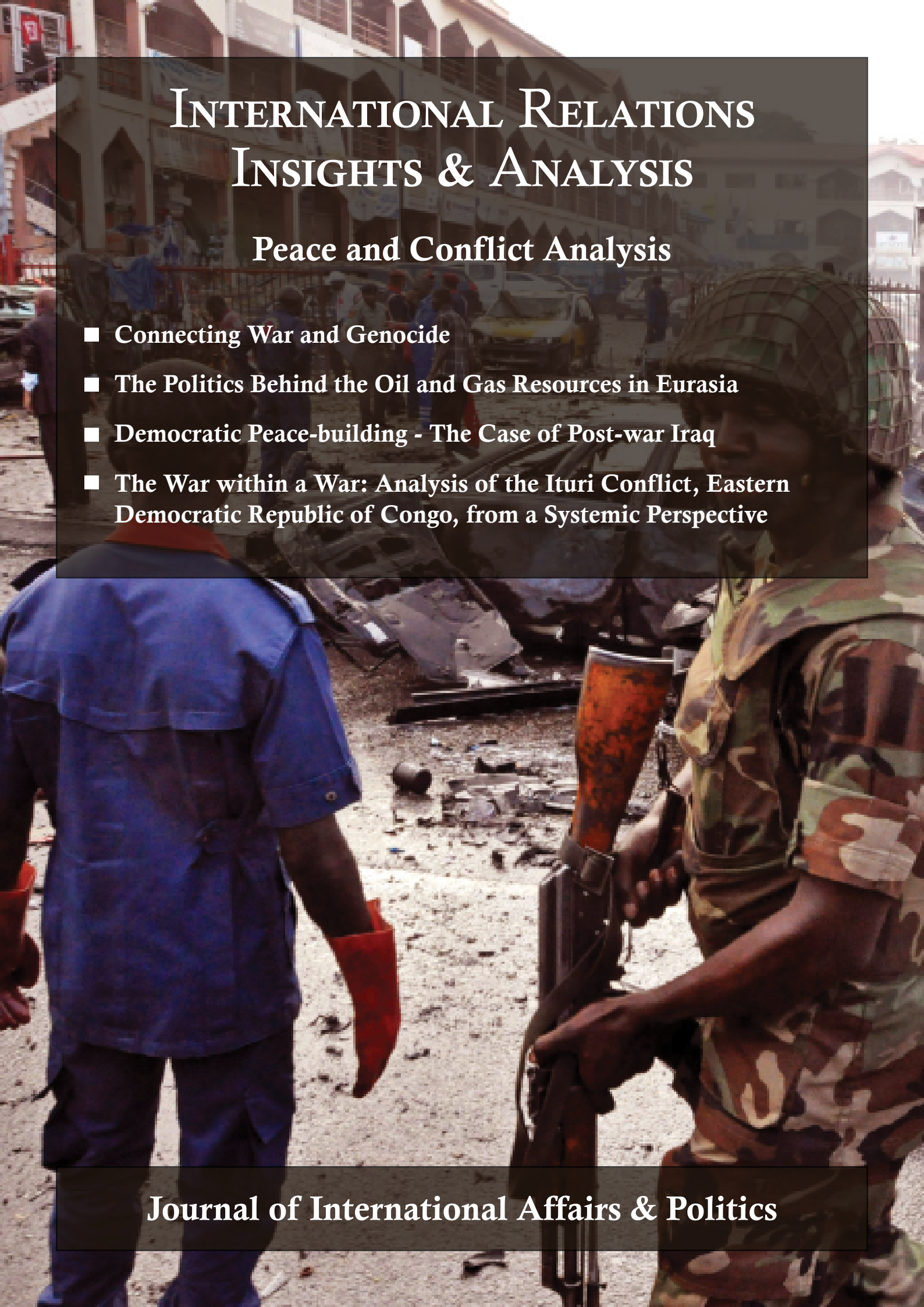

International Relations Insights & Analysis

Peace and Conflict Analysis

- Connecting War and Genocide
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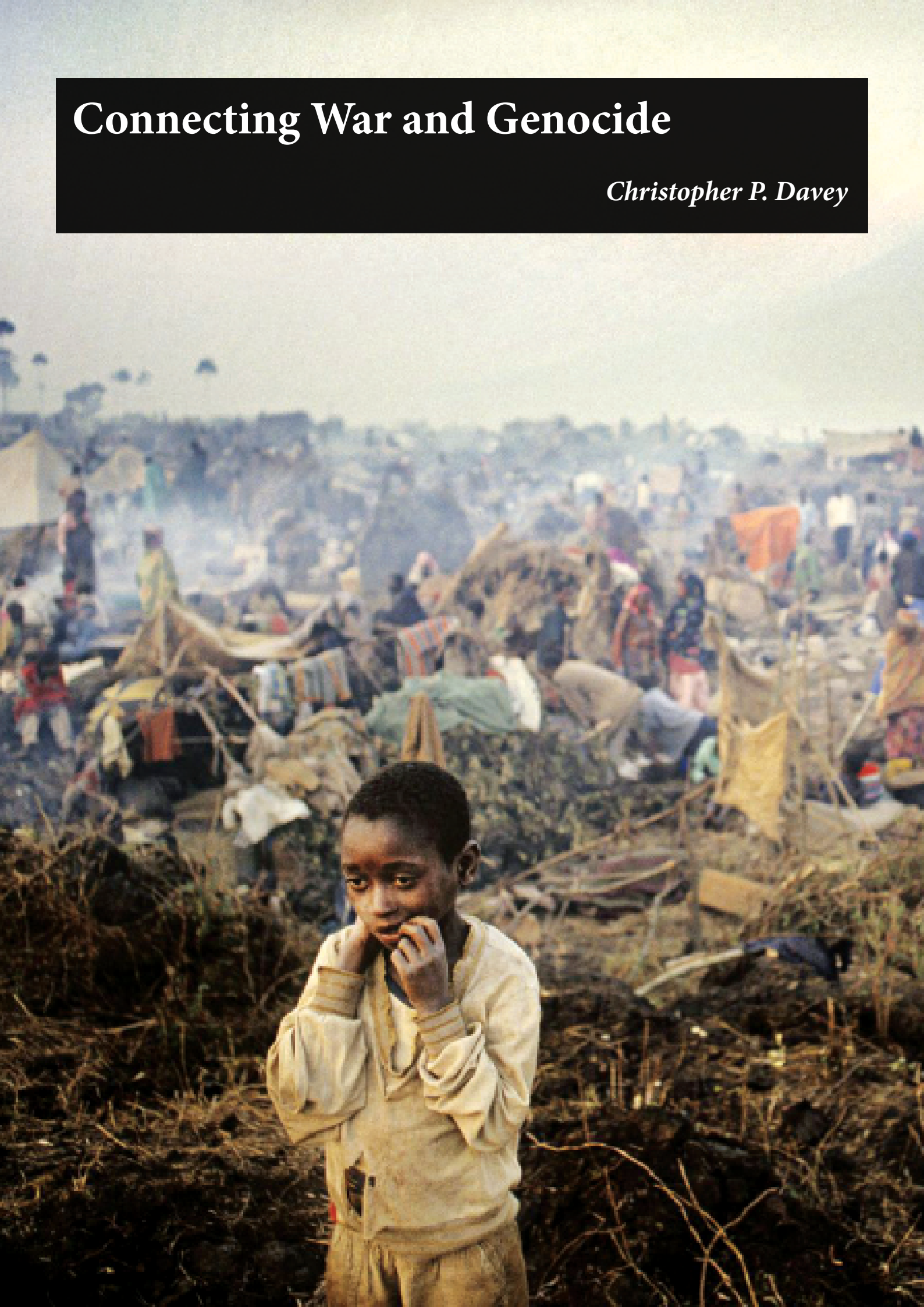
Connecting War and Genocide

