in to a *police station*. While we were locked in *cells*, we were told to put our arms out through the bars and they took our fingernails. I saw this myself. Luckily, they passed me. Thank God! I was in *cell* for a week or so. … They took *my statement* early in the morning around 2 or 3am. So I was *terrified,* suspecting that they were going to *kill* me then. After that, we were *released* but had to report regularly to the police for about a month.[22]

His gruesome story illustrates not only the "scarring" and "painful" elements that Foucault identified in the torture of Damien, but also captures the sense of publicity of torture in Papua. First, it was carried out in a public space (harbour) in daylight, with nothing hidden. Second, those interned also witnessed the torture of their fellow prisoners, with no attempt by the guards to keep it secret. The experience had a tremendous impact on him, and "terrified" him in a way that led him to believe he would be killed. His arrest was never followed by a court procedure

21 For the background of the Biak incident, see Elsham Papua and The Biak Tribunal (www.biak-tribunal.org). This was a citizen tribunal co-organized by Australia-based academics including the author, to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the incident. The event was held in Sydney, Australia, on 6 July 2013. The result of the tribunal was submitted to KOMNASHAM in Jakarta on 16 March 2015 and to the Australian Parliament on 19 March 2015.

22 Interview III/A24 in Biak, on 10 August 2010.

even though the police interrogated him and took his statement. The police were not interested in collecting evidence that could have indicted him in court. Rather, they simply turned Alfons into "a sign of guilt" and "a docile body" as described by Foucault.

A similar pattern of public torture can be observed in Wasior in 2001 when a group of BRIMOB raided the village in search of members of the Papua Freedom Fighters. Instead of arresting combatants, they arrested innocent civilians including Bernard.

> In heavy rain, I was about to leave the company compound when a group of four *BRIMOB* personnel pointed their *guns* at me and stopped me. I was confused. So I asked them "What happened?" But the response I received was only immediate *beatings*. They pointed their guns at me. So I gave up. They took me to the *harbour* where the village head and *many people* were already there. I was not able to recognize them [BRIMOB] because they wore plain clothes and wore bandanas on their heads. They hit us badly until we were *bleeding* and *fainted.* … They put us on a tuck boat and left for Manokwari. I was *tied* to a pole like a crucifix and they *hit* me with rifle butts. They ground hot fresh chillies and forced me to eat them. … I had been terrified so I just *followed* what they wanted me to do. I was *bleeding* all the way to Manokwari.[23]

Bernard was one of hundreds of victims in this case that KOMNAS HAM (2004) investigated. KOMNAS HAM filed the case with the Attorney General, who was supposed to prosecute the case through the Indonesian Permanent Human Rights Court. The case remains pending since 2003, suggesting the unwillingness of the Indonesian judiciary to address the problem of crimes against humanity in Papua, which are punishable under Indonesian law.

Like Alfons, Bernard experienced torture in front of fellow villagers in the harbour and along the way in a tuck boat from Wasior to Manokwari. The torturers (BRIMOB) did not hide the maltreatment ("beatings with rifle butts", "tied in a pole", "bleeding", "fainted") of innocent civilians. In this case they seemed uninterested in collecting any information or confession since Bernard only received beatings when he asked for information. BRIMOB were much more interested in dominating Bernard's body, instilling fear and thus turning him into the "docile body". The Indonesian forces targeted individuals and the collective of citizens simultaneously.

According to the categorization used here, perpetrators are those who actively took part in and executed torture acts. According to the data set, they are mostly members of the Indonesian state security apparatus: 65 percent were personnel of the Indonesian Military (TNI), 34 percent police officers, and only 1 percent belonged to militias. This is confirmed by KOMNAS HAM (2014) investigations in other parts of Indonesia, which found a similar distribution.

Twenty-four interviews were conducted with perpetrators from various organizations. When asked for the reasons why they participated, they put forward four types of argument. The most common argument is termed "proceduralism"; they argued that they had been simply following orders. Next, they often referred to *habitus*, in the sense of the institutional environment in which they were trained and worked, which adapted to the use of violence, both as part of its training and professional system. It shaped attitudes and behaviours of torturers by legitimizing, supporting and endorsing these practices. Denial was also common among torturers, and some of them simply rejected the notion that the practice of torture existed. Finally, only a few interviews suggested that some torturers enjoyed their actions (see also Huggins et al. 2002)

Maxi, a former Indonesian military personnel, who recounted his personal experience of torturing civilians when he was stationed at the border between Indonesia and PNG, illustrates the latter in his narrative. This area remains an intensely militarized zone in which the Indonesian military erected checkpoints along the border, including some inside villages. In the past, everyone had to present his/her ID card at these checkpoints. Any failure to do so resulted in immediate corporal punishment, including torture, which was committed in public. Maxi gives this impression of the behaviour of Indonesian soldiers:

23 Interview IIIA/36 in Wondama on 16 August 2010.

> We made them really, really bad. We *kicked* them. *Forced* them to crawl, to run, do push-ups. We were *watching*. We didn't *shoot* anybody but we *did whatever we liked*. It's just *a game* for us, just for *fun*. Nothing else because we didn't have anything to do and our commander couldn't do much. He let us go. Yes, for the first time, there was an *order* but then it had become a *common practice* as if it was the main duty; but [actually it was not].[24]

Maxi makes it perfectly clear that he and his group did not want to kill but "just to make them really bad." Death was not the ultimate goal. Rather, it was the pleasure of exhibiting power in a theatrical way. It is also clear from this account that this had nothing to do with extracting information, forcing confessions from the victims or simply punishing them. Therefore, Maxi uses the phrase "whatever we liked" and the words "game" and "fun" to assert his domineering position. Coercion though violence is normal and even "fun" like "watching a game". This way of asserting dominant and governing power resonates with what Foucault describes in the context of Damiens' torture as "self-proclamation of guilt" and "inscribing a crime scene on the body of the condemned". Just as Damiens' body became an effective means to convey the message of the awesomeness of the sovereign, so too the bodies of the Papuans were transformed into a medium that transmitted both the messages of the domination of the Indonesian state over Papuans and of their guilt of insubordination.

Maxi's testimony further testifies to the impunity of torture; inflicting pain on victims was acceptable to his superior, who did not intervene, and to his fellow army soldiers. This reflects the element of policy inherent in these acts of torture, as the Indonesian state purposively acted against its own citizens. Thus, Maxi's involvement in acts of torture is sanctioned by authorities of the state, and he himself can feel legitimized as acting as part of the authority of the state.

Maxi's narrative demonstrates both the role of sovereignty of the Indonesian state in these acts of torture, and simultaneously their function as a form of governmentality. Torture was routinely performed in public as a demonstration of how the Indonesian state subjugated the Papuan social body. The more spectacular, the more soldiers enjoyed torturing innocent civilians in an extremely public manner. As a result, during the last fifty years, torture has become normalized in Papua and thus part of the "art of government" by the Indonesian state, linking both sovereignty and governmentality in these acts.

This pattern of violence and torture as normality has persisted until this decade. The image in Figure 4 shows the Indonesian state and security authorities forcefully dismissing a major gathering of Papuans during the "Third Papuan Congress of 2011". This public event brought together some two thousand Papuans on the soccer field of the Catholic School of Theology "Fajar Timur" in Abepura (PGGP and Elsham Papua 2011). This was a prominent event organized by the Papuan leadership, and it was broadly covered by local and national media (PGGP and Elsham Papua 2011).[25] The main agenda of the Congress was the election of a new Papuan nationalist leader, which was thwarted by the raids of the joint police and military forces who completely brought the process to a halt.

Figure 4: Indonesian security forces dismiss the Third Papuan Congress, 2011

Source: Courtesy of ELSHAM Papua

24 Interview I/A6 with a former army soldier in PNG on 17 May 2010.

25 See these media links that recorded the incident: http://news.liputan6.com/read/358826/penutupan-kongres-tiga-papua-ricuh; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVcEPVsKwek; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KupXhPh6cu4; http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/29/west-papua-independence-history; http://www.smh.com.au/world/bodies-at-west-papua-barracks-20111020–1ma6e.html; accessed on 25 March 2016.

During the raid, the joint forces tortured most of participants in front of media representatives. The members of the security apparatus did not hesitate to forcefully beat participants until they were bleeding although they had already raised their hands in surrender. Three people were found dead from gunshots and 387 people were arrested and detained by the police of Jayapura (PGGP and Elsham Papua 2011, 11–12). This public display of police brutality clearly demonstrated the sovereignty and authority of the state, and reinforced the subjugation of the Papuan social body by the Indonesian state.

Narratives of witnessing are based on seventy interviews, in which four types of spectators were identified: caregivers, observers, beneficiaries and bystanders. They engaged with survivors and were related to them to different extents: caregivers had the strongest bonds, while bystanders had the weakest. Caregivers feature prominently in the dataset, including local church leaders, NGO workers, and community leaders and Papuan elders. It is important to understand the motivation and aims of those who work with torture survivors in such a risky environment. Siti works for an NGO, and has long experience of working with torture survivors in Papua. Although Siti never directly witnessed an actual event of torture in Papua, she and her organization were instrumental in having the case of Abepura brought before the Indonesian Permanent Human Rights Court in 2001, which in the end turned out to be disappointing for both survivors and their solidarity networks. Siti had become quite pessimistic about the future struggles of the survivors, the commitment of her own organization to supporting the survivors, and the Indonesian justice system. All this had led to her decision to quit her job. Notwithstanding these disappointing experiences, she highlighted a number of key elements that illustrate her strong engagement with the survivors.

> All [previous engagement with victims] have made a *very deep impression* in my life, notably *trust* building. … A *success* story is the establishment of *a solidarity group X*. In this *organization*, the victims themselves *helped each other* to learn how to build a solidarity organization, to learn human rights, to be sensitive to human rights issues. X *organizes* events to commemorate tragedies in Papua, *cooperates* with the regional office of the Ministry for Justice and Human Rights, *looks after* political prisoners, and talks to university students to educate them. They are *able* to bring the meanings and values of human rights to public attention.[26]

The victims' willingness to trust her left a "very deep impression" on her. Importantly, the organization run by torture survivors themselves became instrumental in reclaiming agency for the survivors. Crucial in this process was the assertion of their identity in public and providing public education on the state of human rights of Papua. They thus established a counter-public sphere that acted as a counter-balance against the images of weakness and subjugation that the public torture incidents had conveyed to the citizens of Papua. Importantly, the organization gained recognition from the Indonesian authorities that resulted in some cooperation with the regional office of the Ministry for Justice and Human Rights. This illustrates the countervailing power of civil society organizations inside and outside Papua, and the limitations of state power and violence. Siti's and forty-three other similar testimonies provide evidence that Foucault's sovereignty is not necessarily and by default overwhelming and paralyzing. These NGOs resist the sovereign power of the state. They thwart the message of fear, terror and invincibility, and turn it into a message of immorality and illegality (Humphrey 2002, 33).

The narratives of the different actors encapsulate the logic of sovereignty and its limitations. While the message of terror is communicated by the Indonesian state and its agents, simultaneously it includes the possibility of resistance; however, the Papuan experience suggests that this message is not automatically transmitted and received by the audience. On the contrary, the message meets various responses from complete surrender to outright opposition and resis-

26 Interview II/B1 with a caregiver in Java on 16 September 2010. There are some variations in engagement with survivors. An interview with a caregiver V/A4 on 11 May 2011 in the Netherlands illustrates the difficulty reconciling Papuan political factionalism with building Papuan solidarity before an international public. Sometime factionalism caused significant damage to efforts to build Papuan solidarity. Another interview with an international caregiver V/B3 on 29 April 2011 in the Netherlands reveals the preference to engage with Papuans living inside Papua rather than those in exile.

tance. These variations illustrate the degree of agency of survivors, spectators and perpetrators. The relationships between these three groups are asymmetrical, however: in flux and dynamic. They are deeply embedded in patterns of domination and non-communication that have shaped the society and polity of Papua since the 1960s. In this context constellations of sovereignty and governmentality vary, and they are not necessarily successive, as stated by Foucault In other words, docility can be produced and maintained by the state as the central player in the theatre of torture and equally function as a mode of governance. However, other players can shift and shape this position, and thus change the "theatre of torture".

6. Conclusion

Torture in Papua is a theatre. It is not merely a technique to inflict pain on the body of victims. Rather, it comprises a set of technologies of domination ranging from war and killings to imprisonment, surveillance and divide-and-rule tactics. By design it was meant to be a state-sanctioned public exhibition of brutality underpinned by the rationality of sovereignty. Three different types of identities construct and reproduce the theatre and its dynamics: torture survivors, perpetrators and spectators. The framework of the theatre has allowed us to see and analyse torture in Papua not merely as a technique of inflicting pain on the individual bodies of victims but more importantly, as a public display of the domination of the Indonesian state over Papuan bodies and minds. Through this framework the link between sovereignty and governmentality in producing a docile social body could be demonstrated: the role of state sovereignty remains distinctively central in subjugating the Papuan social body by using the technology of public torture. In the Papuan context, sovereignty uses torture as a mode of governance to keep Papuans fully controlled.

Torture in Papua is not executed by some "bad apples" in the Indonesian state apparatus. Rather, it constitutes part of the larger strategy of domination by the Indonesian state in which the practice of torture is sanctioned and part of the policy. The Indonesian state apparatus and its different agents are acting as a collectivity and in a systematic way (Karstedt 2014). This includes torture incidents as well as the impunity of torture at the hands of the justice system, where law is converted into tactics. The practice of torture seems unstoppable even after Indonesia ratified the UN Convention Against Torture.

Even if the law and justice system seems paralyzed, caregivers are not. They represent the strongest narrative of agency. Notwithstanding the policy of terror, they managed to maintain their agency and more importantly, to organize and consolidate resistance in various forms. The collaboration between the caregivers and other actors in the theatre of torture, especially survivors, points to a visible and influential role of civil society and third parties. This changes the scene in the theatre of torture from a confrontation between survivors and the state into a triangle of survivors, the state and caregivers. It is in this triangle where the limitations of sovereignty and governmentality become visible.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2015218
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

The "Secret Islamization" of Europe: Exploring Integrated Threat Theory for Predicting Islamophobic Conspiracy Stereotypes

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

The "Secret Islamization" of Europe: Exploring Integrated Threat Theory for Predicting Islamophobic Conspiracy Stereotypes

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Despite any factual evidence, the idea of a secret „Islamization of Europe" is finding increasing support among different groups in Germany. Anders Behring Breivik, who killed seventy-seven people in the July 22, 2011, massacre in Norway, was partly motivated by such beliefs. A test of revised integrated threat theory as a framework for analyzing Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes in Germany. Symbolic and realistic threats are analyzed as mediators between different antecedents (in-group identification, ambiguity intolerance, clash of civilizations) and the dependent variable, conspiracy stereotypes. An online survey was conducted with 355 respondents from Berlin. The findings indicate that respondents with higher education and left-leaning political orientation were less likely to believe in conspiracy stereotypes and threats. The structural equation model indicates partial mediation via symbolic threats for clash of civilizations and education on conspiracy stereotypes. Symbolic threats fully mediate the relationship between in-group identification and ambiguity intolerance on conspiracy stereotypes.

Since the events of September 11, 2001, public debate, policy, and media in Germany have frequently portrayed Muslims and Islam as a threat to the Western World (Schiffer 2005; Hafez 2007; Kluge 2010; Bielefeldt 2010). Numerous studies indicate a rise in derogatory attitudes and hostile actions against Muslims and Islam in European countries (Allen and Nielsen 2002; Zick, Küpper, and Hövermann 2011). Germany is no exception in this regard (Piper 2010; Brauns 2012; de Nève 2013; Zick and Klein 2014). However, whereas the rise in prejudices against Muslims and Islam attracts increasing attention, a relatively new mode of derogatory attitudes toward the outgroup has hardly been noticed, even though it has prominent supporters in the German blogosphere and public debate: the Islamophobic conspiracy theory (Benz 2011; Hafez 2013; Shooman 2014).

Islamophobic conspiracy theories are a relatively new phenomenon, so little research is currently available. Analyses of public debate, media, and relevant websites indicate that the core of this relatively new narrative is the idea of a *secret* ongoing Islamization of Europe (Hafez 2013; Shooman 2014). As with the popular thesis of a "clash of civilizations," this process is purported to be driven by an asymmetrical Muslim population growth that has produced huge masses of unemployed and alienated individuals, who in turn put pressure on Western societies through immigration (Huntington 1998). The idea of asymmetrical population growth due to Muslims having a higher fertility rate, ultimately leading to conflict, is frequently reiterated in the public debate (Foroutan 2012), online forums (Shooman 2014), and the media (Kluge 2010; Bielefeldt 2010), and was prominently adopted and disseminated in the bestseller *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany is abolishing itself) by former politician Thilo Sarrazin (2010). In fact, a recent study reveals that the size of the Muslim population is overestimated all over Europe.[1]

I am grateful to the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, who sponsored this research with a PhD grant. I would also like to thank Camille Barras and Christian Brückner for their helpful comments and support.

1 Public estimates show German respondents think that Muslims make up 19% of Germany's population, however, the actual percentage is only approximately 6%. For more information, see: http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2015/01/daily-chart-2?fsrc=scn%2Ffb%2Fwl%2Fbl%2Fislamineurope

Furthermore, some proponents of this narrative argue on popular websites that the "Islamization process" is supported by certain leftist politicians, yet concealed from the masses by deliberate media disinformation (Shooman 2014). An orchestrated campaign with a hidden Muslim agenda is alleged to be behind this process, with the ultimate goal of enforcing Islamic laws and rules in Germany and eventually dominating the entire Western world (Fekete 2011). According to Benz (2011), these increasingly popular conspiracy theories operate with a strong emphasis on ethnic/civilizational in-group identity, to which Islam serves as the significant outgroup. The "Islamization process" is contextualized as part of a more comprehensive intergroup clash of civilizations resulting from the irreconcilability of the Islamic and Western cultures (Schiffer and Wagner 2011).