Christopher P. Davey



Genocide

Definitions of genocide have been produced by lawyers, scholars, politicians and victims. Debates about these definitions manifest in tension over broad and narrow conceptions of genocide. For instance, the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide narrows target groups to those with ethnic, religious, racial, national identity. The term is also used more broadly as a rhetorical device by news media and activists in order to mobilize popular opinion. The simplest definition of genocide is that it is the intended destruction of specific groups. Despite definitional debates, this type of destructive action has been part of human history as long as warfare itself, however, the two are not necessarily synonymous. Whilst war can occur without genocide, genocide rarely occurs without war, yet, this is not a strictly cause and effect relationship. This explorative article will address social and legal approaches to genocide, some historic intersections of war and genocide, the problematic nature of intent and ideology, humanitarian warfare aimed at preventing genocide, and historic and contemporary issues of resources and climate in war and genocide.

A Social or Legal Phenomenon?

The term "genocide" itself originates with a single author, Raphael Lemkin. Prior to Lemkin's naming of this phenomena, it has littered recorded history. Both the Bible and Quran document divinely mandated mass slaughter of noncombatants. Greek and Roman traditions also describe the destruction of Troy and Carthage. Yet, what makes genocide a unique phenomenon was the purposefully labelling by a contemporary observer of twentieth century warfare. It was this history that captured Lemkin, as seen in his later writings on genocide throughout human history.

Reviewing photographic evidence and eyewitness accounts of the destruction of Armenians in the waning Ottoman Empire, Lemkin, a Polish jurist in the 1930s pushed for international law to prohibit this level of destruction, banning attacks on a national group's physical and cultural integrity. Unsuccessful, but determined, Lemkin escaped Poland after its defeat by Nazi Germany and fled to the USA. There he took up work in the early 1940s describing the process of destruction underway in Eastern Europe. Termed as genocide, or literally race-killing, Lemkin articulated a process by which a group is subjected to a range of processes and outcomes, including both cultural and physical destruction, with planned elimination of a group's rights, integrity and life. Groups may even be forcibly re-identified as another group, resulting in the similar destructive outcome.

Following the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, and the uncovering of Nazi crimes during the war, Lemkin lobbied incessantly for the international, judicial recognition of genocide. Although, "genocide" was not a major feature of the Nuremberg trials, the logic of prosecuting Nazi war crimes under the rubric of the mass destruction of civilians was pervasive throughout the trials and sentencing. Government representatives at the UN entered into negotiations of a treaty that defined and outlawed the crime. The first round of negotiations produced a document that explicitly acknowledged the multiple aspects of Lemkin's "genocide": cultural, physical, and biological destruction, the latter referring to the removal of children from a group and the reproductive sterilization of members of the group. The final treaty accepted by the General Assembly in 1948, excluded cultural destruction and the targeting of political groups. Genocide was also acknowledged as a crime that could occur in both times of war and peace.

Even though Lemkin's law had finally been established, it saw little exercise in the coming decades. The term itself was subject to Cold War rhetoric and political debates, while under the cover of US and USSR interests internationally, violence against specific groups, labelled as ideological enemies, was encouraged and permitted in contexts of decolonization and independence. Most notably in Latin America, genocides have been documented in Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Guatemala. The latter case continues to be legally contested into the 2010s and also involved US training of military forces in tactics of torture and violence against civilians. The People's Republic of China also engaged in civilian group destruction and forced famine at a massive scale during Mao's "Great Leap Forward" and "Cultural Revolution". These internal Cold War conflicts that reached genocidal proportions were fostered, or went unquestioned, during geopolitical bi-polar rivalry.

It was not until after the Cold War that the UN Convention on Genocide was used in prosecuting and attempts at preventing genocide. The 1990s saw mass destruction as simultaneously broadcasted across the satellite TV connected world and devoid of Cold War

divisions that in the past had protected genocidaires. The International Tribunals for both Yugoslavia and Rwanda ushered in the significance of international criminal law, and judgements that utilized Lemkin's first framing of genocide. In some cases such courts are burdened with defining atrocities as genocide or not. Significantly, these ad-hoc tribunals established case law for rape as a weapon of war in the context of genocide. This highlighted issues of gender in genocide, not only raising the question of whether or not genocide is particularly more lethal for men or women, but also how genocide might be experienced differently based on gender. It was the case against Jean-Paul Akayesu, mayor of the Taba Commune during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which heralded the first genocide conviction. Rape, as a weapon, was framed in the prosecution and conviction of Akayesu as an integral part of genocide in this local context.

The 2002 establishment of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute, whilst having its roots in the post-World War II international justice movement, stemmed from a global campaign during this 1990s era of international jurisdiction and prosecution. The Rome Statute articulates verbatim the UN Convention on Genocide, entrenching crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression into the court's jurisdiction. Cases taken on by the Court include those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Central African Republic, and Uganda. Of note was the warrant for the arrest of Omar al-Bashir, as the first sitting head of state charged with genocide during counter-insurgency warfare in Darfur. While the court makes no specialized connection between war and genocide, many of the cases tacitly acknowledge the prevalent context of war for acts of genocide, or the role of military leaders and former heads of state involved in wars that commit genocide.