The case of Anders Breivik clearly indicates the importance of addressing such conspiracy theories (Fekete 2011). Several studies in other contexts indicate that belief in conspiracy theories is significantly associated with negative psychological and behavioral consequences, including prejudice (Mashuri and Zaduqisti 2013, 2014; Bilewicz 2007; Imhoff and Bruder 2014; Swami et al. 2011), discrimination (Bilewicz and Krzeminski 2010; Bilewicz et al. 2013), and even political extremism (Bartlett and Miller 2010). Knowledge about underlying social and psychological mechanisms that might foster belief in conspiracy theories is therefore practically important.

From a theoretical perspective, social psychological research on conspiracy theories is primarily concerned with explaining the relationship between well-established psychological measures (such as anomie, authoritarianism, need for cognition) and belief in various conspiracy theories (Webster and Kruglanski 1994; Abalakina-Paap et al. 1999; Wagner-Egger and Bangerter 2007; Swami et al. 2011). However, some studies have started focusing on conspiracy theories as an outcome of intergroup processes (Kofta and Sedek 2005). In this line of research, some studies indicate that in-group identification (Mashuri and Zaduqisti 2013, 2014), intergroup threat (Bilewicz 2007; Mashuri and Zaduqisti 2013), intergroup conflict (Kofta and Slawuta 2013), and various inter-individual difference variables (such as personality characteristics and/or personal ideologies; Kofta and Sedek 2005; Kofta and Slawuta 2013; Bilewicz et al. 2013) are related to belief in conspiracy theories.

To the best of my knowledge, no study has yet analyzed conspiracy theories involving Islam and Muslims as a conspiratorial group. Furthermore, most existing studies rely on correlational study designs, rather than assessing model fit criteria for measurement and structural models (although see Bilewicz and Krzeminski 2010).

This study therefore sets out to analyze Islamophobic conspiracy theories from an intergroup perspective. The concept of conspiracy stereotype (Kofta 1995; Kofta and Sedek 2005) is adopted to assess the strength of belief in Islamophobic conspiracy theories within an intergroup perspective. The revised integrated threat theory (ITT; Renfro and Stephan 2002) is operationalized as an analytical framework to predict Islamophobic conspiracy theories using structural equation modeling. The revised ITT postulates that the more individuals perceive certain social categories as realistic and/or symbolic threats, the more likely they are to exhibit prejudice. According to Stephan and Stephan (2000), symbolic threats target to the values, norms, morals, or identity of the in-group, whereas realistic threats are associated with political and economic power and physical well-being. Realistic threats may include concerns regarding material goods such as jobs and housing. Threat perceptions vary in relation to inter-individual difference variables (such as personality characteristics and/or personal ideologies). Numerous studies have confirmed these hypotheses (Stephan, Diaz-Loving, and Duran 2000; Stephan and Renfro 2002; Oswald 2005; Riek, Mania, and Gaertner 2006; González et al. 2008). In the German public debate, Muslims and Islam are frequently contextualized as symbolic and realistic threats (Schiffer 2005; Hafez 2007; Bielefeldt 2010; Kluge 2010; Foroutan 2012). In this study, I propose that the revised ITT is an appropriate framework for predicting conspiracy stereotypes as an outcome of threats and antecedents (in-group identification, intergroup conflict, and ambiguity intolerance). Specifically, I propose testing whether intergroup threats mediate the relationship between the different antecedents and Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes.

This study therefore contributes to research on the revised ITT by adding conspiracy stereotypes as an additional intergroup outcome. Moreover, the relationship between threat perception and inter-individual difference variables has yet to be fully explored, with Stephan, Renfro and Davis (2009) pointing to the importance of inter-individual differences in threat perception and asking whether people "with certain types of personality characteristics [are] more likely to perceive that they are threatened by out-groups?" (Stephan et al. 2009, 69). In turn, I propose to test ambiguity intolerance as an antecedent to threat and a distal factor to conspiracy stereotypes. Based on previous research (Abalakina-Paap et al. 1999; Wagner-Egger and Bangerter 2007) and theoretical assumptions (Frenkel-Brunswik 1949; Budner 1962; Morris 2000), I hypothesize that ambiguity intolerance is positively related to threat perceptions and conspiracy stereotypes.

1. Social Psychological Research on Conspiracy Theories

Despite their increasing prevalence in popular culture, public debate, and politics (Goertzel 1994; Swami et al. 2011), conspiracy theories are still largely neglected by scientific research (Anton 2011). Since 9/11, however, the growing popularity of conspiracy theories has been matched by an increase in social psychological research into them (Swami et al. 2011).

Conspiracy theories can be defined as explanatory frameworks through which (real or fictitious) historical or contemporary events and processes are interpreted as the results of secretive actions conducted by multiple individuals or members of a social category (Moscovici 1987; Anton 2011).

However, there are differences with regard to the group to which the conspiracy is attributed. Campion-Vincent (2005) identifies at least two subcategories of conspiracy theory: system conspiracy theories and minority conspiracy theories. According to Moscovici (1987), minorities are prone to being considered collective conspirators, since the minority, by its very existence, can be perceived as a threat and capable of plotting against the established order and way of life of the majority. The anti-Semitic conspiracy theories of the Middle Ages are classic examples of conspiracy theories involving minorities. System conspiracy, on the other hand, is a relatively new phenomenon (Campion-Vincent 2005) (first encountered around the time of the French Revolution) associated with powerful elite groups, such as international corporations, secret services, governments, or lobby groups, which are said to secretly seek greater power and dominance, whether on a local or global scale. Wagner-Egger and Bangerter (2007) demonstrate that the two categories differ in their relationship to commonly tested psychological correlates. While both relate to fear and mistrust in existing social institutions and authorities, minority conspiracies are additionally predicted by political conservatism and discomfort with ambiguity ("need for closure"). This is in line with Webster and Kruglanski's finding of a relationship between conspiracy theories and a "need for cognitive closure" (1994). Abalakina-Paak et al. (1999) find that ambiguity intolerance (Frenkel-Brunswik 1948; Budner 1962), a closely related concept to discomfort with ambiguity, is significantly associated with conspiracy theories, political conservatism, and prejudice. Furthermore, ambiguity intolerance is positively correlated with threat appraisal (Bardi, Guerra, and Ramdeny 2009). Political orientation and ambiguity intolerance were therefore included as predictors of threat and conspiracy theories in this study.

Conspiracy theories operate with intergroup categorizations: the in-group (i.e., the believers of the conspiracy theory) is confronted with an outgroup that is construed as a collective enemy secretly planning and acting to harm the in-group (Mashuri and Zaduqisti 2013). The supposedly conspiring outgroup is perceived as a "collective agent" and attributed collective intentions as a "dangerous, potent and deceptive enemy" (Kofta and Sedek 2005, 42; Kofta 1995). On the basis of extensive research on anti-Semitic prejudice and conspiracy theories, Kofta and Sedek develop a conspiracy stereotype, which they define as (2005, 42):

> A causal, holistic theory of an outgroup functioning, ascribing to its members: (1) a collective goal – a permanent, obsessive striving for power and dominance over other groups in general (and the observer's ingroup in particular); (2) collective behavior – a secret way of doing (e.g., engagement in plots, deception, subversive activities, acting in disguise), and (3) a high degree of group egoism and solidarity (high supportiveness for ingroupers combined with complete disregard for outgroupers' well-being).

1.1. In-group Identification

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986) proposes that individuals tend to achieve or improve positive social identity by comparison to relevant outgroups. If the evaluation of the in-group is favorable, the comparison can lead to a strengthening of social identity. However, if the comparison results in a negative evaluation of the in-group, one possible mechanism to re-establish a positive evaluation of the in-group is through derogatory views of the outgroup. Such a mechanism can be activated if, for example, the outgroup is perceived as a threat to the in-group due to a history of intergroup conflict.

Numerous studies provide empirical evidence for this phenomenon, showing that individuals with high levels of in-group identification are more likely to possess negative views of the outgroup and higher threat perceptions (Corenblum and Stephan 2001; Stephan et al. 2002; Riek, Mania, and Gaertner 2006; Renfro et al. 2006; González et al. 2008). The more individuals identify with their in-group, the more likely they are to be concerned with its interests and the more sensitively they are liable to react to possible threats (Branscombe et al. 1999; Brown 2000). In their study in the Netherlands, Gonzales et al. (2008) demonstrate that symbolic (but not realistic) threats, mediate between (ethnic) in-group identification and anti-Muslim prejudice. This finding is consistent with the meta-analysis by Riek et al. (2006), in which strong in-group identification is primarily related to symbolic threats.

In their study on anti-Western conspiracy stereotypes in Malaysia, Mashuri, and Zaduqisti (2013) show that higher (religious) in-group identification is associated with increased belief in conspiracy stereotypes and that anti-Western outgroup derogation mediates the relationship between in-group identification and conspiracy stereotypes. Furthermore, their study indicates that symbolic threats moderate the mediation of in-group identification and conspiracy stereotypes via outgroup derogation. In a subsequent study, Mashuri and Zaduqisti (2014) demonstrate that in-group identification interacts with intergroup mistrust to predict conspiracy stereotypes via perceived competitive victimhood (Noor et al. 2008).

Based on these observations, I expect that in-group identification will directly affect conspiracy stereotypes and that symbolic threats will mediate between in-group identification and Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes.

1.2. Clash of Civilizations

The original version of the ITT (Stephan and Stephan 2000) suggests that a history of conflict (and hence the perception of intergroup conflict) can have an amplifying effect on intergroup threat perceptions. Several studies provide empirical support for intergroup conflict as an antecedent of threat and subsequently of prejudice (Corenblum and Stephan 2001; Stephan, Stephan, and Gudykunst 1999; Stephan, Diaz-Loving, and Duran 2000).

In the context of intergroup threat and Islamophobic attitudes after September 11, 2001, it seems reasonable to consider intergroup conflict as an additional antecedent of threat. Since the terrorist attacks in 2001, Islam and Muslims are frequently portrayed and perceived as a potential threat to the West in the media, public debate, and government policy (Schiffer 2005; Hafez 2006). One of the most popular framings of this intergroup conflict between the West and the Islamic world, is the "clash of civilizations" theory, first postulated by Bernard Lewis (1990) and later modified and popularized by Huntington (1993). The essence of this theory is, as Huntington puts it himself, that after the Cold War, the "velvet curtain of culture" has replaced the "iron curtain of ideology." In other words, according to Huntington, inter-civilizational conflicts are no longer ideological, geopolitical, or economic, but rather caused and maintained by cultural factors (Rizvi 2011).

The clash of civilizations thesis has been criticized for its essentialist and ahistorical view of civilizations, in which different civilizations, or rather world religions, are assumed to be the major driving force behind social identity, despite increasing support for the simultaneous relevance of multiple social categorizations (Crisp and Hewstone 2007). The thesis was also criticized for constructing civilizations as monolithic and homogenous entities, with an unchangeable core essence shared and valued by its adherents (Casanova 2011). Additionally, empirical studies were unable to confirm the posited prolif-

eration of inter-civilizational conflicts on a global scale (Russett, Oneal, and Cox 2000; Chiozza 2002; Tusicisny 2004).

On an individual psychological level, little research is available on the effects of the clash-of-civilizations narrative (Sidanius et al. 2015). It has been tested as a predictor of various intergroup outcomes, such as intergroup bias and support for different types of violence (Mostafa and Mohaned 2007; Sidanius et al. 2004; Sidanius et al. 2015), as well as threat perceptions (Stephan et al. 2009), but not yet as a predictor of conspiracy stereotypes.

In the German context, analyses of media coverage, public debate, and policy indicate that Islam and Muslims are frequently narrated as the essential and significant alien outgroup in comparison to what is depicted as the modern, democratic, and tolerant in-group (Bielefeldt 2010; Kluge 2010; de Nève 2013). In a representative study on attitudes towards religions, 51 percent considered Islam as a threat, and 80 percent perceived a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West (Pollack and Müller 2013).

Another study shows that this relationship is especially strong among participants with strong in-group identification (Foroutan et al. 2014). A similar relationship between in-group identification and perceiving a clash-of-civilizations intergroup conflict was found by Sidanius et al. (2004) in their study on Arab attributions for the intergroup conflict between the West and the Islamic world. Their results indicate that the participants (Christian Lebanese) who showed higher in-group identification were more likely to attribute the 9/11 attacks to a clash-of-civilizations conflict. In turn, respondents with lower in-group identification attributed the attacks more to an anti-dominance struggle.

With regard to Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes, analysis of the Islamophobic conspiracy theories on relevant websites indicates that the elements and figures of an intergroup conflict along the lines of a clash of civilizations are frequently used to support the idea of an ongoing secret Islamization of Germany (Benz 2011; Schiffer and Wagner 2011; Shomann 2014).

On the basis of these findings, I expect that stronger endorsement of a clash-of-civilizations type of intergroup conflict will be significantly associated with in-group identification. Because the clash narrative is an explanatory framework that posits intergroup value-differences as the root of the conflict and not, for instance, economical or geopolitical reasons, I expect it to be primarily related to symbolic threat perceptions. Therefore, I assume that endorsement of a clash-of-civilizations intergroup conflict will predict conspiracy theories directly as well as indirectly via symbolic threat.

1.3. Ambiguity Intolerance

The concept of ambiguity intolerance was established by Frenkel-Brunswik (1949), whose works were closely related to the works on the authoritarian character (Adorno et al. 1950). Frenkel-Brunswik defines ambiguity intolerance as the "tendency to resort to black-white solutions, to arrive at premature closure as to valuative aspects, often at the neglect of reality, and to seek for unqualified and unambiguous overall acceptance and rejection of other people" (1949, 115). Since Frenkel-Brunswik's first definition of the concept, it has undergone several reformulations, and differing measurement scales have been developed (Furnham and Marks 2013). One of the most commonly used scales for assessing ambiguity intolerance was developed by Budner (1962). Budner defines ambiguity intolerance as "the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as sources of threat" (Budner 1962, 29) whereas tolerance for ambiguity is defined as "the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as desirable" (ibid.). According to Budner, situations are ambiguous if they are complex, ambivalent, insoluble, and/or new. In turn, individuals with a high ambiguity intolerance tend to show aversive reactions, such as discomfort, stress, delay, avoidance, and so on when confronted with ambiguous situations or information (Budner 1962; Furnham and Marks 2013). Accordingly, I believe ambiguity intolerance to be a valuable concept for understanding inter-individual differences in reactions towards Islam and Muslims among non-Muslim Germans. Individuals with high levels of ambiguity intolerance could perceive the presence of Islam and Muslims and their increasing visibility in German society as ambiguous, as it challenges traditional understandings of the in-group and requires *new* and *more complex* narratives of the in-group, eventually leading to

threat perceptions. As Muslims are frequently portrayed in public debate and the media as a significant outgroup and possible threat, individuals with high ambiguity intolerance could tend towards an *overall rejection* of Islam and Muslims by *generalizing* negative aspects of individual behavior onto the whole outgroup. As Kofta and Sedek (2005, 42) note, this generalization process is in line with research showing that people interpret intergroup relations similarly to interpersonal relations (Alexander, Brewer, and Hermann 1999) by perceiving social categories not as static entities but as dynamic and "collective agents" (Morris 2000), which, when attributed with collective intentions of a malicious and deceptive nature, constitute a conspiracy stereotype.

Several studies show that ambiguity intolerance is positively related to prejudice and authoritarian character (Adorno et al. 1950; Sidanius 1978; Watson and Morris 2005), and threat appraisal (Bardi, Guerra, and Ramdeny 2009). Furthermore, ambiguity intolerance and the closely related concept of discomfort for ambiguity have been linked to belief in conspiracy theories (Webster and Kruglanski 1994; Abalakina-Paak et al. 1999, Wagner-Egger and Bangerter 2007). Thus, I expect higher ambiguity intolerance to be associated with higher threat perceptions and a stronger belief in conspiracy stereotypes. Furthermore, I expect threats to mediate between ambiguity intolerance and Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes.

1.4. Hypotheses

H1: Political orientation towards the right will be significantly and positively associated with conspiracy stereotypes.

H2: Reported in-group identification and the belief in clash of civilizations will be positively significantly related to each other.

H3: In-group identification will have significant positive direct and indirect effect (the latter via symbolic threats) on conspiracy stereotypes.

H4: The belief in clash of civilizations will have a significant positive direct and indirect effect (the latter via symbolic threats) on conspiracy stereotypes.

H5: Ambiguity intolerance will have a direct and indirect effect (the latter via threats) on conspiracy stereotypes.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

Data acquisition was conducted via an online survey (Unipark) advertised through channels including university email lists, university bulletin boards, and social media. The survey announcement and starting page specified that participants must be German residents and that participation was voluntary and anonymous. The possibility of winning a prize was offered as an incentive (iPod, iPhone, and iPad). The data collection took place between June and August 2014. After removing all non-native and all Muslim respondents, as well as all respondents with any missing values, a total of $N = 355$ German-resident, non-Muslim participants completed the survey without missing values. In the final sample, 203 participants were female (57.2 percent), and 152 male (42.8 percent). The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 36 years ($M = 25.43$, $SD = 4.12$).[2]

2.2. Measures

The survey consisted of a demographic section (age, gender, education, migration background, political orientation, and religion) and a section including the following measurement instruments (predictors): in-group identification, clash of civilizations, and ambiguity intolerance. Realistic and symbolic threats were included as mediators. Anti-Islamic conspiracy stereotypes were measured as a dependent variable and were included after the previously mentioned survey sections.

2.2.1. Predictor Variables

Identification with the (national) in-group was measured, as in similar previous studies (Verkuyten 2005), using three items

2 This paper presents the results of a multipart online survey. The results of this paper are based on the second part of the survey. All participants of this study completed survey number one prior to the survey of this study. The first survey included the following measures: Social Dominance Orientation (Sidanius and Pratto 1999), intergroup threats, anti-Muslim prejudice and anti-Islamic sentiment. Demographic informations of the participants are taken from the first part of the survey. All other measures used in this study were part of the second part of the survey.

from the collective self-esteem scale (Luhtanen and Crocker 1992): "My German identity is an important part of myself"; "Being German is a very important part of how I see myself"; and "I am proud to be a German"). All items were measured on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree." Higher scores indicate stronger in-group identification. Cronbach's α for the three-item scale is .73.

Tolerance of ambiguity was assessed using six items from the scale developed by Budner (1962). Examples include: "What we are used to is always preferable to what is unfamiliar"; and "The sooner we all acquire similar values and ideals, the better." All items were measured on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree." Cronbach's α for the six-item scale is .72.

Clash-of-civilizations intergroup conflict was assessed by four items, adapted for the German context from the study by Sidanius et al. (2004). They capture (a) the endorsement of the existence of a currently ongoing clash of civilizations, in general, and (b) the perception of a clash of cultures between Islam (essentialized and monolithic) and the West in particular. The items included "We are currently facing a 'clash of civilizations'"; "The Islamic culture is inherently incompatible with modernity"; "Islam is not compatible with democracy and human rights"; and "Islam has to modernize itself, otherwise there can be no peaceful coexistence". Pre-test interviews were conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the construct, and the assessment showed overall good values.[3] The participants responded on a four-point scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (4) "strongly agree." Cronbach's α for the four-item scale is .84.

2.2.2. Threats

Symbolic and realistic threats were adapted from Stephan et al. (1999, 2000, 2002). All threats were measured on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree."

Realistic threats were measured using five items addressing economic and political threats from Islam and Muslims (including "The welfare system in Germany is increasingly burdened by the presence of Muslims"; "The Muslims in Germany threaten our economic wealth"; and "Islam threatens security in Germany"). Cronbach's α for the scale is .93.

Symbolic threats were measured using seven items, including: "I am worried that … " (a) " … German norms and values are threatened by the presence of Muslims"; (b) " … our rights and freedom are threatened by the presence of Muslims"; and (c) " … German identity is threatened by the large numbers of Muslims in Germany." Cronbach's α for the scale is .95.

2.2.3. Dependent Variable

Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes were constructed using formulations similar to those of Kofta and Sedek (2005) and were measured using four items: "Muslims are secretly plotting to achieve an Islamization of Germany"; "Actually, Muslims are striving to establish sharia in Germany"; "Islam is conspiring against the West"; and "Muslims are planning to Islamize the West step by step.") on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "definitely false" to (5) " definitely true." Cronbach's α for the scale is .95.

2.3. Analysis

The aim of this study is to test the revised integrated threat theory (ITT; Stephan and Renfro 2002) for explaining Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. The results will be presented in four sections. First, descriptive results for the measured scales (additive) will be presented. Second, the results for the confirmatory factor analyses, which assess the fit of the observed variables to their respective latent constructs, will be given. Third, the findings regarding the relationships between the different constructs and model fit of the structural model will be shown. Fourth, the results of the mediation analysis will conclude. Following the procedure of Gonzales et al. (2008), the measurement and structural model were fitted by maximum likelihood, assuming multivariate normality using Amos (Version 22). Any surveys with missing values were removed from the sample. The resulting final sample (N = 355) included no missing values.

3 See the results section for detailed information.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Results

The mean scores, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among all the variables are shown in Table 1. Overall, the mean scores for all scales were below their respective neutral mean values. The mean scores varied slightly by gender, with male participants showing significantly higher mean scores than female participants for both threats and ambiguity intolerance. When age was used as a control variable in the statistical analysis, no significant difference was found for any variable. Overall, symbolic threats showed higher mean values than realistic threats. Higher education is significantly and negatively related to both threats and conspiracy stereotypes. As expected (H1), political orientation towards the right (1 = left / 5 = right) is positively related to conspiracy stereotypes ($r = .35, p < .01$) and to symbolic ($r = .35, p < .01$) and realistic threats ($r = .34, p < .01$). Furthermore, in line with H2, clash of civilizations was significantly related to in-group identification ($r = .49, p < .01$).

Overall, the mean scores for threat perceptions and belief in conspiracy theories suggest that the sample subjects show a low level of threat perception and belief in conspiracy stereotypes.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables (N= 355)

	M	*(SD)*	(Scale)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. In-group identification	2.48	0.93	(1–5)	–						
2. Clash of Civilizations	2.03	0.73	(1–4)	.49**	–					
3. Ambiguity Intolerance	2.00	0.60	(1–5)	.40**	.32**	–				
4. Political Orientation	2.14	0.75	(1–5)	.49**	.35**	.22**	–			
5. Education	5.35	1.29	(1–8)	-.09	-.14**	-.23**	-.06	–		
6. Symbolic Threats	1.52	0.82	(1–5)	.55**	.67**	.49**	.35**	-.23**	–	
7. Realistic Threats	1.34	0.68	(1–5)	.49**	.55**	.53**	.34**	-.28**	.79**	–
8. Conspiracy Stereotype	1.67	0.97	(1–5)	.52**	.67**	.44**	.35**	-.27**	.77**	.66**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

All the measures show significant intercorrelation in the expected direction (Table 1). High intercorrelations can indicate multicollinearity. Variance inflation factor (VIF) analyses yields 3.20 as the highest VIF value. According to Myers (1990), VIF values smaller than 10 indicate that there is no serious problem with regard to multicollinearity.

3.2. Measurement Model

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed including all the proposed constructs (with Amos 22.0), to assess the construct validity[4] of the individual variables and model fit indices for the proposed measurement model.[5] The convergent validity and discriminant validity

4 The validity of the clash-of-civilizations scale, which was adapted and modified for this study, was analyzed during the CFA analysis. Acceptable discriminant validity is indicated by factor correlations < .80 (Brown 2006) and convergent validity by factor loading values > .60 (Garson 2010). The results show good discriminant validity (factor correlations ranging between .50 and .76) and good convergent validity (standardized regression weights for the factor loadings ranging between .62 and .84, $p < .001$).

5 The results of an initial CFA revealed that the In-group Identification scale (Luhtanen and Crocker 1992) and Tolerance of Ambiguity scale (Budner 1962) did not fit the data well. Therefore, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (AMOS) were conducted to shorten the scales.
The full Tolerance of Ambiguity scale, consisting of sixteen items, did not fit the data well, χ^2 (584) = 1313.556, $p < .01$ (CFI = .93, SRMR = .05, RMSEA = .05). The items were analyzed for their factor score to uniqueness ratio, and the six items with the highest ratio were selected. The final six-item scale (two items for each of the three subscales) fits the data well, χ^2 (289) = 753.373, $p < .01$ (CFI = .97, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .05). The chi-square difference test was significant, indicating that the short scale is a better fit to the data, $\chi^2_{diff.}$ (295) = 699.429, $p < .001$.
The full In-group Identification scale, consisting of five items, did not fit the data well, χ^2 (289) = 693.587, $p < .01$ (CFI = .96, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .06). The items were analyzed for their factor score to uniqueness ratio, and the three items with the highest ratio were selected. The final three-item scale fits the data well, χ^2 (241) = 571.405, $p < .01$ (CFI = .97, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .05). The chi-square difference test was significant, indicating that the short scale is a better fit to the data, $\chi^2_{diff.}$ (48) = 122.182, $p < .001$.

(CFA) of the constructs are verified when the results indicate a good model fit (Brown 2006). Following the suggestions of Hu and Bentler (1999), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMS) were employed as absolute fit indices, and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was employed as a comparative fit index. Conservatively speaking, a good fit of the data is indicated by an RMSEA value of less than 0.05, an SRMSR value of less than 0.08, and CFI values of 0.95 or higher (Hu and Bentler 1999). Table 2 shows that the CFA with a six-factor oblique solution, in which all constructs were allowed to correlate with each other, showed an acceptable absolute and comparative fit to the data. The six-factor oblique model had a significantly better fit to the data than the six-factor orthogonal model, with independent constructs [$\chi^2_{diff.}$ (9) = 434.939, $p < .001$] or the one-factor model [$\chi^2_{diff.}$ (15) = 1697.939, $p < .001$].

Table 2: Comparison of Fit Indices of the First Model (Six-Factor Oblique), the Second Model (Six-Factor Orthogonal), and the Third Model (One Factor)

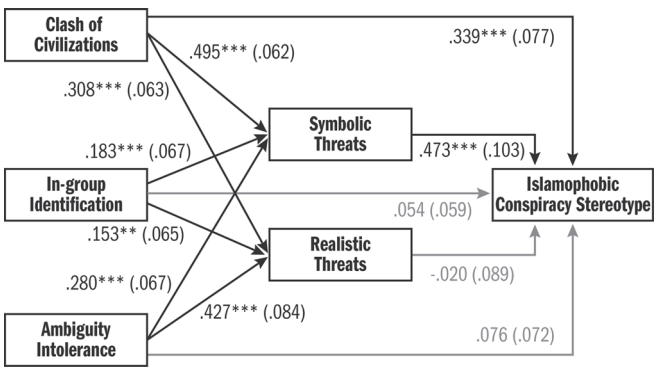
	Fit Indices				
Models	χ^2	*df*	*RMSEA*	*SRMR*	*CFI*
Six-factor oblique	763.487	362	.050	.044	.96
Six-factor orthogonal	1.198.426	371	.070	.070	.91
One factor	2.461.282	377	.111	.248	.78

In order to improve the model fit indices for the final six-factor oblique model, error items of the same latent constructs, but not between items measuring different latent constructs, were allowed to covary, resulting in the respecification of nine parameters in total: one residual covariance for symbolic threats; three residual covariances for realistic threats and three for ambiguity intolerance; one residual covariance for in-group identification and one for conspiracy stereotypes. The model χ^2 of 565,225 indicates a lack of an absolute fit ($p < .001$), which is not uncommon for larger sample sizes. However, all the other fit measures indicate that the model has a good model fit: χ^2 /*df* = 1.64; CFI = 97; SRMR = .044, and RMSEA = .041 and 90% CI = .035 – .047. The z-statistics obtained for all the factor loadings were statistically significant ($p < .001$), and the standardized factor loadings were between .40 and .95.

3.3. Structural Model

The proposed structural model shows a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 622.427$; $p < .001$; *df* = 379; $\chi^2/df = 1.64$; CFI = 97; SRMR = .044 and RMSEA = .043 with 90% CI = .037 – .049). Figure 1 shows the results of a saturated model, in which all pathways, direct as well as indirect, were estimated simultaneously. Education was entered as a control variable. The figure depicts the estimated standardized coefficients of the direct pathways. As expected, in-group identification had a significant effect on symbolic threats, and a smaller, but also significant effect on realistic threats (H3). However, unexpectedly, in-group identification had no significant direct effect on conspiracy stereotypes (H3). As hypothesized, clash of civilizations had a significant positive effect on both types of threats and on conspiracy stereotypes (H4).

Figure 1: Path diagram model with estimated standardized coefficients with bootstrap standard errors in parentheses



*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
Note: Non-significant paths are marked grey.

Thus, as predicted, the endorsement of the existence of a clash of civilizations was associated with higher levels of threat perceptions and conspiracy stereotypes. Ambiguity intolerance also showed positive significant effects on both types of threat, as expected (H5). However, no significant effect on the dependent variable was found (H5).

To assess the mediating role of the threats on the relationships between the three predictor variables and the dependent variable, the total effects of the predictors were further decomposed into direct and indirect effects. Table 3 shows that for clash of civilizations, the direct and indirect pathways are significant, indicating partial mediation through symbolic threat. Partial mediation through symbolic threat is also suggested for education. The indirect pathways of in-group identification and ambiguity intolerance through symbolic threat are significant, thus suggesting full mediation.

Table 3: Decomposition of unstandardized and standardized direct and indirect effects on conspiracy stereotypes, with bootstrap standard errors in parentheses

	Total Effects		Direct Effects		Indirect Effects	
	Unstandardized	Standardized	Unstandardized	Standardized	Unstandardized	Standardized
Education	-.111 (.033)	-.146 (.043)	-.081 (.027)	-.106 (.035)	-.030 (.016)	-.040 (.021)
In-group Identification	.150 (.078)	.138 (.070)	.059 (.065)	.054 (.059)	.091 (.040)	.083 (.036)
Clash of Civilizations	.994 (.143)	.567 (.067)	.594 (.146)	.339 (.077)	.400 (.093)	.228 (.050)
Ambiguity Intolerance	.490 (.195)	.200 (.070)	.186 (.188)	.076 (.072)	.304 (.115)	.124 (.045)
Symbolic Threats	.559 (.118)	.473 (.103)	.559 (.137)	.473 (.103)		
Realistic Threats	-.030 (.137)	-.020 (.089)	-.030 (.118)	-.020 (.089)		

The explained variance of endogenous variables is indicated by the squared multiple correlations value. The path model of the full model accounts for 71 percent [.71, 95% CI (0.628, 0.768) $p = .003$] of the variance in Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes.

4. Discussion

The main objectives of this study were threefold: First, to test the revised integrated threat theory as an analytical framework for predicting belief in Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. Second, following the suggestions of Stephan et al. (2009), to test whether the personality characteristic ambiguity intolerance (Frenkel-Brunswik 1949; Budner 1962) had an influence on threat perception and/or conspiracy stereotypes. Third, to test the clash-of-civilizations intergroup conflict as an additional antecedent to threats and conspiracy stereotypes. It was proposed that symbolic threats will mediate between the relevant antecedents (in-group identification, clash-of-civilizations intergroup conflict and ambiguity intolerance) and Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes.

On the basis of previous findings (Wagner-Egger and Bangerter 2007; Abalakina-Paak et al. 1999), I predicted ambiguity intolerance and right-leaning political orientation to be predictors of belief in conspiracy theories. The results of this study confirm that political conservatism is statistically related to Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. Furthermore, on the basis of theoretical assumptions (Budner 1962) and previous empirical findings (Bardi et al. 2009), I expected a direct effect of ambiguity intolerance on threat perceptions. The results suggest no direct effect of ambiguity intolerance on conspiracy stereotypes. As expected, ambiguity intolerance was directly related to both types of threat perception and, via symbolic threat, to conspiracy stereotypes. This confirms the role of ambiguity intolerance in explaining conspiracy theories as an intergroup outcome. As expected, individuals with high ambiguity intolerance appear to be more open to intergroup threat perceptions and, via symbolic threat, to believing that Islam and Muslims represent a collective enemy with a secret plan to harm the in-group. Therefore, this study supports considering personality characteristics in explaining the inter-individual differences in threat perception and subsequently, the different intergroup outcome variables for conspiracy stereotypes, as suggested by Stephan et al. (2009).

Furthermore, following the findings of Mashuri and Zadaquisti (2013, 2014), in-group identification (ethnic) was

expected to be statistically related to conspiracy stereotypes. Building on previous research (Riek et al. 2006), in-group identification was further expected to relate primarily to symbolic threat. The results of the structural equation model confirm that in-group identification is significantly and primarily related to symbolic threats. However, no direct effect on conspiracy stereotypes was found. The reason for this may be that religious in-group identification (as described by Mashuri and Zadaquisti 2013; 2014) has been found to be related to threat perceptions and different intergroup outcomes (Verkuyten 2007) more often than to national or ethnic in-group identification (for a general overview, see Ashmore, Wilder, and Jussim 2001). Moreover, in-group identification had a significant indirect effect on conspiracy stereotypes via symbolic threats, thus confirming the assumptions of the revised ITT, which proposes in-group identification as antecedent of intergroup threat.

Moreover, the perception of an intergroup conflict involving a clash of civilizations was proposed as an additional antecedent to threats and conspiracy stereotypes. Earlier studies employing a clash-of-civilizations perspective as an explanatory framework for intergroup bias and support for violence showed that the perception of an intergroup conflict rooted in a clash of values is significantly related to negative intergroup outcomes (Kinder and Sears 1981; Lewis 1990; Huntington 1993; Sidanius et al. 2004). The results of this study contribute to a better understanding of this research by adding conspiracy stereotypes as a further consequence of a value-clash narrative, as well as by demonstrating that the clash narrative is significantly related to higher levels of threat perceptions and, via symbolic threats, significantly related to conspiracy stereotypes. As expected, the variable clash of civilizations was strongly related to symbolic threats. However, it also showed a significant yet weaker effect on realistic threats. Therefore, considering both types of threats simultaneously, as suggested by the integrated threat theory, is implemented in this study by examining the clash-narrative as a possible antecedent of threat.

In agreement with previous studies (Sidanius et al. 2004; Sidanius et al. 2015), the clash perspective was found to be significantly associated with in-group identification. The results suggest that individuals with higher levels of in-group identification and a right-leaning political orientation are more prone to believe in Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. On the basis of previous findings suggesting a semantic similarity of Islamophobic conspiracy theories to clash-of-civilizations attributions (Benz 2011; Shomann 2014), I expected clash of civilizations to have a direct effect and an indirect effect (via threat) on conspiracy stereotypes. The results confirm both the direct effect and an indirect effect via symbolic threat, suggesting partial mediation.

Finally, the findings indicate that lower education is significantly and positively related to threats and conspiracy stereotypes. The negative effect of participants having a higher level of education still holds after controlling for mediation via threat, thus suggesting partial mediation. Belief in Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes seems to decrease as the level of the participants' education increases.

Overall, the findings confirm the expectation that belief in conspiracy theories as an intergroup outcome is directly related to symbolic threat perceptions and the perception of a conflict involving a clash of civilization. Additionally, symbolic threat mediates between in-group identification, the perception of an intergroup conflict involving a clash of civilizations, ambiguity intolerance, education, and conspiracy stereotypes. In sum, the full model accounted for 68 percent of the total variance found in the Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. The overall results confirm that the revised ITT is appropriate for explaining belief in conspiracy theories.