Given the variety of outcomes for the legal prosecution of genocide, and the deep, contextual connection to war, many academic and sociological perspectives of genocide have run the gamut of amending Lemkin's law to a broader definition, reminiscent of the first committee draft, to separating the legal and social studies of the phenomenon altogether. According to scholar Adam Jones, genocide remains a potent rhetorical tool for popular mobilization, both in the name of preventing destruction and protecting civilians.

Historical Cases of Genocide and War

Genocide occurs following warfare, in the context of, or during warfare, and sometimes within a social or political "war" or campaign that becomes violent on a massive scale. The following examples, grouped by type, demonstrate these intersections of war and genocide. These also utilize the varied aspects of violence (structural, direct and cultural) as described by scholars such as Johan Galtung. The genocide of Tutsis, moderate Hutus and Twa peoples in 1994 Rwanda, erupted following a peace agreement pausing a violent civil war in the north. With the Rwandan Armed Forces, militias and the Rwandan Patriotic Front still mobilized and arming themselves, violence very easily rolled into successive wars starting with the "War of Liberation" in 1996 Zaire. Further retaliatory massacres and genocides continued against both Hutus and Tutsis of Rwandan, Burundian and Congolese origin. Indigenous peoples, in the expansion of colonial Europe, were subject to violent warfare, and campaigns of social or cultural destruction. From opposite ends of the Western colonial world, Tolowas in 1890s California and Tasmanians in early 1800s Van Diemen's Land were exposed to settler violence, programs of resettlement and re-education, extinguishing the cultural and physical life of these groups. Practices of warfare and military cultures have also influenced the scale of destruction. In German South-West Africa Herero and Nama peoples were hunted down and herded into the Omaheke desert as part of German annihilationist military tactics forged in past colonial and European wars. First Nations' children in Canada were also targeted in social warfare that aimed to destroy the Indian and enforce western, white values, education and culture. Regardless of how these two phenomena collide, it is when they do that the scope and magnitude of destruction is catalysed into a level of violence that destroys groups of human beings.

Genocide is also produced by wars of independence and wars of state crisis. The wars of the 1990s break-up of Yugoslavia, saw mass scale destruction of cultural and physical life from the burning of libraries, heritage sites and museums, to the use of rape as a weapon of war and the use of overwhelming military force on civilian populations. The rise of the Islamic State in the Levant (ISIL) has also produced regional warfare and the highly publicized destruction of historic religious communities and ancient cultural sites; such conflict continues to affect the lives of many in the region,

Arkan's Tigers kill and kick Bosnian Muslim civilians during the first battle for Bosnia in Bijeljina, Bosnia, March 31, 1992. The Serbian paramilitary unit was responsible for killing thousands of people during the Bosnian war, and Arkan was later indicted for war crimes. (Photo Credit: Ron Haviv)

displacing and target specific groups. The Srebrenica attacks often act as the zenith of this episode and demonstrate a form of genocide: a gendercide of combat aged males were selected from Bosnian refugees and executed by Bosnian-Serb soldiers.

Such wars may also intend on forging a new state, again in the context of crisis. The Ottoman, Cambodian, and French ideological struggles for power and new state formation saw the targeting of people outside of those that are perceived to "naturally" belong to the new state. Armenians and other Christian minorities, caught between a World War I front and an emerging state were subjected to cultural and physical destruction. Cham Muslims and even Cambodians within the Khmer Rouge party structure were executed in the so-called killing fields. Many were taken into prisons where they were tortured with physical, sexual and mental violence before finally being executed. Others were forced to produce fabricated, self-incriminating evidence of their transgressions against the regime, in a manner to rival George Orwell's dystopian 1984. During the French Revolution the Catholic and royalist Vendée became subject to a counter-insurgency war that implemented scorched earth policy and mass drownings on a weary and defeated civilian population. The new Jacobin dominated regime, finding itself confronted by both a British fleet in the channel and an insurrection only a year after the execution of King Louis XVI, reacted swiftly and pointedly against those outside the new parameters of belonging set by revolutionary politics.

Intent and Ideology

The impact of legal definitions has led to an emphasis on proving intent and establishing the presence of destructive ideologies. As such these elements have allowed scholars to narrowly identify specific cases of genocide (such as the Holocaust, Rwanda 1994, and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia) as the gold-standard of this type of destruction, where perpetrator ideology and intent to destroy a group is apparent through historical interpretations or documentary evidence. The post-war trials of Nazi war criminals framed the party and state apparatus as a criminal organization that planned and executed destruction, following through on ideological tenets requiring the elimination of the Jews. However, within the context of warfare, scholars, such as Christopher Browning, have argued a different perspective. After the initial defeat of the Soviet war machine in the summer of 1941, a sense of inevitable triumph swept through the Wehrmacht. Within this atmosphere, mass killings of Jews increased as SS Einsatzgruppen, or mobile killing units, moved east encountering larger, Orthodox Jewish communities. From the late summer of 1941 to the following months, two distinct campaigns of mass shootings were conducted by Einsatzgruppen,

Wehrmacht, Ordnungspolizei and local collaborators. These operations embodied a war strategy that escalated as distinguishable enemy "Others" became more abundant in an area intended as agricultural colonies for the Third Reich.

Browning also documents the increase in tension between those who saw Jewish forced labour as an economic benefit of occupation, and those who considered such a logistical or ideological liability and that Jews were to be eliminated. Soviet resurgence further catalysed radical action, along with the establishment of the first series of several death camps throughout occupied Poland. Browning's study of the Hamburg reserve police battalion further demonstrated that middle class, middle-aged Germans, by and large devoid of ideological commitments to Nazism, became through the context of warfare well-trained executors and hunters of Jews. In the hostile environment of occupied territory, held together by shared sense of duty and necessary camaraderie, these men engaged in genocide around eastern front. On the surface these actions may seem intended and ideologically driven. Yet, a deeper perspective presents a view that is more socially complex and layered with elements of group loyalty and survival in a warzone. Genocide, therefore, became more likely as social conditions were nurtured through warfare or wartime mentality.