5. Limitations and Future Research

Certain limitations of this study should be addressed in any future research. First, the relatively small sample consisted mainly of students, so the results are not representative of German society as a whole. Future studies could test the relationships in a more representative study. Another limitation is that data acquisition was conducted via an online survey, which is a relatively new method in the field of scientific research. The obvious advantage of online surveys is to reach respondents more quickly and cost-effectively than is possible using traditional methods.

Online surveys also have been shown to decrease social desirability, due to their anonymity (Kreuter, Presser, and Tourangeau 2009). On the other hand, online surveys must be kept very brief in order to ensure a high response rate (for an introduction to the online survey method and a discussion, see Dillman, Smyth, and Christian 2008). Finally, the high percentage of explained variance in the dependent variables (68 percent) may be inflated by the common method variance of the survey procedure.

Based on the findings of this study, future research could expand the scope of the antecedents to threats and different intergroup outcomes by assessing the effect of further potential personality characteristics (Stephan et al. 2009). Moreover, alternative explanatory frameworks for intergroup conflict, such as the counter-dominance perspective (Mostafa and Al-Hamdi 2007; Sidanius et al. 2004) and generalized personal ideologies (for example, the conspiracy mentality from Imhoff and Bruder 2014) could also be analyzed in the context of threats and conspiracy theories involving high-power outgroups (for example, in the case of system conspiracy).

Additionally, Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes could be assessed with a broader scope than was done in this analysis (four items only). Finally, future studies should explore the relationships between Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes, anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim prejudices, and Islamophobic behavioral intentions.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, the findings indicate that participants have relatively low adherence to Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes, which is an encouraging finding. Nevertheless, approximately 9 percent of the respondents indicated that they were not certain that an Islamophobic conspiracy did not exist and approximately another 8 percent indicated that they believed in an Islamophobic conspiracy to some degree. While this is certainly not an alarming amount, we must keep in mind that the sample in this study consisted mainly of well-educated respondents and does not necessarily reflect the views of the general population. Future studies with a more diverse sample may provide different results.

The results imply some possible practical actions to reduce intergroup tensions. In the context of integrating Muslims and Islam into German society, the results suggest that a predominantly culturalistic perspective on intergroup relations with essentializing and monolithic social categorizations (for example, "culture clash between the West and Islam") in conjunction with a low tolerance for ambiguity ("*The sooner we all acquire similar values and ideals, the better")* and strong in-group identification ("I am proud to be a German") explained much of the variance in intergroup threat perceptions as well as in adherence to Islamophobic conspiracy stereotypes. In light of these results, public policy and public debate on the subject would be well advised to avoid the pitfalls of reductionist, black-and-white explanations of intergroup relations and should instead support more inclusive in-group narratives (Muslim *and* German), with an emphasis on the positive aspects of cultural diversity in an immigration country. This should help mitigate intergroup conflict perceptions and subsequently, support the integration of Muslims and Islam in Germany.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016169
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864–1385

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Using an Arab-Muslim sample of 160 Egyptian citizens from the greater Cairo area, we examined the role of religion in prejudice toward Americans and Europeans. When religious fundamentalism was tested concurrently with general religiousness, only religious fundamentalism significantly predicted prejudices toward both Americans and Europeans. In a second step we included closed-mindedness (CM), a facet of need for cognitive closure, and conservatism (RCON), a facet of right-wing authoritarianism, to explain the religion-prejudice link. Instead of using the two variables as parallel mediators, we assumed CM to be a predictor of RCON. Hence, in a first model we applied CM and RCON as serial mediators of the religious fundamentalism-prejudice relation. In a second model where fundamentalism was predicted by CM and RCON prejudice remained the outcome variable. RCON had stronger effects than CM across all models. The effect of religious fundamentalism was marginal or not significant when CM and RCON served as preceding variables in the second model, suggesting that they may be more decisive than religious fundamentalism in the development of prejudice. Participants distinguished between Americans and Europeans, with Americans the more relevant outgroup in the religious context.

International relations of Middle Eastern countries with the United States and Europe have been characterized by tensions, for multiple reasons stretching back centuries. In recent history, the most profound rupture in relations was the attacks of September 11, 2001. The interactions that followed were characterized by violence and counter-violence with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and more attacks such as the bombings in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005. Today, after the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and Iraq and the uprisings of the Arab Spring, relations are a little more at ease. However, Syria's civil war, the Gaza crisis, and the rise of the "Islamic State" currently destabilize the region and demand international political action with unforeseeable outcomes.

Besides obvious political and historical reasons for the challenging relationship between the Middle East and the United States and Europe, social psychological research has contributed to our understanding of these relations by investigating (1) the role of individual mechanisms and how they drive the conflict, and (2) the impact of international political actions on individuals' perceptions and attitudes toward the United States. In studies with Arab citizens from Lebanon and Egypt, the main theories applied were social dominance theory (Henry et al. 2005; Levin et al. 2003; Sidanius et al. 2004), international image theory (Alexander, Levin, and Henry 2005; Bilali 2004), and – most recently – the dual process model (Levin et al. 2012). In summary, these studies indicate that social domi-

We would like to thank Andreas Zick for valuable discussions of earlier versions of this paper. We would also like to thank our Egyptian interviewers and participants, without whom this study would not have been possible. We are especially grateful to Mohsen Alashmoni for his valuable advice. Friederike Sadowski received funds from the German Research Foundation, Research Training Group 884 "Group focused enmity" as well as additional funding from the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, Bielefeld University, Germany.

nance orientation (SDO) and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) partly explain both prejudiced perceptions of the U.S.-Arab relationship and support of violence against the United States.

One aspect not yet considered in this research context is the role of religion, although religion is a factor dominating Arab society and politics.

Furthermore, decades of research with Christian samples in the United States and Europe show that religion is a factor influencing various prejudices in complex ways (Allport and Ross 1967; Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis 1993; Hall, Matz, and Wood 2010), that factors such as right-wing authoritarianism (RWA; Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Duckitt et al. 2010) or need for cognitive closure (NFC; Brandt and Reyna 2010; Webster and Kruglanski 1994) can explain part of the religion-prejudice link, and that this relation may acquire political relevance when religion is a factor influencing politics (Brandt and Reyna, 2014). Among the religious factors, religious fundamentalism, a conservative belief structure that may serve as ideology (such as the Tea Party movement in the United States), turned out as one of the strongest predictors of a variety of prejudices in the Christian context (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Hill et al. 2010; Hunsberger 1995; Johnson et al. 2011).

1. Aims of the Present Research

With our study, which was conducted in Egypt, we aimed to close this gap by investigating if and how religious factors influence Arab citizens' perception of Americans and Europeans. In particular, we expected *religious fundamentalism* to be the appropriate concept for capturing those parts of religion causing prejudice. We further expected that, similar to research findings in the United States and Europe, the relationship of religion and prejudice would be further explained by cognitive-motivational factors such as RWA and NFC. A mediator model, in line with previous research (Brandt and Reyna 2010; Hill et al. 2010; Mavor et al. 2009; Shen Johnson et al. 2013), is complemented by a second model, in which NFC and RWA serve as predictors of religious fundamentalism, which in turn serves as a predictor of prejudice. This is because NFC and RWA could have motivated a person to adopt religious fundamentalism to satisfy his/her needs for cognitive closure and steadfast guidance and values (Brandt and Reyna 2010, 2014). This model relates to Jost's theory on why and how people adopt ideologies (Jost 2006; Jost, Federico, and Napier 2009).

Hitherto the focus of analysis has been on U.S.-Arab relations. However, the European states are political actors in the region as well, albeit more in terms of economics and civil society than in terms of military operations (Gad 2005). This may yield a less negative perception of the European-Arab relationship than the U.S.-Arab one. In sum, we hope to further our understanding of the individual mechanisms at work, especially with regard to the role of cognitive-motivational and religious factors.

2. Why Might Religion be a Predictor of Prejudice toward Americans and Europeans in Egypt?

2.1. Previous Research with Christian Samples

Half a century of research on the link between religion and prejudice in the United States and Europe has shown that religion and prejudice are indeed associated. However, this relationship is a complex one, determined by several factors such as the form of religiosity (Allport and Ross 1967; Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis 1993), the prohibition or permission of certain prejudices by the religious communities (so called proscribed or non-proscribed prejudice, for example, Duck and Hunsberger 1999; Batson and Stocks 2008), and the measurements used (Goldfried and Miner 2002). Among the different aspects of religiousness, it was especially religious fundamentalism, a deeply conservative approach to religion emphasizing that only one's own beliefs are correct and true, that showed consistent positive relationships with all kinds of prejudices, including racism and homophobia (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Hall, Matz, and Wood 2010). This relation was especially strong when a target group was perceived as violating the fundamentalists' religious values (Duck and Hunsberger 1999; Laythe et al. 2002; Mavor, Louis, and Laythe 2011).

2.2. Application to the Egyptian Context

First, Egypt is a religiously conservative country (Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999), which makes it an ideal con-

text to test religious fundamentalism as a predictor of prejudice.[1] Because the understanding of religious fundamentalism is controversial (Hood, Hill, and Williamson 2005) and its most common conceptualization in psychology (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992) bears some highly criticized stereotypical characteristics such as militancy and violence, we need to clarify our own understanding of religious fundamentalism. Following Hood and colleagues (2005), we define it as a belief structure that is not related to any particular content (see also Kirkpatrick, Hood, and Hartz 1991; Williamson et al. 2010), but characterized by the specific way of interpreting the sacred text central to the religious community, and the related process through which an objective truth and the constitution of the fundamentalist reality is derived (Hood, Hill, and Williamson 2005; Williamson et al. 2010). This concept of *intratextuality,* developed by Hood and colleagues (2005) to avoid a stereotypical characterization of religious fundamentalism, is applicable to all three Abrahamitic religions and has been cross-culturally validated in a Muslim context (Williamson et al. 2010).

Second, there is evidence that especially the United States is perceived as value-violating and these perceptions are often expressed in terms of religion, as in the speeches and appeals of the global jihad movement (Ibrahim 2007). That makes the existence of non-proscribed prejudice (prejudice permitted by a religious community) likely.

Third, in daily Egyptian politics the role and influence of religion is constantly debated (Agrama 2012). Since the ouster of Mubarak in 2011, many parties have been founded on religious programmes, and the inclusion of Islamic laws in the constitution was heatedly debated (Asad 2012; Egypt Independent 2012). That makes it all the more likely that people's religious attitudes also influence their perception and attitude toward international political actors.

3. What Factors May Contribute to the Religion-Prejudice Link in the Egyptian Context?

The role of different social attitudes and cognitive variables was investigated to clarify why and how religion and prejudice are associated. In previous research, RWA and NFC were mostly considered as mediators of the religion-prejudice association. However, there is also evidence that they may be preceding variables and thus predict religious fundamentalism, which in turn causes prejudices.

3.1. Previous Research on RWA as Mediator

Several studies (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Hall, Matz, and Wood 2010; Johnson et al. 2011; Johnson et al. 2012; Laythe, Finkel, and Kirkpatrick 2001, 2002; Mavor et al. 2009; Mavor et al. 2011) found evidence that RWA, a social ideological attitude or value (Duckitt et al. 2010), may mediate the religious fundamentalism-prejudice association. In a recent study, Brandt and Reyna (2014) predicted and found that authoritarianism (such as reflected in obedience to the sacred text) and traditionalism (for example reflected in conservative values and norms preserving the status quo), which are both core values of religious fundamentalism, mediated effects of religious fundamentalism on prejudices. Given Egypt's authoritarian political system (Kassem 2004) and conservative society, RWA may be associated with religious fundamentalism even more strongly than in the United States or Europe and thus contribute more strongly to the religion-prejudice relation.

3.2. Previous Research on NFC as Mediator

Another factor considered for explaining why fundamentalism is related to prejudice is a rigid cognitive style (Brandt and Reyna 2010; Hill et al. 2010), most prominently conceptualized as need for cognitive closure (NFC) by Kruglanski and Webster (1994). It is defined as an "individual's desire for a firm answer to a question, any firm answer as opposed to confusion and/or ambiguity" (Kruglanski 2004, 6). Roets and Van Hiel (2011a) even suggest

1 According to the World Values Survey report on Egypt (World Values Survey Association 2014), 94.1 percent of the Egyptian sample (n=1,523) indicated that religion was very important to them. Concerning their general political attitude, 57.1 percent selected 6 or higher on a scale ranging from 1 (political left) to 10 (political right). Only 18.5 percent positioned themselves in the range 1 to 4. The middle position of 5 was chosen by 24.5 percent.

that NFC is the motivational cognitive style proposed by Allport (1954, 175, 400) as an omnibus factor generating all kinds of prejudice.

Findings from various studies show that these assumptions also apply to the religious fundamentalism-prejudice association, where NFC has displayed considerable strength as mediator (Brandt and Reyna 2010; Hill et al. 2010). This effect is explained in terms of religious fundamentalism as an ideology providing order, consistency, and certainty, and thereby attractive for people high in NFC (Brandt and Reyna 2010). Prejudice occurs when a person's adopted ideology is challenged by groups with different beliefs or values. In the end, it is not the beliefs as such but the way people believe that causes prejudices (Hunsberger 1995). Other studies (Jost et al. 2003; Jost et al. 2007) also found that high NFC scores were related to specific ideologies serving this need and that perceived threat to these ideologies entailed rejection and prejudice toward groups perceived as threatening (Federico, Golec, and Dial 2005). That NFC may also be a mediator in the Egyptian context is plausible given the struggle over religion and politics, but also the general instability of society and politics since the January 25 Revolution in 2011 (Korany and El-Mahdi 2014), which may increase the need for stability, structure, and certainty.[2]

3.3. RWA and NFC as Predictors of Religious Fundamentalism

So far, we have considered each of the mediating factors to explain the fundamentalism-prejudice link independently. However, research on cognitive derivates of political ideology suggests that NFC could also be framed as the preceding variable and RWA as the subsequent one. For example, Cornelis and Van Hiel (2006; see also Onraet et al. 2011) demonstrated that RWA and SDO mediated the effects of two dimensions of NFC, desire for order and predictability, on conservatism and prejudice. This indicates that these cognitive variables are among the cognitive mechanisms related to these social attitudes that may entail the adoption of certain ideologies such as religious fundamentalism because they satisfy needs for order, structure, and certainty. Research by Jost and colleagues (2009) explaining which macro and micro factors influence the adoption of particular ideologies lends further support to these assumptions. In their model, NFC is one of the suggested micro-context factors underlying the epistemic motivation that then leads to resistance to change, the adoption of a conservative ideology, and specific prejudice and discrimination in order to justify the existing system.

In sum, NFC could be the preceding variable and hence the predictor of RWA. Religious fundamentalism as an ideology could be adopted as a consequence of the NFC-RWA link, and in turn lead to prejudice when the certainty provided by religious fundamentalism is threatened.

4. The Current Study

The aim of the current study was to expand our understanding of prejudice toward Americans and Europeans by exploring the role of religion as well as that of cognitive-motivational variables such as NFC and RWA. In a first step, we tested the hypothesis that religious fundamentalism would predict prejudices toward Americans and Europeans. This hypothesis was based on the fact that religious fundamentalism was prominent in the Egyptian context and had been shown to be a strong predictor of prejudice in the Christian context. General religiousness served as control variable.

In a second step, structural equation modeling was applied to estimate mediation models. Encouraged by the findings on NFC as predictor of RWA (Cornelis and Van Hiel 2006; Onraet et al. 2011) and the work of Jost and colleagues (2007, 2009), we considered two models theoretically plausible and estimated them. In the first model, NFC and RWA were employed as serial mediators of the religious fundamentalism-prejudice link, in accordance with previous studies. In the second model, NFC and then RWA preceded religious fundamentalism, which finally predicted prejudice.

2 The January 25 Revolution is the key event at the beginning of the Arab Spring in Egypt. It culminated in the ouster of President Mubarak in February 2011 (Korany and El-Mahdi 2014).

Because of limited space and time in the questionnaire and survey process, we included only one dimension each of RWA and NFC respectively. The conservatism dimension (RCON) of RWA was selected because it should be most closely linked to the fundamentalist belief structure (Brandt and Reyna 2014) and had proven to be culturally adequate during our qualitative pre-testing phase (see Method section). Moreover, the revised RWA scale by Duckitt and colleagues (2010) and the non-content-related fundamentalism scale by Hood and colleagues (2005) were employed to avoid statistical overlap and inflated correlations (Brandt and Reyna 2014; Johnson et al. 2012; Mavor et al. 2009). This has been a severe problem in earlier studies (for example, Laythe et al. 2002) when using the RWA scale by Altemeyer (1992).

For NFC, the sub-dimension closed-mindedness (CM) was selected, because of evidence from a study in the Christian context (Brandt and Reyna 2010) that it is the sub-dimension of NFC most strongly linked to the fundamentalism-prejudice association.

5. Method

5.1. Sample and Procedure

Data were collected in the greater Cairo area in June and July 2013. Conducting surveys in Egypt is generally a challenging task because surveys are not a well-known research procedure and people are often suspicious toward strangers asking questions about such sensitive topics as religion or foreign countries. To avoid any bias due to our foreign nationality and also to make trust-building easier, participant recruitment was organized by a local organization that approached potential respondents in different settings (such as cafés or a friend's house). If a person agreed to participate after reading our information sheet, the questionnaire was handed to them and the interviewers waited until they had completed it. Although we aimed to gather a sample based on demographic specifications (age, gender, religion, education) matching the composition of Egyptian society, this turned out to be impossible.