Humanitarian Wars and Genocide

Since Allied forces arrived and surveyed the lingering destruction of Nazi genocide at death and concentration camps stretching from Dachau and Bergen-Belsen to Auschwitz, Western humanitarianism and liberalism has placed moral and political value in waging war in the prevention of genocide. Yet, the prime driver for any international intervention most often falls to the national interests of the intervening party or state in question. This logic is not limited to Western states. Genocides in both Cambodia and Rwanda were curtailed by military interventions. However, these actions occurring in the context of civil or regional warfare demonstrate that whilst intervention may appear to be humanitarian or protective in nature, it is often the result of national or strategic interests. Intervention by NATO countries in both Kosovo and more recently Libya, demonstrate the interplay of political goals and hegemonic politics by large international powers, with interests in influence or resources.

Genocide can also be politicized so as to justify so-called humanitarian intervention. The War on Terror, following the terrorist attack in New York City, or "9/11", was legitimated by characterizing regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan as previously or currently genocidal, as well the accusation of supporting terrorists. Humanitarian intervention, therefore, transitioned into regime change and installing democracy, resulting in years of continued turmoil and instability. It is also often the case that international intervention facilitates retaliatory attacks between warring parties. In Kosovo and Serbia, following NATO bombings of strategic targets, parties exchanged incidences of massacre and expulsion. Currently, many politicians and Western actors continue to legitimize aerial bombing in the region on the basis that ISIL is likewise a genocidal regime worthy of such a response.

Rwandan refugee children plead with Zairean soldiers to allow them across a bridge separating Rwanda and Zaire where their mothers had crossed moments earlier before the soldiers closed the border on Aug. 20, 1994. (Photo Credit: Jean-Marc Bouju/AP)

Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or drones, as they are more popularly known, has further characterized humanitarian intervention against genocide. This type of strategic deployment intended to prevent massacre of civilians, more often than not endangers lives and destroys infrastructure, making post-conflict rebuilding challenging and utilizing doctrines like Responsibility to Protect, as another vehicle for state-interested interventions. In Libya, where Muammar Gaddafi threatened and engaged in mass killing of civilians in response to his regime collapsing in 2011, drone bombing was used repeatedly in attacking strategic military targets, allowing Libyan rebels to overwhelm Gaddafi's forces and end his regime. Again instability has followed such actions intended to prevent genocide.

Resources and Climate

Studies of civil war, "new wars" and the continued occurrences of intrastate wars, frequently spilling violence and refugees across international borders, indicate that war continues to be part of human existence, with genocide as its most destructive form. As societies become more globally aware, resulting from digital connectivity or the rise of global challenges, conflict over resources seem to emerge at the front and centre of globalization and contemporary history. Wars over resources are certainly not new, neither is the application of genocide in such conflicts. The conquest of Central and South America by the Spanish and Portuguese armies and settlers was rife with resource and market driven violence. Genocides here were propelled by warfare based on a logic of white European superiority and the insatiable demand for exportable goods and natural resources. Christopher Columbus and Hernan Cortez's searches for gold were frustrated by the absence of accessible treasure and willing labour. Both engaged in campaigns of terror against indigenous populations that decimated these peoples. In the case of the Caribbean Arawak peoples, they were entirely exterminated. The spread of trade, markets and resource driven violence in European colonies also resulted in the commodification of people themselves, creating a transatlantic slave trade that was perhaps the most globalized episode of genocide.

The most salient case of genocide as an outcome or means of gathering and exploiting resources is the Belgian Congo, or the Congo Free State. Established in 1885, King Leopold II drained the region of rubber and ivory for sale on international markets. In doing so he left a wake of a seriously reduced Congolese population, many who survived were mutilated as a form of discipline and punishment. The Belgian run Force Publique conducted a reign of terror to ensure quotas were met and the continuing profitability of the colony. This private army, whose ranks were filled by Congolese men pressed into service, offered a less fateful role in colonial Congo, but nonetheless a brutalizing experience. The more recent pursuit of resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has fuelled and become interwoven with contemporary conflict in the region, with the seizure and illegal mining of precious metals being exported via regional powers sponsoring internal militias and rebel groups in the DRC.

Evolving forms of warfare and genocide, along with widening perspectives in an increasingly global world, present a web of crises where genocide becomes part of the phenomenon of climate violence. Whilst war and genocide have become infrequent in the Global North, the Global South is home to new crises where war, genocide and climate violence have become mixed, and especially acute where contests and unequal distribution of resources produce massive inequality. Mark Levene describes this web as post-genocide; a type of mass violence or so-called low-intensity conflict, where climate change, state collapse, war lords, competition and illicit use of resources create a type of destructive violence, without any clear intent to destroy. This condition of regions or states becomes more severe as actors endeavour to compete in global capitalism, or being subject to international debt or neoliberal financial systems. The context of ongoing or simmering conflicts and warfare further compound this scenario.

Violence in both Kyrgyzstan and Kenya has resulted in the targeting killings and destructive process of some groups. In Kenya desertification catalyses pastoralist societies into conflict where small arms are available, poverty is rampant and water scarce. The northern region of Turkana has seen some of the worst conflict and effects of this web of crises. Kyrgyzstan's ethnic minority of Uzbeks has been subject to discriminatory policies and communal violence in the wake of drought and poverty. Kyrgyzstan's dependency on hydroelectric power, wreaked havoc on by droughts in the region, creates post-genocide violence where Uzbek people were targeted as the state buckled under climate induced pressures.

First as Tragedy, then as Farce

Reflecting the spirit of Marx's well-quoted saying, war and genocide, albeit in dynamic ways, continue to stride hand in hand across the pages of history and current affairs without humanity's critical attention. The connections are repeatedly underestimated, as demonstrated by the lack of acknowledgement of civilian burden in many conflicts, and disconnected in later analysis. This latter dysfunction is perhaps attributable to the problematic nature of intent and ideology as such continue to rule and reign over popular and political interpretations of genocide and war. The implementation of history in justifying interventions against genocide, likewise repeats, in a farcical manner the politicized simplification of

history, without recognizing the tangled relationship of war and genocide, more often than not coming together in destructive processes either aimed at or resulting in the obliteration of groups.