Because our focus was on the Arab-Muslim context, only Muslim participants were included in the sample. We excluded the responses of 24 participants (11 were not Egyptian citizens and 13 had more than 50 percent missing values on the items measuring the religious variables). This left a sample of 160 participants (107 male, 46 female) with complete data on all variables (M_{age}=45.63, SD_{age}=16.49).

5.2. Pre-testing and Content of Measures

Cross-culturally valid measures were obtained in an intense qualitative research process with cognitive interviews (Willis 2005) and discussion groups conducted in the fall of 2012 in Cairo. The results of the interviews were analyzed with the qualitative content approach (Mayring 2007) involving two researchers to ensure reliability. Factor analysis was applied to all scales to confirm the assumed theoretical structures.

5.2.1. Measures of the Religious Variables

Religious fundamentalism was measured with a slightly modified version of the intratextual fundamentalism scale by Hood and colleagues (2005). We reworded item RF5 from "The Qur'an is the words of men, NOT the words of God" to "The Qur'an is the words of God, NOT the words of men", because pre-testing revealed that the original version had the potential to offend participants. The other items used were: "Everything in the Qur'an is absolutely true without question" (RF1); "The Qur'an should never be doubted, even when scientific or historical evidence outright disagrees with it" (RF2); "The truths of the Qur'an will never be outdated, but will always apply equally well to all generations" (RF3); and "The Qur'an is the only one that is true above all Holy Books or sacred texts of other religions" (RF4). The response scale was a five-point-Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). The scale proved to be highly reliable (α=.92).

In addition, we included a measure of *general religiousness* in our study, serving as control variable that ensured that being religious as such was not a predictor of prejudice. General religiousness was conceptualized in alignment with Huber (2008) and defined as the behavioral dimension of religious identity, the overarching concept. Four dimensions of religiousness were included in this measure: ideology, experience, and public and private practices (Huber 2008; Stark and Glock 1969). In the "Religions-

monitor" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2007), a study across twenty-one countries with nationally representative samples, this concept of general religiousness has been successfully applied in Muslim countries. For our study, we used the following items from the Religionsmonitor: "How often do you think about religious issues?" (RG1, intellect); „How strongly do you believe in God?" (RG2, ideology); and „How often do you experience situations where you have the feeling that God intervenes in your life?" (RG3, experience). The response scales ranged from one to five (RG1 and RG2: 1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=moderately, 4=fairly, 5=very much; RG3: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally, 4=often, 5=very often). For the religious practices dimension, three items from the *Psychological Measure of Islamic Religiousness* scale (PMIR; Abu Raiya et al. 2008) were used. These were "How often do you go to the masjid?" (RG4),[3] "How often do you fast?" (RG5), and "How often do you pray?" (RG6). The response scales were five-point-Likert scales (RG4: 1=never, 2=a few time a year, 3=a few time a month, 4=about once or twice a week, 5=one a day or more; RG5: 1=never, 2=few days of Ramadan each year, 3=half to all of Ramadan each year, 4=the whole Ramadan each year, 5=other religious days or Sunnah fasts in addition to Ramadan; RG6: 1=never, 2=several times a month, 3=several times a week, 4=most of the time the five daily prayers, 5=five times a day or more).

Factor analysis (PFA) revealed a two-factor structure, one representing the practice dimension of religiousness (RG1, RG4, RG5, RG6), and a second representing more of a spiritual dimension (RG2, RG3). The reliability testing showed that Cronbach's alpha was strongest in the case of the practice dimension (α=.70) and weaker for the scale as a whole (α=.63) as well as for the spiritual dimension (α=.50). We thus selected the religious practice sub-scale for further analysis.

5.2.2. Conservatism and Closed-mindedness

RCON was measured with two items from the short form of the ACT scales by Duckitt and colleagues (2010) measuring the conservatism facet: "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn" and "Our leaders should be obeyed blindly." The two items were combined and formed a reliable scale (α=.87). For *CM*, we used the two items from the NFC short scale (Roets and Van Hiel 2011b) measuring the closed-mindedness facet: "I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways" and "I usually avoid consulting many different opinions before forming my own view." The internal consistency of the two items combined was adequate (α=.73). The responses for the RCON and CM items of were given on a five-point-Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree).

5.2.3. Prejudice toward Americans and Europeans

Because pre-testing had shown that Egyptian participants did not distinguish between people from different European countries (Britain, France, and Germany) and held equally strong prejudices toward all three targets, we treated "Europeans" as a unitary target in the main survey. For the assessment of prejudice toward people from the United States and Europe we used four items from Levin and colleagues (2012). These authors conceptualized prejudice as consisting of the three classical dimensions (Fiske 1998): negative stereotype, negative affect, and a behavioral component. Because of space constraints we used only the items for negative stereotype and negative affect. The two items used for negative stereotype refer to the stereotype content model (Fiske et al. 2002) whereas negative affect was measured with general feelings of unfavorability (Moreno and Bodenhausen 2001). However, as the two items measuring negative affect did not form a reliable scale, we were only able to use the items measuring negative stereotype: "How trustworthy are Americans/Europeans?" and "How warm are Americans/Europeans?" (5-point-Likert scale, 1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=medium, 4=fairly, 5=very much). The US scale (α=.88) and EU scale (α=.89) proved to be equally reliable.

6. Results

To estimate the hypothetical models, we employed structural equation modeling with Mplus version 5 (Muthuén

3 "Masjid" is the Arabic term for "mosque".

and Muthuén 1998–2007) with a MLR estimator. Table 1 provides the correlations and descriptive statistics for all variables. To determine the fit of the models, we used the following indices: the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). In case of the RMSEA, values ≤ .05 are considered as a good fit, values ≤ .08 are acceptable, and values between .08 and .10 indicate a mediocre fit (Browne and Cudeck 1993). All reported path coefficients are standardized. We controlled for gender and age in all models to account for the skewed distribution of these variables in the sample. Moreover, because of the small sample size it was not possible to calculate separate models for men and women. Using gender as control variable had the additional advantage of accounting for the influence of this variable. Additionally, we controlled for the influence of education. All factors were modeled as latent variables. Only the control variables were manifest.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables (n=160).

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Religious identity	–								
2. Religious fundamentalism	.18*	–							
3. RCON	-.10	.60***	–						
4. CM	-.10	.47***	.58***	–					
5. Prejudice toward Americans	.04	.64***	.66***	.50***	–				
6. Prejudice toward Europeans	.04	.45***	.54***	.39***	.79***	–			
7. Control variable: age	.02	.26***	.50***	.55***	.36***	.19*	–		
8. Control variable: gender	-.10	-.32***	-.39***	-.27***	-.33***	-.30***	-.34***	–	
9. Control variable: education	.06	.001	.04	.10	-.07	-.17*	.15	.05	–
Mean	3.17	4.80	4.03	3.93	1.76	2.02	45.77	–	3
SD	.85	.59	.87	1.00	.95	.97	16.44	–	1.33

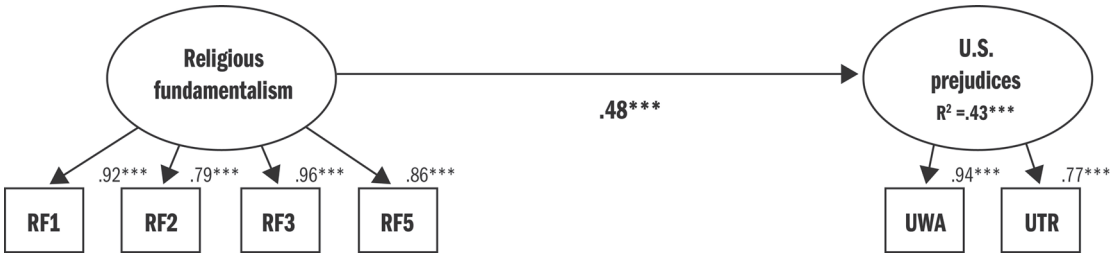
Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05.
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness.
Education was measured using a scale consisting of five options: 0= illiterate, 1= less than six years of school education, 2= high school, 3= some university education, 4= graduation from university with a BA or MA, 5= PhD. As gender was measured dichotomously, mean and standard deviation are not provided.

6.1. Religious Fundamentalism as a Predictor of Prejudice toward Americans/Europeans

With the first model, we tested whether religious fundamentalism was a predictor of prejudice toward Americans and/or Europeans, controlling for general religiousness. Neither model fit the data well (Americans: χ^2=146.41, df=53, CFI=.84, TLI=.78, RMSEA=.105, SRMR=.077; Europeans: χ^2=154.56, df=53, CFI=.83, TLI=.76, RMSEA=.109, SRMR=.076), although a significant amount of variance of the dependent variable prejudice was explained (Americans: R^2=.43, p<.001; Europeans: R^2=.22, p<.001). Religious fundamentalism was a strong positive significant predictor (Americans: β=.50, p<.001; Europeans: β=.27, p=.001) whereas general religiousness was not significant and negative (Americans: β=-.12., p=.066; Europeans: β=-.07, p=.650). The insignificant and negative prediction of prejudice by general religiousness already indicated that it is not a predictor of prejudice. In addition, a Wald test (Brown 2015) was applied to assess whether religious fundamentalism was a significantly better predictor than general religiousness. For that purpose the paths from the predictors to prejudice were constrained to zero. In case of religious fundamentalism, the Wald test was highly significant (Americans: χ^2= 15.83, df=1, p<.001; Europeans: χ^2= 13.52, df=1, p<.001) whereas the effect of general religiousness on prejudice was not significant (Americans: χ^2= 3.15, df=1, p=.08; Europeans: χ^2= .21, df=1, p= .650). Thus general religiousness was rejected as a predictor of prejudice

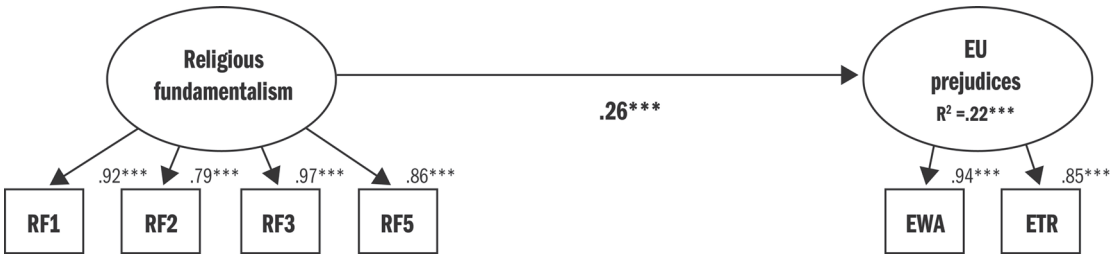
toward people from the United States or Europe. The models were tested again with religious fundamentalism as the only predictor (Figures 1 and 2), which yielded a much better fit (Americans: χ^2=27.47, df=20, CFI=.97, TLI=.96, RMSEA=.048, SRMR=.034; Europeans: χ^2=25.17, df=20, CFI=.98, TLI=.97, RMSEA=.040, SRMR=.031). The amount of variance explained by the model (Americans: R^2=.43, p<.001; Europeans: R^2=.22, p<.001) did not change in comparison to the first models, which also shows that religious fundamentalism was indeed the decisive predictor. All further analyses were conducted with religious fundamentalism as predictor or mediator

Figure 1: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Americans by religious fundamentalism



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05. Control variables: age, gender, and education.
UWA= warmth toward Americans. UTR= trust in Americans.

Figure 2: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Europeans by religious fundamentalism



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05. Control variables: age, gender, and education.
EWA= warmth toward Europeans. ETR= trust in Europeans.

6.2. Mediation Models with Serial Mediators

Mediation models were estimated as shown in Table 2 and Figures 3 and 4. Their significance was tested via bias-corrected bootstrapping procedures, which are recommended over the Sobel test (Preacher and Hayes 2004, 2008). On the basis of 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrapped samples, 95% confidence intervals (CI) were estimated for each effect (see Table 2). If a CI did not include zero, the effect was determined to be significant.

Table 2. Total effects, total indirect effects, and specific indirect effects of the mediation models I and II for the outcome variables (a) prejudice toward Americans and (b) prejudice toward Europeans.

	(a) **Outcome variable:** Prejudice toward Americans	(b) **Outcome variable:** Prejudice toward Europeans
	Effect (SE), 95% CI	Effect (SE), 95% CI
Mediation I: CM and RCON		
Predictor: religious fundamentalism		
Total effect	**.49** (.08), **.63–1.53**	**.27** (.08), **.24-.92**
Total indirect effect	**.30** (.10), **.28–1.05**	**.35** (.11), **.32–1.29**
Specific indirect effect: via CM	.03 (.10), -.21-.52	.12 (.14), -.02–1.04
Specific indirect effect: via RCON	**.17** (.09), **.05-.75**	**.15** (.08), **.01-.67**
Specific indirect effect: via CM and RCON	**.10** (.08), **.05-.80**	**.08** (.09), **.03-.65**
Direct effect: religious fundamentalism on prejudice	.19† (.11), -.04–1.02	-.08 (.11), -.69-.22
Mediation II: RCON and RF		
Predictor: CM		
Total effect	**.58** (.15), **.29–1.04**	**.66** (.15), **.33–1.14**
Total indirect effect	**.48** (.21), **.24–1.10**	**.29** (.24), **.05-.76**
Specific indirect effect: via RCON	**.39** (.22), **.13–1.00**	**.33** (.23), **–07-.79**
Specific indirect effect: via religious fundamentalism	.03 (.06), -.04-.21	-.01 (.10), -.27-.02
Specific indirect effect: via RCON and religious fundamentalism	**.06** (.06), **.00-.26**	-.03 (.06), -.16-.03
Direct effect: CM on prejudice	.10 (.25), -.34-.60	.37† (.33), -.09–1.09

Note: Bold coefficients indicate significant effects. Confidence intervals that do not include zero are considered to be significant. 95% CI= 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals.
The effect marked with † is marginally significant (p<.06).
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness. RF= religious fundamentalism.

6.2.1. Mediation Ia: CM and RCON as Serial Mediators of Prejudice toward Americans

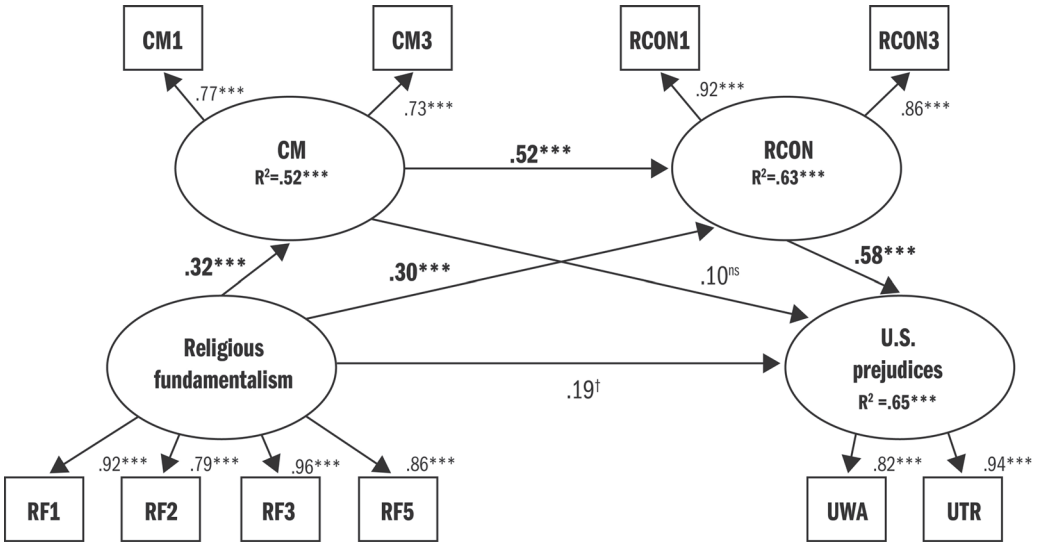
The model using CM and RCON as serial mediators of the fundamentalism-prejudice link showed an adequate fit for prejudice toward Americans (χ^2= 107.14, df=47, CFI=.96, TLI=.93, RMSEA=.089, SRMR=.033). The examination of individual paths supported the suggested model: Religious fundamentalism positively predicted CM, and CM predicted RCON, which in turn predicted prejudice toward Americans (see Figure 3). The direct path from religious fundamentalism to RCON also turned out to be significantly positive, whereas the direct path from CM to prejudice was not significant. In total, the model accounted for 64.7 percent of the variance in prejudice toward Americans.

These results were partly in line with the hypothesis: The effect of religious fundamentalism on prejudice was partly mediated via CM and subsequently RCON with .10 (p=.014). However, RCON also mediated parts of those effects independently of the expected pathway (mediated effect=.17, p=.003). The direct path from religious fundamentalism to prejudice, controlling for CM and RCON, was still marginally significant, which indicates that the effect of religious fundamentalism was partially mediated by CM and RCON.