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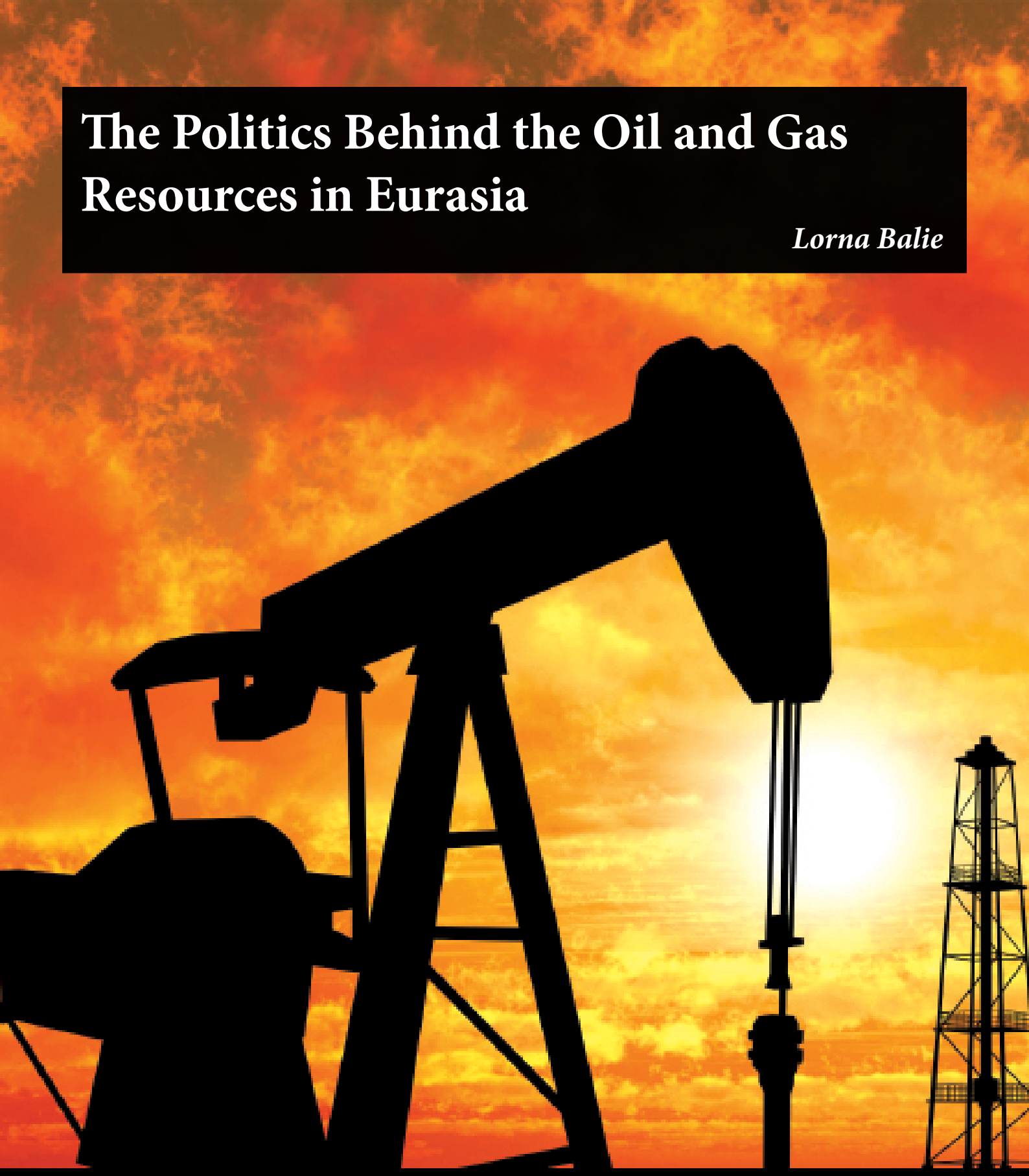
By Christopher P. Davey

Christopher P. Davey is a graduate of Utah Valley University's Peace and Justice Studies programme and the Joint European programme of Human Rights and Genocide Studies at Kingston University. He is currently a PhD researcher in Peace Studies at the University of Bradford, and a Associate Research Fellow at the John and Elnora Ferguson Centre for African Studies. Mr. Davey's main research research areas include: genocide in central Africa, and colonial and imperial legacies of genocide in British history.

The Politics Behind the Oil and Gas Resources in Eurasia

Lorna Balie



1. Introducition

The main reason for political intervention in the Central Eurasian and the Middle East region is for the purpose of economic expansion and the amassing of oil and gas reserves that is of vital importance for growing industries and transportation. This had led to a race for control over energy reserves. Growing economies such as India and China have increasing energy needs to supply, sustain and expand their growing industries. In addition to economic growth, there are profits that can be gained from oil and gas pipelines, business contracts and tanker routes. The Caspian Sea is estimated to have 50 to 110 billion barrels of oil, and from 170 to 463 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Central Asia, (i.e. Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan) stands above a black and "blue" (gas) gold: oil and gas reserves, with Turkmenistan being the world's fourth largest gas producer after Russia, Iran and Qatar. It contains about 8.1 trillion cubic meters of gas, i.e. 4% of the world's gas reserves.

Control over central Asia's energy supplies dates back to the 1900s with the Britain Empire and Tsarist Russia. Britain and Russia competed for control over Afghanistan due to its geopolitical strategic point through proxy wars. Afghanistan was used back then by the British to invade Russian Turkestan, and also by Russia to invade colonial India. The goals today are the same, but different players have emerged, namely, the US along with Russia, China, India, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan due to the world's multi-polarity. Transnational oil corporations, such as Unocal and others have a stake in the matter as well. There is competition for control and influence of this region between the US and Russia. Russia is trying to maintain control of central Asia's energy reserves and transit routes, whilst America tries to stop it by means of alternative oil and gas transit routes. However, this competition is of a polycentric nature, with oil and gas companies emerging from America, Russia, Asia, South America and Europe - everyone trying to gain a stake in the competition. Iran being the third largest producer of oil, has been sanctioned by western powers due to accusations of clandestine nuclear activity, but is also seen as an obstruction to US objectives of regional energy security (Abbas 2012: 2 - 6; 14 -15). There have been many detrimental consequences from this competition, namely, sanctions, wars resulting in the loss of life and even forced regimes changes. People are being indirectly and directly harmed by these policies and actions with many human rights violations and even crimes against humanity. Russia and the U.S have been competing for power, influence and control over the central Eurasian region for its oil and gas reserves, ever since the Former Soviet Union had split up (Abbas 2012: 5-7; The Hindu 2012). The competition is not as explicit as before, but it is still has detrimental effects to the people caught in the middle.

The question this paper hopes to answer is how the big powers such as the US with its allies and Russia with its allies are competing and blocking the control over the energy rich resources in countries within the Middle East, and how this has led to conflict and war in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and potentially Iran? My main hypothesis is from a neo-realist and neo-liberal perspective that competing political and economic interests, as well as the threats against national security of mainly the US with its allies and Russia with its allies, are the cause of conflict and war in countries in the Middle East. This is because of these countries' natural endowment of energy rich reserves and their strategic geopolitical position.

The explanatory hypothesis presented in this paper is that in order to meet national energy demands of the US for example, there was a need to gain access and control of cheap and abundant oil and gas resources. By controlling the production and transit of these energy resources, one is able to exert power over other actors demanding the same resources. Military intervention was used by these powers in some cases such as Afghanistan and Iraq under neo-liberal undertones which are more acceptable and gained support by the American public. "The War on Terrorism" and "freeing Iraqi people" from its oppressive dictatorships was statements made to rally support for military interventions in these countries. These actions have caused many conflicts and wars as well as human rights violations in the Middle East. These questions will be answered in the following order; firstly, power politics after the Cold-war period will be discussed; secondly, the importance of oil and gas; third, the politics behind the oil and gas pipeline projects; and finally, case studies of wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and potential war in Iran.

2. Power Politics after the Cold-War

After demolishing the Berlin Wall in 1990 which marked the end of the Cold War, Russia and The U.S have been competing in a different style of war, that involves the acquisition and power over finite resources; that of oil and gas in Central Asia and the Middle East. The Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) comprised of Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan during 1922 and 1991. Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are the oil and gas producing countries of the region and were released from the Soviet Union's grip and power, after the bloc's separation. Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union was the dominant power, and as the current capital of Russia, it still exerts influence over the region, and therefore has wide access to the oil and gas rich resources countries in the former soviet. Turkmenistan has tried gaining independence from Russia by diversifying its gas buyers. The TAPI (acronym for Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) pipeline has created the opportunity for Turkmenistan to do so. The U.S however, is trying to infiltrate the region to gain a stake in these resources, by trying to influence the former communist countries to become more westernized and liberalize their economies.

The strategy of the US after the collapse of the Soviet Union is to limit Russian, Chinese and Iranian control in the central Asian, and Middle East region. Projects such as the IPI (Iran, Pakistan and India) pipeline would be a major blow to American national interests in the region if it were to succeed. The Heritage Foundation, a US-based research and educational institution, published a report in 2008 saying, "The Proposed Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline: An Unacceptable Risk to Regional Security", (Abbas 2012:24-25). The US is trying any means necessary to block Iran from growing in regional dominance. Russia's South Stream pipeline is also a threat to US national economic interests and will later be explained. The US is taking any measures necessary to maintain its dominance in the growing polycentric natured world. Oil and Gas resources have played an important role in influencing and exerting power.

3. The importance of oil and gas

Oil and gas is considered to be a vital energy resource in the world today. Natural gas is estimated to be around 22 to 29% of the world's energy supply by 2030, and will increase when more gas power plants are constructed. Oil is composed of a variety of substances that through processing, different products are formed, such as gasoline, diesel, kerosene, fuel, lubricant oil, paraffin wax and compost. These products are used for ink, plastic, oil, resins, pneumatics (applied to dentistry, construction and mining), rubber, matches, photo film and fertilizer (Guilhoto et al 2006: 2). With these products oil can provide heat for homes, power for industries and manufacturing, and fuel for transportation. It has created numerous jobs and almost half of the natural gas demand for energy comes from the electric power sector (Business and

Economics Research Advisor 2010; Oil and Gas UK 2013). There is however a limited abundance of energy reserves found all over the world. It has the capacity to be consumed for at least 60 more years. These energy reserves are found mainly in Russia, Iran, Qatar and Turkmenistan, respectively. Gas production will increase in Russia for 20 more years. Russia is the world's leading natural gas producer, and will stay in this position provided that it invests in infrastructure and in its gas fields. In the same light, Russia is also predicted to have the biggest increase in consumption of natural gas in the future. Likewise, the US is the world's largest consumer of natural gas as well as petroleum. The US meets its consumption demands through domestic production of natural gas as well as imports through mainly pipelines in continental trade. Unfortunately, gas production is highly dependent on pipelines and regional markets. The transit of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) via tankers is also extremely expensive (Business and Economics Research Advisor 2010; Paillard 2010). Any means of acquiring access to energy resources cheaply are in many countries' interest.

Gas production has however reached its peak in 2008. According to Longwell (2002:101), demand for oil and gas was expected to rise at 2% and 3% respectively during and after 2010 due to economic growth, especially in emerging economies, growing populations and electric power sectors. Sustaining the functions of existing developed economies such as the US is also a main reason for the increase in consumption. However, while demand is rising, production is slowly declining. For example, gas resources are slowly depleting in the North Sea region - the European Union's energy supply zone due to its consumption levels. Oil is the most important form of energy in Europe followed by natural gas and coal.

The European Commission's Second Strategy Energy Review of 2008 predicts that Europe will be dependent on oil and gas imports until 2020. As a result of this increasing levels of consumption and declining levels of production, it is estimated that only two-thirds of the continents' energy needs will be met until 2015 and only a quarter until 2025 (Paillard 2010). Looking at natural gas consumption, it is predicted to increase by 70% by 2025 from 92 trillion cubic feet to 156 trillion cubic feet by mainly the electric power sectors and emerging economies as previously mentioned. Industrial consumption for natural gas is also predicted to rise from 8 trillion cubic feet in 2003 to 10.3 trillion cubic feet in 2025 (Business and Economics Research Advisor 2010). There have been technological advances in exploration for energy reserves, along with development. Discoveries of energy resources have been found in Africa, Central Asia, and other parts of the world by OPEC in the past which has increased energy supplies (Longwell 2002:104). The same explorations are being undertaken in order to find newly discovered energy reserves such as that in Turkmenistan. Many pipeline projects are underway to transfer newly discovered and existing energy resources.

4. Oil and Gas pipelines in Eurasia

Arguing from a neo-realist perspective, the decline of the supply and the rise of the consumption of energy reserves have led to international competition, conflict and cooperation to gain access to regions possessing energy rich supplies through international contracts, pipelines, tankers and transit routes. As a solution to this problem and potential crisis, Abbas (2012: 5) argues that below the Caspian Sea lay the largest reserves of fossil fuel that is estimated to be 50 to 110 billion barrels of oil and 170 to 463 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Within the Central Eurasian region, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan both could be situated above 130 billion barrels of oil, which is 3 times that of the United States. This could meet the present consumption demand if access and the infrastructure are in place.