6.2.2. Mediation Ib: CM and RCON as Serial Mediators of Prejudice toward Europeans.

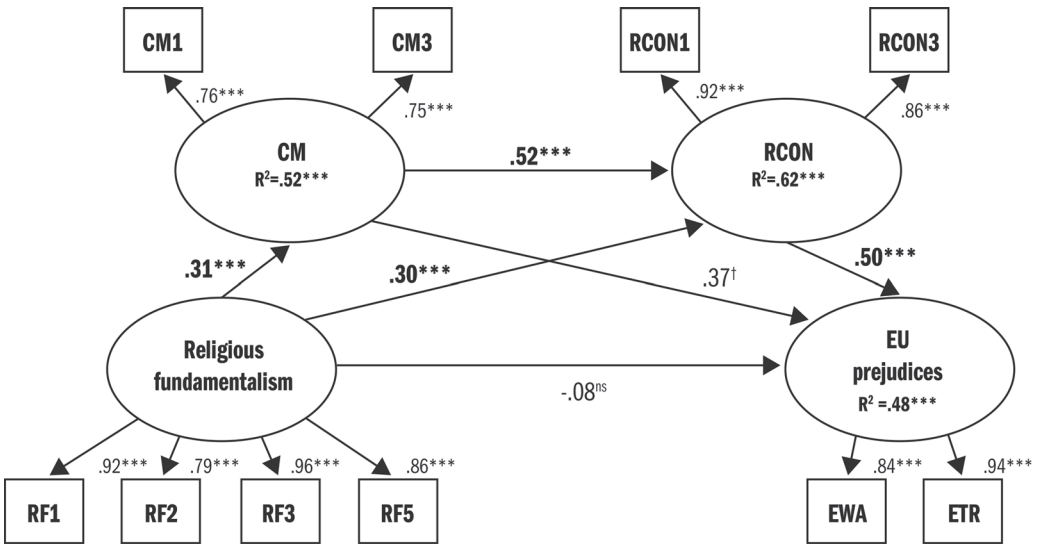
The fit of the serial mediator model was adequate (χ^2= 103.93, df=47, CFI=.96, TLI=.94, RMSEA=.087, SRMR=.033) and the proposed relationships among the variables were all significant (see Figure 4). The direct path from religious fundamentalism to RCON was significant, while the path from CM to the outcome variable was marginally significant. The model accounted for 48 percent of variance in the outcome variable. The mediation showed that all effects of religious fundamentalism on prejudice were mediated via two pathways: the predicted one via CM and subsequently RCON with .08 (p=.018) and a second one, where RCON independently mediated parts of the effects (mediated effect=.15, p=.015).

Figure 3: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Americans with CM and RCON as serial mediators (Mediation Ia)



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05, †p<.06.
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness. UWA= warmth toward Americans. UTR= trust in Americans.
Control variables: age, gender, and education.

Figure 4: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Europeans with CM and RCON as serial mediators (Mediation Ib)



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05, †p<.06.
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness. EWA= warmth toward Europeans. ETR= trust in Europeans.
Control variables: age, gender, and education.

Next, CM was modeled as a predictor preceding RCON; in turn, RCON and subsequently religious fundamentalism functioned as serial mediators, and prejudice remained the outcome variable (Table 2, bottom half, and Figures 5 and 6). The model fits were the same as in the previous model because the same number of paths had to be estimated.

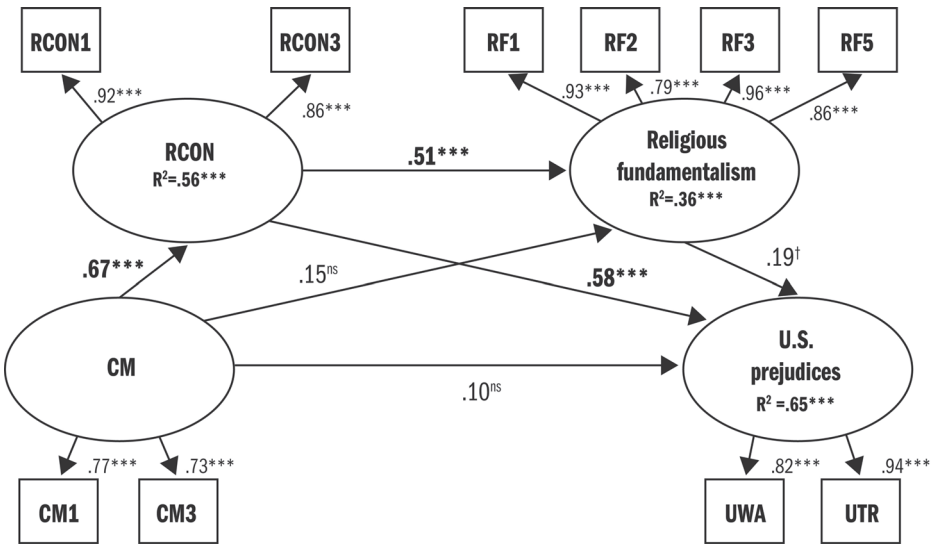
6.2.3. Mediation IIa: RCON and Fundamentalism as Serial Mediators of Prejudice toward Americans

For prejudice toward Americans, CM significantly predicted RCON, which predicted religious fundamentalism. The path from religious fundamentalism to prejudice was marginally significant (β=.19, p=.058). Additionally, RCON also predicted prejudice independently of religious fundamentalism (β=.58, p<.001). The results of the mediation were again partly as predicted: the effects of CM were partly mediated via RCON and subsequently religious fundamentalism (mediated effect =.06, p=.044) and partly by an additional path via RCON (mediated effect =.39, p<.001).

6.2.4. Mediation IIb: RCON and Fundamentalism as Serial Mediators of Prejudice toward Europeans

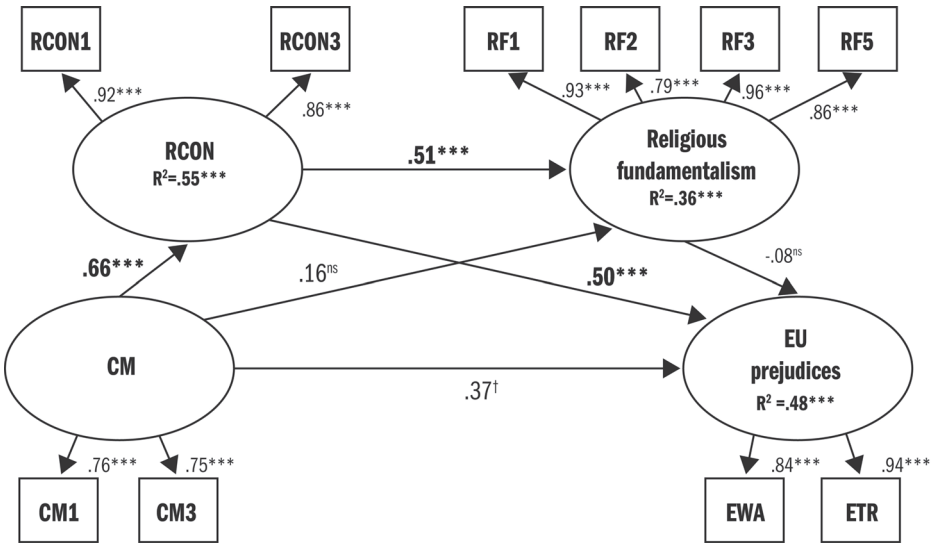
In this model, not all of the expected paths were significant. The relationships between CM, RCON, and religious fundamentalism were significant and positive, but the path from religious fundamentalism to prejudice was not (β=-.08, p=.370). Accordingly, the effect of CM was not mediated via the RCON-fundamentalism path, which was not significant either (mediated effect=-.03, P=.383) Instead, RCON mediated the effects of CM with .33 (p=.001) on prejudice independently of fundamentalism. There was also a marginally significant direct effect of CM on prejudice.

Figure 5: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Americans with RCON and fundamentalism as serial mediators (Mediation IIa)



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05, †p<.06.
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness. UWA= warmth toward Americans.
UTR= trust in Americans.
Control variables: age, gender, and education.

Figure 6: Standardized path coefficients and factor loadings of the SEM predicting prejudice toward Europeans with RCON and fundamentalism as serial mediators (Mediation IIb)



Note: ***p<.001, ** p<.01, *p<.05, †p<.06.
RCON= RWA conservatism. CM= NFC closed-mindedness. EWA= warmth toward Europeans. ETR= trust in Europeans.
Control variables: age, gender, and education.

6.3. Comparison of the Results for Americans with the Results for Europeans

A statistical comparison of the models with the Wald or similar tests was not possible because the small sample did not yield enough degrees of freedom for the estimation of both models at one time. The following comparisons will thus be descriptive only.

6.3.1. Religious Fundamentalism as a Predictor of Prejudice

The effect of religious fundamentalism on prejudice toward Americans (β=.48, p<.001) was almost twice as large as in the European case (β=.26, p<.001).

6.3.2. Mediations I and II

The results of mediation I were quite similar for Americans and Europeans, but the results of mediation II differed. For prejudice toward Europeans, religious fundamentalism, the second serial mediator, did not mediate any effect and consequently the specific indirect effect via RCON and religious fundamentalism was not significant as well. In the case of prejudice towards Americans, however, religious fundamentalism still tended to predict prejudice when all other variables were controlled. This difference is most probably due to the overall weaker predictive effect of religious fundamentalism on prejudice in the European case, which was diminished to almost zero when all other variables in the model were controlled.

6.4. Effects of Control Variables

The control variables gender, age, and education also showed interesting differences in terms of their relationship to the two prejudices. In the case of Americans, both age and gender were related to prejudice, with older people (r=.36, p<.001) and men (r=-.33, p<.001) reporting higher prejudice. For prejudice toward Europeans, a similar pattern emerged (age: r=.19, p=.015; gender: r=-.30, p<.001), and there was an additional effect of education, with more educated people reporting lower prejudice (r=-.18, p=.029). We compared the correlation coefficients by target of prejudice (Americans vs. Europeans), using a method suggested by

Weaver and Wuensch (2013), to test whether age, gender, and education were more strongly related to prejudice toward Americans or Europeans. As can be seen in Table 3, education was more strongly related to prejudice toward Europeans, whereas age was more strongly related to prejudice toward Americans. For gender, there was no difference.

Table 3. Results of t-tests comparing the non-independent correlations of the outcome variables prejudice toward Americans and prejudice toward Europeans with the control variables age, gender, and education

	t	df	p	95% CI
Age	**3.36**	153	.001	**.06 – .26**
Gender	-.59	153	.554	-.13 – .07
Education	**–5.22**	153	<.001	**-.35 – -.15**

Note: Bolded coefficients indicate significant effects. Confidence intervals that do not contain zero are considered to be significant. 95% CI= 95% bias corrected confidence intervals. Gender was coded with 1=male and 0=female.

7. General Discussion

Generally, we found that religious factors play a role in the perception of Americans and Europeans among Egyptian citizens in the greater Cairo area. Specifically, religious fundamentalism was a significant predictor of prejudice toward Americans and Europeans, whereas general religiousness was not. These results resonate with findings from the Christian context: Being religious as such is not linked to prejudice; what is decisive is the way in which people hold a belief (Hood, Hill, and Williamson 2005; Hunsberger 1995).

If we understand religious fundamentalism in terms of an ideology, a further explanation for its predictive role is that people who adopt fundamentalism as their ideology may react with prejudice when they feel that this ideology is threatened by an outgroup (here by Americans or Europeans), in order to protect it. By contrast, general religiousness does not seem to serve as an ideology but may be a mere expression of a person's religious identity.

When we further explored cognitive-motivational variables that mediated the religious fundamentalism-prejudice association, the social attitude RCON and the cognitive-motivational variable CM accounted for parts of this relationship. As assumed, RCON was the stronger mediating variable. This may be due to the high chronic accessibility of conservatism within Egypt's authoritarian political system and society (Srull and Wyer 1986). The latter suggestion remains speculative, as our study does not provide data on how authoritarian the Egyptian society in general is and whether it is more authoritarian than other societies.

The results concerning the relationship of the predictors CM, RCON, and religious fundamentalism indicate that CM and RCON are more involved in mediating the related prejudice than is religious fundamentalism because the second pair of models (mediation IIa and IIb) turned out to be the weaker one. The path from fundamentalism to prejudice was only marginally (Americans) or not significant (Europeans), whereas in the first pair of models all paths were fully significant. These findings suggest that CM and RCON may be the more crucial variables in the development of prejudice. The ideology of religious fundamentalism, however, is no longer a predictor when CM and RCON are defined as preceding variables. Taken together, these findings suggest that CM and RCON may be the more crucial variables in the development of prejudice. A theoretical explanation for this would be that CM and RCON may be part of the motivational cognitive style that makes a person prone to prejudiced thinking (as suggested by Roets and Van Hiel 2011a). The ideology a person adopts, however, fulfills more of a directional or orientating role, such as indicating whom to feel threatened by and how to react to threat.

The results for prejudice toward Americans and Europeans differed in two respects: First, the predictive effect of religious fundamentalism on prejudice was almost double the size for prejudice toward Americans than for prejudice toward Europeans. Second, prejudice toward Americans was more common among older people and men, but education had no influence. Prejudice toward Europeans was also more common among older people and men, but it was also lower among more highly educated participants. These findings suggest two interpretations: First, in the religious context, Europeans do not seem to be as relevant

an outgroup for Egyptians as Americans, thus also posing less threat and receiving less prejudice in the end. Second, prejudice toward Europeans does not seem to be as deeply entrenched as prejudice toward Americans. Both interpretations suggest that participants generally distinguished between Americans and Europeans. This differentiation may be based on the recognition of these countries' different political approaches to the region, but it is up to future research to explore what exactly makes Egyptian Muslims differentiate between Americans and Europeans.

7.1. Contribution of the Current Research

The current study extends our knowledge on what influences individual perceptions of Americans and Europeans in an Arab-Muslim context in several ways. First, we demonstrate that religious fundamentalism is a predictor of prejudice toward both Americans and Europeans and is hence related to the perception of the United States and Europe on the individual level. Moreover, the measures we used for RWA and religious fundamentalism were not conflated with each other, which added precision compared to previous studies examining both concepts (Mavor et al. 2009; Mavor et al. 2011).

Second, we explored the underlying motivations of the fundamentalism-prejudice relationship. With CM and RCON we considered two variables jointly in sequential models, whereas previous research had used them only individually (Brandt and Reyna 2010; Hill et. al. 2010; Johnson et al. 2011). In both models, CM and RCON predicted and/or mediated prejudices, which demonstrates that they are related in their effects on the relation of religious fundamentalism and prejudice. Moreover, the effect of religious fundamentalism on prejudice was marginal or not significant when CM and RCON were used as preceding predictors, which suggests that CM and RCON may be the more decisive predictors. The strong effects of RCON in comparison to CM also appear to support the notion that the authoritarian component implemented in religious fundamentalism may be a key motivation underlying the fundamentalism-prejudice relation. In this study, the Egyptian context may even have enhanced this effect due to the strong and highly salient authoritarian nature of the country's political and social system.

Third, although the two prejudices were highly correlated, we showed that prejudice toward Americans and prejudice toward Europeans were not the same but participants distinguished between the two. Most interestingly, the two prejudices differed in terms of their dependence on education, which suggests that a negative perception of Europeans may be less entrenched in Egyptian society than the negative perception of the United States.

Fourth, from a cross-cultural perspective this study replicated for the first time many of the findings from the Christian context conducted with samples from Europe and the United States – such as religious fundamentalism being the crucial predictor instead of general religiousness, the mediating role of CM as well as RCON, and the strong role of RCON – with a sample from an Arab-Muslim context. Future research should focus on replicating these results and exploring possible specific cultural phenomena in this context.

Fifth, we applied only measures that were pre-tested for their cross-cultural applicability, in order to ensure cross-cultural validity, and adapted the measures when necessary, such as in case of the intratextuality scale (Hood et al., 2005) – an advantage not many studies have.

7.2. Limitations of the Study

We must acknowledge some limitations of our study. The sample is small, includes more men and older people than women and younger people, and data were collected in an urban area only. This limits the applicability of our results to this specific population. We would expect that a sample including participants from smaller towns and rural areas might yield more pronounced results, because these participants can be expected to have had less access to education and less experience with people from the United States and Europe. Future research should address these differences and should also assess whether similar results can be found in other Arab-Muslim countries. Islam is a religion with enormous variation and it could therefore play a different role in other countries in the region. Moreover, although we tried to accomplish a neutral atmosphere for the participants, possible demand characteristics may have influenced the responses.

To verify our theoretical considerations in terms of a possible order of the predictors, longitudinal study designs are needed to investigate, for example, whether ideologies are adopted at a later point in order to satisfy cognitive-motivational needs possibly acquired earlier in life. Furthermore, we have to consider that the weaker contribution of CM in comparison to RCON could also be due to suppression effects because of a midrange correlation of r=.51, which, on the other hand, is unavoidable given the idea that NFC may be the preceding variable of RWA (Hayes 2013).

The nature of this study is correlational and explorative but we hope to have established an appropriate theoretical setup for the calculated models with the literature available at this point. The suggested models will need replication in the Arab-Muslim and also in the Christian context, as RWA and NFC have not yet been applied in the same model.

8. Conclusions

The current study provides first social psychological insights into how religious factors, in particular religious fundamentalism, are entangled in the perception of Americans and Europeans in an Arab Muslim society. It reveals that specific dynamics involving social attitudes and cognitive styles are inherent to the religious fundamentalist ideology on which the derogation of the outgroup is based. Being religious in general is not decisive; instead, certain belief structures adopted to serve needs for steadfast guidance and a stable worldview in combination with authoritarian attitudes may fuel prejudices toward outgroups that are perceived as threatening this ideology.

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International Journal of Conflict and Violence

urn:nbn:de:0070-ijcv-2016177
IJCV: Vol. 10 (1) 2016

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Vol. 10 (1) 2016

ISSN: 1864-1385

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Since the mid-twentieth century, the effects of violence and crime on the victim have become an increasingly important topic. In Switzerland, men and boys are affected by criminal acts of violence recorded by the police to a similar extent as women and girls. The Victims of Crime Act (VCA; Opferhilfegesetz, OHG), in place since 1993, treats men and women equally. It guarantees free legal, medical, psychological and social counselling, as well as some financial compensation, for victims of violent crime. However, male victims of violence are clearly underrepresented in victim support. This article seeks explanations: it first looks at the extent of reported and not-reported criminal acts to explain the differences. The review of the literature suggests that "being victim" is linked to "femininity". This leads to the elaboration of a theoretical framework on the gender-regime in this field. The main argument is that institutions treat "being a victim" differently for men and women and that the consequences of being a victim are different for men and women. To analyse the argument, we carry out a discourse-analytical study on how the social negotiation processes of "becoming a victim" take place. We find that victimised men and women differ in the manner and extent to which they are construed as victims in these negotiation processes. This affects the way victim support is organized and entails manifest effects regarding use of victim support and the expected clientele counselling services.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the effects of violence and crime on the victim have become an increasingly important topic in politics and society. A number of countries, mainly in the industrialised world, have enacted programmes and laws designed to uphold the needs and rights of victims. Such steps, for example, were taken in New Zealand in 1963, in the United Kingdom in 1964 and in Germany in 1976 (Spalek 2006). In Switzerland, the Victims of Crime Act (VCA; Opferhilfegesetz, OHG) has been in place since 1993. The act guarantees free legal, medical, psychological and social counselling, as well as some financial compensation, for victims of violent crime (Opferhilfegesetz 2007). As one of the most comprehensive victim support laws, it stipulates that victims of violence are to be offered quick and efficient support in specialised, state-subsidised counselling centres.