TAPI

To ensure that these energy supplies are accessed and transferred there is currently one major pipeline project underway to transport this natural gas from and through Central Asia to South Asia, via TAPI which was proposed in the 1990s. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the pipeline project was signed in 1995 by Turkmenistan and Pakistan, but then put on hold in 1998 due to instability and political unrest in Afghanistan. When the Taliban government was removed by US forces in 2001 it opened up a new beginning for the project, and so a new agreement was signed involving the TAPI nations in 2002 (Palau 2012). In 2008, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India signed the gas sales purchase agreement (GPSA) in Avaza, Turkmenistan to build TAPI which is worth more than $7.6 billion with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank. It will be 2680km long and carry 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually.

Construction was expected to start in 2012 and operate in 2018. This pipeline will serve as a transit route for natural gas from Dauletbad gas fields, south Yolotan-Osman (145km) in Turkmenistan, through Herat and Kandahar in western Afghanistan (735 km) to Quetta and Multan in Pakistan (800km) and end in Fazilka in Northwestern India. Afghanistan withdrew from the project in March 2012 and instead settled on a transit fee of $160 billion per annum. The U.S assumed that the war in Afghanistan would not be as protracted, making the TAPI pipeline more legitimate and providing a stable and secure environment for it to be constructed. The construction of the TAPI pipeline is currently put on hold due to the instability in the Afghan region (Escobar 2009; Abbas 2012, 5-7, 13; Washington's Blog 2012; The Hindu 2012).

TAPI Pipeline in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, September 18, 2015.

An important precondition for TAPI's construction is security. The challenge the construction of TAPI faces is the transit route of the pipeline which crosses through dangerous terrain and war-torn areas such as Kandahar in Afghanistan where the Taliban was formed and regularly launch attacks. It is classified to be extreme zone by the UN. The costs of reparation for each attack are high, and also the immeasurable loss of human life. The Taliban government was replaced with Hamid Karzai. Karzai promised to assign 7000 troops to secure and protect the construction of TAPI even though 7000 troops may not be effective. The pipeline would however benefit the war-torn country dramatically. Karzai also stated that, "Afghanistan is to resume its central role as a land bridge in this region" (Seiff 2010). Afghanistan isn't however the only option through which the TAPI can be constructed. Iran is a much more viable, cheaper and a safer transit route. Iran opposes the construction of TAPI as it will weaken its influence and power in the region. However for political reasons, this option has been avoided which will be discussed later (Peimani 2011; Seiff 2010).

IP

Competing against TAPI and US interests was the IPI (Iran, Pakistan, India) pipeline which would have transported oil and gas from Iran to Pakistan and terminate in India. The US opposed India and Pakistan importation of Iranian gas as it is believed that Iran would use the revenues to finance its nuclear program. India was pressurized by the US through not selling its nuclear reactors to India. In addition, India wishes to develop its off shore gas fields in the Bay of Bengal and limit its dependence on foreign gas imports. Pakistan was also discouraged to partake in the IP plans. But only India withdrew from this project, and joined the US supported TAPI pipeline project.(Abbas 2012, 5-7,13; Dadwal 2011; Escobar 2009; Washington's Blog 2012; The Hindu 2012). The IP is currently under construction and Iran's section has been completed. The rest will be constructed and connected to Pakistan in 2014. Pakistan's domestic demand for energy is greater than its supply and is in need of gas imports for power generation. In order to deter Pakistan from the IP project, the US has offered funds to build a LNG re-gasification terminal to import gas from Qatar rather than Iran and import electricity from Tajikistan through Afghanistan. However, Tajikistan cannot meet those demands as Iran is assisting its government with its deficiencies. TAPI was therefore used to deter India and Pakistan from importing Iranian gas (Peimani 2011). With the exclusion of India in the IPI pipeline project, Iran and Pakistan have commenced with the Iran-Pakistan (IP) onshore gas pipeline and signed the final agreement of construction worth $US 3.2 billion. Iran and India signed 2 agreements that included possible participation of India. The 900km pipeline will transport 750 MMcf/d of gas from Iran to Pakistan.

BTC

On the other hand, In 1997 The U.S and, with the help of Turkey has sponsored and proposed the oil pipeline, from Baku in Azerbaijan, through Tbilisi in Georgia to the Ceyhan port in Turkey. It is called the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline and started pumping oil in May 2005. It was extremely expensive and difficult to build, but the government managed

Location of the Nabucco pipeline

to procure financing from agencies and banks. There were lots of political and business oppositions against the construction of this pipeline in both the Caspian states and the United States. The purpose of this pipeline was to undermine Russia's control and strategic dominance over central Asian gas and oil and claim a stake of the European gas market.

Nabucco

In addition, the U.S proposed that Turkmenistan build a natural gas pipeline, named Nabucco Pipeline running parallel to the BTC but originating from Ankara in Turkey and ending in Europe (from Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria). The US intends to connect the already existing and operational Baku-Tblisi-Erzerum gas pipeline to the proposed Nabucco pipeline (Abbas 2012, 7; Dawal 2011). The Turkish had ratified an agreement with the European Union in 2008 for its involvement of the construction of the Nabucco pipeline. It will cost around $US10.6 billion and will extract gas from Azerbaijain, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Georgia and Iraq. It will be 3,300Km long and will terminate in Baumgarten, Austria, transporting 31Bcm/a of gas. Turkmenistan is not willing to include Russia in this project either. Qatar and Turkey are planning to construct a connecting pipeline which will run through Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria and hope to connect this Nabucco as well which Qatar will also supply gas to (Clancy 2010). This proposal may be hindered by the current civil war in Syria which will be discussed later.

Nord Stream and South Stream

Russia still maintains its dominance in the region through its energy resources whereas the US wants Europe to shift its resource dependence away from Russia. Russia supplies Europe with energy through 3 main pipelines and they are planning to build two more running from Russia, namely Nord Stream and South Stream. The Nord Stream pipeline is already under construction which will run from Northwest Russia through the Baltic Sea ending in Germany, whereas the South Stream pipeline will run from Southwest Russia through the black sea through Bulgaria, Greece and Italy, with a branch to Hungary and Austria (Abbas 2012, 7). Europe's energy supply is highly dependent upon Russia's Nord Stream and South Stream pipelines, and Europe and Turkey's Nabucco pipeline. The Nord stream pipeline is an offshore pipeline which runs from Vyborg in Russian to Griefswald in Germany. The South Stream pipeline will transport 63 billion cubic meters of gas from Russia per year through the Black Sea to Bulgaria, Italy, Hungary and Austria and may be completed in 2015 (Abbas 2012, 8). South Stream is viewed as competition for Nabucco with regard to funding, market share, and press. Russia argues that there is limited gas supply for Nabucco, and that South Stream is safer and readily supplied. However, this will be the only pipeline that will have no direct contact or participation from Russia. It will thereby diversify Europe's natural gas suppliers and transit routes. The pipelines are to run parallel to each other and deliver 27.5 billion cubic meters of oil per year. It is estimated

to cost about Euro 15 – 16 Billion.