In 2010, 24,648 people affected by violence received support through the Swiss victim support counselling centres (see Table 1). Of these, 24.3 percent were male and 75.7 percent female. This would suggest that women and girls are affected by violence and crime to a much greater extent than men and boys. While victims are not required to have submitted a complaint to the police before they access the victim support scheme, the list of criminal offences that entitle them to receive support corresponds to the classification of violent offences used in the police crime statistics (PCS; polizeiliche Kriminalitätsstatistik). Consulting the PCS, however, casts doubt on the assumption that women are more likely than men to be victims of violence. According to the statistics, 35,528 individuals were victims of violent crimes registered with the Swiss police in 2010 (Table 1). Of these, 52.6 percent were male and 47.6 percent female.

This article is based on the research project "Gender Regimes: Institutionalised Inequalities" funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (grant no: PDFMP1_127306). It was directed by Monica Budowski; Anne Kersten's PhD was part of this project (Kersten 2015).

Table 1: Victims receiving advice according to victims of crime statistics and victims of violence according to police crime statistics, Switzerland

		2010	
		VCS	PCS
Male victims	Number	6,001	18,687
	% male	24.3	52.6
Female victims	Number	18,647	16,841
	% female	75.7	47.4
	Total	24,648	35,528
	%	100.0	100.0

Data sources: Federal Statistical Office, victims of crime statistics (VCS), database as of 16 May 2012, own calculations; Federal Statistical Office, police crime statistics (PCS), database as of 11 February 2011. For this comparison, only the offence categories available in both VCS and PCS were included (Kersten 2015, 200)

This means that, at least in Switzerland, men and boys are affected by criminal acts of violence recorded by the police to a similar extent as women and girls. The VCA, in turn, treats men and women equally. The question therefore arises, why male victims of violence are so clearly underrepresented in victim support.

One possible explanation is that the figures in Table 1 provide only a limited and incomplete picture of the violence affecting men and women. It is known that the police crime statistics merely reflect reported offences, in other words, cases in which a prosecution is brought (Walklate 2004); the extent of unreported cases is a matter of estimation. The VCS, by contrast, provides an indication of unrecorded cases, of incidents of criminal violence that are not necessarily reported to the police. In order to put these specific insights concerning reported and unreported violence into context, the first section outlines the current research into victims of violence by sex over time in various countries.

Another possible explanation for the differences between men and women in Swiss victim support services applies macro-societal considerations from a gender perspective. The different figures from police crime statistics and victims of crime statistics in Table 1 suggest that being affected by violence does not automatically make people victims. We argue that being categorised a victim and hence receiving state support is the result of – always provisional – social negotiation, recognition and attribution processes. These processes are determined by the institutional framework, the interests of the actors involved, and the gender images that are mediated by both the individuals involved and the environment. Gender refers to the social construction and representations of what men and women are and/or should be; such images are embedded in mutual relationships of power and represent a structure and a mechanism of social relationships. Gender structures relationships between the sexes, with "sex" categorising the population into male and female. Our perspective conceptualises victim support as part of the welfare state gender regime (Lewis 2002; MacRae 2006) in which society (possibly) treats women and men affected by violence in different ways. The second section describes these theoretical foundations. The third section presents the discourse-analytical approach used to study social negotiation processes. The fourth section discusses the findings of the authors' study that examined the creation and implementation of the Swiss Victims of Crime Act in light of the above argument.

1. Women and Men as Victims of Violence – the Current State of Research

The figures for victims of violence by sex shown in Table 1 are inconsistent: three-quarters of the victims seeking assistance are female, whereas more than half of victims of violence reported to the police are male. Therefore the questions arise: Are women and men affected by violence to a similar extent? What are the consequences of violence for victims? And how do they cope with their experience?[1]

The sex ratio of individuals receiving assistance through the Swiss victim support programme has remained relatively constant since the enactment of the VCA: around 25 percent of assisted individuals are male (Bundesamt für Justiz 1996, Bundesamt für Statistik 2014). Similarly, the figures for violent crime recorded by the police for the years 2002–2011 indicate that the victims were male in

1 The research results outlined below focus on industrialised countries, since state regulation of victim support is largely confined to these countries. Figures for girls and boys are included if minors are distinguished in the relevant studies. Otherwise, violence against children is not treated separately.

more than 50 percent of reported cases.[2] There are differences when it comes to the type of violence: men and boys are more frequently victims of homicide, bodily harm and robbery, while women and girls are more likely to be victims of sexual offences (Bundesamt für Statistik 2012, Bundesamt für Polizei 2009). The same differences also occur in relation to offences for which people seek help through the victim support programme. According to international victim surveys, 6.6 percent of men and 5.8 percent of women (above the age of 16) in Switzerland were victims of violence in the years 1989 to 2000 (Verweij and Nieuwbeerta 2002). National victim surveys conducted in 2005 and 2011 confirm both the slightly higher prevalence of violence against males, as well as the sex differences in the aforementioned offence categories (Killias, Haymoz, and Lamon 2007; Killias et al. 2011). For Switzerland there are no other studies that yield sex-based information on victims of violence. In all studies, violence and thus "becoming victim" is always defined on the basis of criminal criteria.

The police crime statistics for other countries (Bundeskriminalamt 2012; Flatley et al. 2010; Gannon and Mihorean 2005; Jansson 2007; Rennison 2001; Truman and Planty 2012) and victim surveys (van Dijk, Kesteren, and Smit 2007; Verweij and Nieuwbeerta 2002) show figures similar to those for Switzerland.[3] They depict the following (quantitative) picture since the 1980s: Men and boys in industrialised countries tend to be slightly more frequently affected by interpersonal violence and crime than women and girls. There are country-specific differences in overall levels of violence but not in the proportion (percentage) of female and male victims of violence. In terms of types of violence, the sex differences described above for Switzerland also apply. Moreover, men and boys are more frequently affected by violence in the public sphere, while women and girls are more frequently affected in the private sphere of family and partner-type relationships. Apart from police crime statistics and victim surveys, there are very few studies from other countries that focus on victims of violence by sex and take into account different types of violence. A number of studies focus on domestic violence and/or violence against women (for example BMFSFJ 2004b; European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights 2014; Schröttle and Glammeier 2013; WHO 2013), while male victims of violence have been treated as a peripheral issue only (BMFSFJ 2004a; Hagemann-White 2002; Martinez and Schröttle 2006; Newburn and Stanko 2002). Tjaden and Thoennes's study (2000) is an exception: They interviewed a representative sample (N=16,000) of women and men (age 18 and older) in the United States about experiences of violence in their life to date (including childhood). Their definition of violence was broader, encompassing rape, different forms of physical assault and stalking, as well as others that are not (yet) part of criminal criteria of violence. The findings correspond to the results described above: 66.9 percent of the men and 55.9 percent of the women had been victims of violence at some point in their lives.

Being affected by violence is not the only relevant factor when claiming benefits under government assistance programmes. The physical and mental injuries and impairments that victims have to cope with are also relevant. Indeed, helping victims to cope with their experience is an important aim of the victim support services (Kersten 2012). In the aforementioned survey by Tjaden and Thoennes (2000), 31.5 percent of female victims of rape and/or physical assault (in comparison to 16.8 percent of male victims) stated that they had been physically injured in the assault (abrasions, bruises, broken bones, gunshot wounds); psychological harm and trauma were not investigated. Research is lacking, for Switzerland and for other countries, regarding injuries and harm caused by violence on a sex-specific basis. Thus far, studies that focus on the needs of crime victims in relation to by harm and injuries have paid little attention to the category of sex (Boom and Kuijpers 2012).

2 PCS for the whole of Switzerland are available from 2009. The figures for previous years are approximations that include only selected criminal offences (for example homicide, bodily harm and sexual offences) and serve mainly as a basis for identifying trends over time (Bundesamt für Polizei 2009).

3 The studies consulted include national research findings from the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Germany, as well as comparative international studies of various industrialised countries.

Apart from violence research, trauma research is also concerned with the impact of potentially traumatic events (including violence). The findings are ambiguous. Some studies indicate that men generally experience more traumatic events than women, whereas women are more likely to develop post-traumatic stress disorders as a result of what they experience (for example, Stein, Walker, and Forde 2000). Other studies found no significant sex differences regarding the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (for example Maercker et al. 2008). Further studies conclude that men are less likely than women to develop post-traumatic stress disorder, yet more likely to suffer depression, physical ill health and alcohol problems in the aftermath of traumatic events (for example Pimlott-Kubiak and Cortina 2003).

Numerous studies and policy measures (BMFSFJ 2004b; Egger and Schär Moser 2008; European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights 2014; Martinez and Schröttle 2006; WHO 2013) have dealt with the diverse and profound consequences of violence for women and the ways in which they deal with the effects of violence. Male victims of violence have not yet received the same attention. The only data available at present comes from a few qualitative studies that provide some initial limited information on the subject (BMFSFJ 2004a; Burcar and Akerström 2009; Durfee 2011; Stanko and Hobdell 1993). The findings suggest that men also experience a range of negative effects as a result of being subject to violence. We conclude from this literature – applying a gender perpective – that male victims' coping mechanisms and their contacts with their social environment and with institutional support services appear to be influenced by images of masculinity.

The current state of research on the sex-specific experience of violence thus fails to provide a sufficient explanation for the low proportion of male victims of violence in Swiss victim support. According to the statistics, women and girls are not affected by violence more than men and boys. The sex differences in types and contexts of violence do not clearly indicate that women are in greater need of support than men. Also, the present research does not indicate whether women and girls suffer more extensive negative effects and consequences of violence than men and boys or whether they cope with them differently, and thus require more support. From a gender perspective, it therefore seems possible that notions of masculinity might deter men from seeking support. The importance of gender concepts, in this case for male victims, will be addressed in greater detail in the next section as a gender regime affecting victim assistance.

2. The Victim Construct and Gender – a Theoretical Perspective

The small number of male victims of violence receiving help from the victim support service may be due to the specific and concealed way that gender, in the sense of the social construction and representation of what men and women are, shapes welfare state services. The theoretical foundations of this perspective are outlined below.

2.1. From Primary Victimisation to Victim Status

As we argued at the outset, being subject to violence does not automatically turn people into victims. If this is not the case, then what does the term victim mean? Kirchhoff defines victims (in a victimological sense) as follows: "A victim is an individual or a group forced to cope with important (at least) potentially uprooting events that can be actuated against him or her by other humans. […] Living in miserable conditions is not enough. Victimization must be human-made – people cannot be victimized by alcohol or drugs […]" (Kirchhoff 2010, 113). Thus in order to be a victim, the individual must have been affected by a certain type of event. These events have four characteristics. Firstly, they are concrete, identifiable acts. Secondly, the acts are directed against the potential victim and committed by others. Thirdly, these actions must have the inherent potential to have a significant negative impact on the affected individuals, thereby existentially affecting their well-being. And fourthly, these harmful actions must violate shared social norms (Strobl 2010). This may, for example, reflect in the fact that the injurious actions are categorised as criminal offences. Thus the Swiss VCA defines victims as individuals "[…] whose physical, mental or sexual integrity has been directly affected by a crime […]" (translated from Opferhilfegesetz 2007, Art. 1).

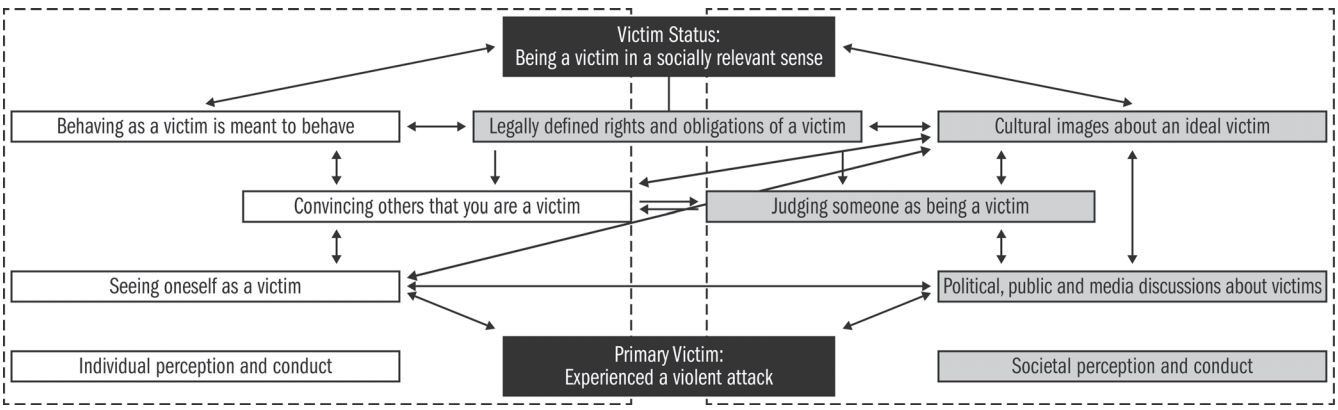
The four characteristics of the definition of the victim focus on the injurious events and the direct negative effects

on the affected individuals. These events and their negative effects are referred to as primary victimisation (Dignan 2005, 23–31; Kirchhoff 2010). For individuals affected by primary victimisation to become victims, they must first perceive themselves as such ("accounting to self", Dunn 2010, 162), that is, they must react to the damaging actions in a certain way. Secondly, they must convince other people to regard them as victims ("accounting to others", Dunn 2010, 162–64). And thirdly, it is relevant how society responds to primary victimisation. "Accounting by others" (Dunn 2010, 164–66) emerges in a number of ways. It becomes manifest in interaction between individuals affected by primary victimisation and representatives of government organisations (police, victim support service, medical services, courts). It is also mirrored in legal and institutional rules. Last but not least, it is a component of the political and public discourse on the subject of victims of violence.

In "accounting by others", the focus is on the actions of the (potential) victim. Such action is evaluated and social sympathy and attention are awarded according to certain criteria. These critera represent the particular society's image of the "ideal victim" (Christie 1986, 18); only these are to receive full public sympathy and attention. In Western societies, the key features of this image are innocence, weakness, defencelessness and the inability of the victim to care for him- or herself, not merely in the situation of primary victimisation, but also to some degree in the individual's life in general (Dunn 2010; Rock 2002; Spalek 2006; Strobl 2010). The extent to which a society considers specific groups of individuals affected by violence to be victims, who may therefore expect government assistance, depends, inter alia, on the extent to which such individuals embody the key characteristics of the ideal victim.

Consequently the concept of the victim is constructed by a power-charged social process. How this happens is illustrated in Figure 1. The process begins with the "primary victim or victim *an sich*" (Rock 2002, 14), as the individual victimised by the harmful act of another person (at the bottom of Figure 1). This primary victim may turn into a "secondary victim or victim *für sich*" (Rock 2002, 15), but does not necessarily have to do so. These aforementioned processes of perception, interaction and recognition at the micro and macro-societal level are those that turn a person into a secondary victim. Secondary victims are individuals affected by violence who perceive themselves as victims and are at the same time regarded as such by society. They are victims in a socially relevant sense. They are afforded a morally privileged position in society. They have attained the status of victim, consisting of a specific position within society associated with state recognition and attention – for example in the form of victim support.

Figure 1: The social process of contstructing the victim



Source: Kersten 2015, 104

2.2. Gender as Social Practice and Structure

Establishing and implementing a government victim support scheme takes place, as described above, in the form of a social process constructing the victim at the micro and macro level. Here the question arises: How important is the social category of gender in this process?

For the purpose of the present paper, we view gender as a construct that frames and shapes individual and social processes. Thus, it is not considered a differential category consisting of two biological forms (referred to as "sex" above). Rather, the key issue is the relationality of the construct of gender and the power-shaping components of this construct. This is, for example, summed up in the following words by Scott (1988, 42): "[G]ender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power." Gender is thus understood in terms of perceived differences between women and men, but it is situated within social relationships. As a constitutive element of social relationships, gender acquires meaning in and through the actions of the actors. At the same time, it is also part of the specific structural setting, which frames and influences these actions (Messerschmidt 2005; West and Zimmerman 1987). At the level of social interaction, these structurally framed processes are referred to as "doing gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987, 135–37). Norms, images and rules that define certain behavioural patterns as corresponding to a particular sex and being "correct" in a specific situation are an important aspect of the process of "doing gender" (Scott 1988; West and Zimmerman 1987). Gender may thus be understood as "[…] *structured action*, or what people do under specific social-structural constraints" (Messerschmidt 2005, 197). According to this perspective, gendered social structures arise from the recurrent and consistent interactions of gendered social actors (Messerschmidt 2005).

Gender is thus both a structure and a mechanism – in other words, a specific social practice that tends to shape itself and its own rules (Connell 2009). Power is a determining factor within this gendered field of social relations, as described above by Scott (1988). Social relations between the sexes unfold essentially as power relations. These are constantly reproduced (but also challenged or deconstructed) in interactions, and are based on hierarchical and complementary gender images. Male dominance and hegemony may thus be legitimised via the gender construct. The defining cultural model of male dominance in a particular society, also referred to as "hegemonic masculinity" (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), acts both as a prescriptive social norm and a "generative principle" (Meuser 2006, 108) of everyday interactions.

The power-charged construct of gender thus frames and influences the negotiation, recognition and attribution processes of constructing the victim at the micro- and macro-societal level. Violence is one of the key areas through which masculinity may be formed and reinforced in its hierarchical complementarity to femininity (Meuser 2003; Messerschmidt 2005). Accordingly, "*Aktionsmacht*" (the power to violate) and "*Verletzungsoffenheit*" (general vulnerability) as basic criteria of human socialisation (Popitz 1992) play an important role in the social construction of the difference between the sexes (Wobbe [1995] translated the term *Verletzungsoffenheit* with "openness to vulnerability").[4] The male power to violate is a central feature of hegemonic masculinity. It taps into female general vulnerability when men subdue and hurt women in heterosocial situations of violence. Furthermore, male power to violate is created by violent homosocial conflicts among men and includes all participants, regardless of who sustains injuries and who remains unharmed. The prerequisite for this masculinity-shaping component of homosocial violence among men is the fact that the violent act is not perceived in terms of devaluing and subjugating the other party; rather, it is regarded as a violent competition between opponents who are in principle equal. However, when violence among men (as well as male violence against women) takes on the characteristics of devaluation and subjugation of the opponent, the subjected men find themselves in a

4 "*Verletzungsoffenheit*" (general vulnerability) according to Popitz (1992) refers to the basic human fear, anxiety and concern about potentially being harmed by someone else.

position of general vulnerability and this is fundamentally connotated as female (Meuser 2003). General vulnerability thus destroys hegemonic masculinity. At the same time, it constitutes a core feature of the victim status, in the form of weakness, defencelessness and impairment, described above.

2.3. Victim Support as a Gender Regime

The assumed incompatibility of victim status and hegemonic masculinity may manifest itself at the level of the affected individuals, as some of the research findings cited earlier suggest. However, we argue that the category of gender may operate at the macro-societal level during the creation and implementation of such a state victim support programme. If this is so, the power-charged construct of gender is embedded in social institutions and organisations – usually in a concealed way – and structures social relations in a given area in a specific way (Brush 2002; Lewis 2002). For men and women as social groups, such gender regimes produce different life situations and uncertainty conditions, as well as different opportunities and obstacles to participate (Dackweiler 2004, 452).

MacRae (2006, 524–25) defines the term gender regime as follows: "'Gender regime' refers to a set of norms, values, policies, principles, and laws that inform and influence gender relations in a given polity […]. A gender regime is constructed and supported by a wide range of policy issues and influenced by various structures and agents, each of whom is in turn influenced by its own historical context and path." A gender regime is thus based both on institutionalised rules and principles and on norms and discourses on gender relations. It influences and is influenced. On the one hand, it regulates the opportunities of gendered individuals for access to social resources and hence their social participation. On the other hand, actors are engaged in the way gender is shaped and organised. It is thus fundamentally variable and is constructed over time by power-charged negotiation processes involving a very wide range of actors (Pfau-Effinger 1998).

To understand the gender regime in Switzerland's government victim support programme thus involves analysis of the social negotiation processes relating to the formulation and implementation of the VCA. On the basis of the theoretical model, it can be assumed that – despite the explicitly gender-neutral wording of the VCA – victimised men and women differ primarily in the manner and extent to which they are construed as victims in these negotiation processes.

3. Discourse Analysis

Social negotiation processes relating to the formulation and implementation of welfare state measures take place in the form of spoken and written input from a variety of actors in different social locations (politics, media, local government, etc.) and at different times. The methodology of discourse analysis (Jäger and Jäger 2007) allows this linguistically fixed social process to be explored. Discourse analysis assumes that the meaning of phenomena is constructed through the use of language, through which a specific social reality emerges. The individual statements of actors who are dispersed in space and time are assumed to be connected. This connection manifests itself in the form of certain patterns and regularities that characterise the spoken and written input for a specific thematic or institutional field. A discourse is thus the institutionalised social spoken and written practice, by means of which specific social realities and truths are constructed in a certain field – in this case state aid for victims of violence.

A variety of different interpretative frameworks for phenomena thus converge in a discourse – in the form of individual statements that are linked by certain rules and patterns and that compete with each other. Power in the discourse is manifested in the way certain interpretative frameworks are institutionalised and thus legitimised; they determine and justify social action beyond the specific discourse by virtue of representing "true" knowledge (Jäger and Jäger 2007). The discursively established "truth" of certain interpretative frameworks always remains provisional and to a certain degree disputed.

Discourse analysis is mainly concerned with texts such as books, newspaper articles and minutes of meetings. Such texts are treated as statements of actors and are first examined for substantive statements or "discourse fragments". The next step involves analysing the regularities and pat-

terns by means of which the discourse fragments of all the examined texts refer and relate to each other. Finally, the reality-constituting outcomes of the identified discursive structure are explored (Jäger and Jäger 2007; Keller 2011).

To develop an understanding of the way the Swiss victim support programme was socially constructed, the political and media debates on the subject – hereafter referred to as the public victim support discourse – were examined by means of discourse analysis as described above. The analysis covered the years 1978 to 2008.[5] The extent to which male and female targets of violence were construed in the public discourse as victims who receive or should receive state support will be examined in more detail in the following section.

4. Support for Victims of Violence and the Role of Gender – Empirical Findings

The statutory victim support programme in Switzerland was created following a *Volksinitiative* [popular initiative] launched by several members of the editorial staff of the magazine *Beobachter* in 1978.[6] In a slightly modified form, this initiative was approved of by the Swiss voting population in December 1984. The VCA was then drawn up as a federal law; it came into force in 1993. The VCA was later revised after its implementation shed light on certain shortcomings. The new, completely revised version entered into force in 2009.

4.1. Victims as Individuals with Rights – or Needs

The process of creating and implementing Switzerland's statutory victim support programme, as outlined above, was accompanied by diverse political and media debate (public victim support discourse). These discussions involve two different ways of understanding victims and the support they should receive. Both interpretative frameworks take the effects of violence on individuals as their starting point.[7]

The first interpretative framework typically presents the situation of individuals affected by violence as follows: "It is a miracle the person escaped the robbery alive. However, the financial consequences of injury and disability are infinitely depressing and ruinous. Nobody helps Frieda G. in her efforts to obtain full compensation within a reasonable time period. She has had a tiring battle […] which will probably continue for many more years" (translated from Beobachter 1978). The suffering that the experience of violence entailed is clearly highlighted. At the same time, the affected individuals are represented as responsible, autonomous individuals, capable of making decisions on their own, who have to fight for their rights over and over again for an extended period of time, since the state is not concerned about upholding these rights. Despite having been affected by violence the victims are described as acting and fighting autonomously: They are in a "hopeless two-front war against the perpetrator" (translated from Beobachter 1979); they have to apply for compensation through civil suits, and in order to receive legal aid, they have to deal with money matters, register as unemployed, and contact laywers and even the perpetrators (Beobachter 1979, 1980; Zimmermann 1979; Neue Zürcher Zeitung 1979; Strech 1984a, 1984b). This mode of interpretation was a particular feature of the debate in the initial period and led to the 1984 referendum on victim support; it is utilised mainly by the founders of the popular initiative.

The second interpretative framework also makes clear reference to the impact of the violence suffered. At the same time, the affected individuals are described as lacking full capacity for autonomous decision-making and action; they are powerless people with needs that the state should meet out of compassion. Statements such as the following are typical: "The offence frequently places the victim in a state of psychological shock. […]. To regain his internal balance, the victim does not merely require money but also and above all psychological support, a confidant to advise him,

5 The following written documents were examined: all records of the parliamentary debates on the popular initiative on victim support, the draft of the VCA and its complete revision, and the minutes of the relevant preadvisory parliamentary commissions; the documentation of consultations on the law and the total revision; the notices of the Federal Council regarding the initiative, the law and its revision; various reports by various commissions and offices; 323 newspaper articles in various national and regional print media.

6 The *Beobachter* is a Swiss bi-weekly consumer and advice magazine.

7 In the following discussion, victims of violence in childhood are not considered. They become part of the discourse only in the late 1990s, and with no differentiation on the basis of gender.

restore his self-confidence and facilitate his reintegration into society" (translated from Bundesrat 1983, 891). This interpretative framework was first brought up in the debate by the Federal Council and Parliament. Following the successful referendum, it was of decisive importance for the further fomulation and implementation of the VCA.

From this time onwards, victims are mainly represented as people who, for example lack the courage to go out (Forster 1990), are not able to work consistently and have anxiety attacks (Baumgartner 2003), are helpless and vulnerable, severely traumatised and out of control of their lives (Sachs 2001; Talamona 2003; Noser 2004).

The view of victim support based on state compassion for needy, powerless victims prevails in public discourse. We suggest two unconnected explanations that explain this view of victim support. Firstly, the liberal understanding of the welfare state: At the time the VCA was created, Switzerland conformed to this model (Nollert 2007). In a liberal understanding of the welfare state, state benefits are awarded only to groups in need; they are not defined as a right of broader social groups. Secondly, that of a state monopoly on violence: the state monopoly on violence is secured by state compassion. Victims should not and must not take their own action against offenders or even the state. By providing disadvantaged, needy individuals or victims with support, the state can discipline and channel the victims' actions.

The two distinct interpretative frameworks of the victim demonstrate our theoretically based argument (expounded above): the term "victim" is not self-explanatory, and being the subject of violence does not in itself turn people into victims. Instead, the term refers to a disputed social status that is linked to specific patterns of behaviour and characteristics of the individuals affected by violence.

From a gender-sensitive perspective, the way victims are characterised within the public victim support discourse is interesting: in the first interpretative framework, victims are individuals affected by violence who are struggling and have certain rights. In the political and media debate, these victims are both male and female, or are described in neutral terms. In the second interpretative framework, victims are individuals affected by violence who are incapable of action and in need of assistance. In this case, the victims are presented as female, as the detailed results of the discourse analysis show (Kersten 2015). In other words, if the focus is on the struggle of victims and what they are entitled to, both female and male subject to violence may be victims. On the other hand, if the focus is on the impairment of victims and on their needs, the victims are female and not male. What causes gender to become a reality-constituting category is therefore not the mere fact of being affected by violence but the highly specific characteristics of the situation in which this happens.

4.2. Victims in Need of Assistance Are Constructed as Female Rather than Male Individuals

The successful referendum established the view of victims as powerless individuals in need of assistance, thus rendering this interpretative framework dominant within the public victim support discourse. The further political and media debate is characterised by specific discursive mechanisms. When victims and victim support are discussed, this tends to take place in a certain manner. We outline the way the gender-specific characterisation of the image of the powerless victim is strenthened and affirmed below.

Time and again, statements on victims and victim support formulated in a general and gender-neutral way are illustrated using concrete case studies (for example Hürlimann 1994; Basler Zeitung 1996a; Bundesversammlung 2007). In three-quarters of the cases the examples refer to women (Kersten 2015). Even in articles describing the wide range of topics and services of victim support centers, it is asserted that women are disproportionately affected both quantitatively and qualitatively. Arguments are most often tailored to women; what men who are affected by violence experience does not seem necessary to account for. For instance, in an article describing all services provided under the VCA, the newspaper *Wir Brückenbauer*, concludes that: "[…]it is mainly women who suffer the most severe physical and psychological harm as a result of rape" (translated from Schlänni 1991). In the same vein, the newspaper *Schaffhauser Nachrichten* reports on support for crime victims in the canton Schaffhausen and confirms:

"Women are the most common victims of crime" (translated from Schaffhauser Nachrichten 1998). Last but not least in the debate around the revision of the VCA, the victim is also construed as female. The consultation process concerning the revision of the VCA, for example, highlights the absence of provisions "[…] that take into account the fact that the majority of crime victims are women" (translated from Bundesamt für Justiz 2003, 7). And National Council member Susanne Leutenegger Oberholzer criticised the revision with the words: "It affects mainly women, and it affects the most vulnerable members of our society" (translated from Bundesversammlung 2007, 1105).

The repeated reference to female victims and the various ways in which they are disadvantaged has no equivalent when it comes to male victims, even though the large numbers of males affected by violence cited in the current research above might suggest otherwise. Male victims are not usually mentioned in debate in the media or by politicians. Firstly, if they are mentioned, they are described as an exception to the rule. The following statement by National Council member Hans Schmid is characteristic: "I might add, in all modesty, that occasionally a man may also end up having to claim such compensation" (translated from Bundesversammlung 1984, 261). The wording "occasionally a man may also end up having to claim such compensation" indicates that *men* are not usually in the (victim) situation, while *women* are. Similarly, the *Schaffhauser Nachrichten* states that "[…] victims of crime will probably more rarely be male" (translated from Schaffhauser Nachrichten 1993). Secondly, the concrete situations of male victims, in the exceptional cases in which they are mentioned, typically remain unclear. No further explanation as to why they should be served is added. One example is the way in which National Council member Hans Schmid changes the subject after the statement cited above: he has nothing to add regarding the situation of male victims. This is typical for statements discussing male victims in the discourse: the adverse effects of violence – which are regarded as the prerequisite for victim support – are not mentioned (further examples see Der Bund 1994; Ott 2001). Thirdly, if male victims are afforded more attention, this tends to take place with reference to their potential as perpetrators. The newspaper *Basler Zeitung*, for example, reports the low percentage of men receiving victim support and concludes that: "[…] if there is insufficient appropriate support, victims are often identified too late – when they have become perpetrators of sexual assault themselves" (translated from Baumgartner 1993). In line with this, the newspaper *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* demands a counselling service for men on the grounds that "male victims later become perpetrators" (translated from Neue Zürcher Zeitung 1994). As potential perpetrators, male subjects of violence (still) appear capable of action. This power to act stands in contradiction to a victim status that is based on helplessness and need for assistance. And if the pitiful situation of male victims is discussed at all – which has only been the case in the more recent media discourse from 1995 onwards – it is usually addressed in connection with masculinity. It is usually stated that male victims are afraid of no longer being taken seriously as men, and that they would feel like failures and weaklings (Solothurner Zeitung, 1995; Kaspar 1996; Noser 2004). Within the logic of the discourse, therefore, being a victim and needing help diminishes masculinity. In this context, victim support appears a threat to masculinity.

4.3. Hegemonic Masculinity and Victim Support

In the discursive practice outlined above, femininity and masculinity are construed as forming an opposing, hierarchically ordered complementarity. Victim status is associated with women affected by violence; their femininity is not discussed or regarded as a problem at any point in the discourse. Victim status and femininity are thus linked in a quasi-natural manner and are characterised by general vulnerability, need for assistance and weakness. Masculinity, on the other hand, appears as the counter-image to this concept of victim status.

According to the presented theoretical outline, being affected by violence only promotes masculinity if the male subjects appear capable of action as coequal opponents to their perpetrators. A victim status that is based on need for assistance and general vulnerability destroys this image of the coequal opponent, and therewith undermines masculinity. This status must thus be rendered irrelevant or unthinkable for men if one of the core features of hegemonic masculinity, the dominance and power to violate, is

not to lose its social force: *men* cannot become victims, since they would then cease to be *men*. The process of forming and implementing the victim support programme thus demonstrates the power of hegemonic masculinity as a reality-constituting, prescriptive social norm and structure.

Interestingly and revealingly, the public discourse – both in older and in more recent debates – never refers to scientific facts and statistics on individuals affected by violence (Kersten 2015). Scientific findings would reveal the full extent to which men are the subject of violence, enable men to come within the purview of the victim support programme, and therewith question a core feature of hegemonic masculinity: the power to violate. Moreover, the Federal Council and Parliament start by emphasising the helplessness of victims and associating these references to female victims of violence. Male victims, by contrast, are entirely non-existent in the political debate. They are mentioned only in relatively recent media coverage from 1995 onwards. This clearly demonstrates Meuser's theoretical assumption (2006): hegemonic masculinity is particularly effective as a prescriptive norm and structure where power is concentrated within a society; in the case of the public victim support discourse this would be among the actors with political clout.

The social reality created by the public victim support discourse corresponds to the victims of crime statistics cited at the outset: 75 percent of clients are female and a mere 25 percent male. The supposedly "true" knowledge of the gender-specific modes of experience of violence established by the discourse is further reflected in the Swiss nationwide victim support structure: around 40 percent of the counselling services are geared towards women, girls and/or children; only one single counselling centre specialises in male victims, while the remainder cater to all victims of violence (Konferenz der kantonalen Sozialdirektorinnen und Sozialdirektoren 2012).

5. Conclusions

Society as a whole does not register the extent of violence against men, and in particular the negative consequences of violence for affected male individuals. The findings of the present study clearly demonstrate this. In a concealed manner and as a power-charged construct, gender structures the way society handles the issue of victims of violence. This is the way hegemonic masculinity renders manifest its reality-constituting power: women are ascribed the role of victims characterised by general vulnerability, whereas men are pegged as perpetrators with the power to violate or as non-victims. The study reveals by means of discourse analysis of relevant documents (political documents and newspapers) dealing with victim support issues that such quasi-natural gender-specific patterns are socially constructed. By unveiling the socially constructed nature of such gender-specific "truths" society becomes able to view men as victims too.

Greater social awareness of men's experience of violence is necessary, given the high numbers of male individuals affected by violence. However, as the study reveils, this will only be possible if at the same time there is a critical examination of the hegemonic image of masculinity that is based on dominance and the power to violate. Such a critical debate might create the space and allow a social discourse to emerge with a language and an awareness for men who are affected by violence and suffer. This in turn allows appropriate opportunities for providing assistance to be devised. Both women and men frequently become victims of violence and have to cope with the various adverse consequences of the violent experience; allowing men and women to receive support is therefore important.

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