So essentially, its Russia's Nord stream and South stream competing with US sponsored TAPI, BTC and Nabucco, to gain profits from energy transit routes and oil and gas exportation to European countries. TAPI excludes both Russia and Iran. The U.S is involved in the pipeline projects which bypass China, Russia and Iran, thereby weakening Russia's control and influence over the flow of oil in the region. The U.S attempts to use different strategies such as western commercialism and the buyers reliance thereof (Abbas 2012, 6 - 8). The US wants access to the central Asian gas through the transit pipelines and Afghanistan is therefore of geopolitical significance to the US for obtaining access to the flow of oil and gas.

5. The war in Afghanistan

After the 9/11 Terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, which killed almost 3000 people, global peace and security was undermined in an unexpected way. These series of events threatened national and international security resulting in stricter security measures in the US and internationally. The US did not only take national defensive measures, but also international offensive measures which led to the "War on Terrorism". The war was fought in Afghanistan to eliminate Al-Qaeda - a Terrorist organizations believed to be responsible for planning, coordinating and carrying out the 9/11 attacks. The United States' military intervention in Afghanistan was pro-active self-defense and vengeance for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The UN general assembly and security council condemned these terrorist attacks, and viewed it as a threat to international peace and security through UNGA resolution 56/1 and UNSC Resolution 1386 (2001) . The UN however did not authorize the war in Afghanistan as it was not an act perpetrated by the state and it would intrude upon Afghanistan's sovereignty. The US argued that the UN's authorization was not necessary as the US intervention in Afghanistan was an act of self-defense and a national security concern. According to the United Nations Charter, any nation, such as the US who has signed and ratified the charter may resort to use self-defense through military force to protect itself, once all diplomatic means of resolving the issue is exhausted (United Nations Charter). The United States was authorized with a joint resolution by the US congress a few days after the attacks, on the 14th of September 2001 to "use all and necessary appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11th, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons" (Grimmet 2007) to protect citizens at home and abroad. On the 20th September, the US urged the Taliban government to hand over Osama bin Laden and the leaders of Al-Qaeda and also close down the terrorist camps. The Taliban government was willing to hand over Osama bin laden if any evidence that proved his involvement was presented. The US government refused to cooperate as their demands were not met and then sought to eliminate the Taliban government as it was believed that they harbored terrorist groups.

Afghan villagers gather near a house destroyed in an apparent drone strike in Logar Province on June 6, 2012. (Photo Credit: AP/Ihsanullah Majroh)

On the 21 October 2001, the US started its first military invasion in Afghanistan. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was given a mandate in Afghanistan in December 2001 by the United Nations Security Council to assist the government in bringing security in Kabul. After August 2003, the security was expanded around the area and passed on to NATO to bring about security, stability and peace-keeping which is still being violently contested by the Taliban and extremist forces. Amendments to the AUMF have therefore been proposed. However, the US has gone beyond its mandate, and has not only sought to fight those believed to be involved in 9/11 but also any terrorist group and insurgence. Opposition has arisen against this behavior and the

ambiguity of this mandate (Cronogue 2012:377).

I will argue these following sections from a neo-liberal and neo-realist perspective that the removal of the Taliban government was because of their disapproval and refusal to participate and construct the TAPI pipeline. While the Taliban government was in control it deployed forces to patrol the Turkmen-afghan border. The removal of the Taliban therefore opened up the possibility for the TAPI pipeline to be constructed. Former President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai replaced the Taliban and the TAPI agreement for was approved and signed in 2002 – A few months after the US invasion. Soon after the removal of the Taliban government, the pipeline deal was signed. The US had other interests, besides the removal of terrorist organizations. Afghanistan is of geopolitical importance to the U.S as it lies between the Caucuses (an oil and gas rich region) and the nuclear powers, namely, China, Russia, Pakistan and India. It is not only of geopolitical importance but is resource rich containing "deposits of natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chrome, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc and iron ore, as well as precious and semiprecious stones". Wars were fought in and over Afghanistan (Escobar 2009; Abbas 2012, 17).

One can argue that the war in Afghanistan was not only aimed at removing terrorist groups. Contrary to the US aims of the "War on Terror", terrorism had significantly increased in Afghanistan since the foreign military presence, as shown by the Global terrorism database (2012). In addition, Afghan civilians were threatened and killed by NATO forces who were supposed to protect them. Finally, security in the region has not improved. The US as well as other foreign forces has a network of military bases located in Afghanistan.

"One of our goals is to stabilize Afghanistan, so it can become a conduit and a hub between South and Central Asia so that energy can flow to the south"

The US has spent about $5.4 trillion in Afghanistan and the situation has not stabilized or improved after more than a decade of struggle. According to Abbas (2012), the construction of TAPI is the main reason the US invaded Afghanistan. The assistant secretary of state Richard Boucher said in 2007: "One of our goals is to stabilize Afghanistan, so it can become a conduit and a hub between South and Central Asia so that energy can flow to the south" (Abbas 2012). The US's reconstruction projects such as the TAPI pipeline in the Afghanistan is viewed by the US as an opportunity for regional cooperation between rival states and seeks more economic interdependence among regional powers, raising the cost of conflict. Afghanistan will therefore serve as a transit area for the TAPI pipeline. The route will be located in the south running from Herat towards Nimruz and the Hemand provinces, where the Taliban, and Pashtun guerrillas, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Hazaras are located. The US is also building a new military mega-base for US troops in Dasht-e-Margo, close to Taliban and guerilla forces in order to stabilize and secure the region for the construction of the pipeline.

The Afghan Minister of Commerce and Industry Wahidullah Shahrani said the 5000 – 7000 security force personnel will be deployed along the pipeline route. Afghanistan will procure $160 billion in transit fees from the pipelines that will eventually be built; however construction is highly dependent on the security in the region (Escobar 2009; Abbas 2012:19 - 21).

Russia has supported the war in Afghanistan by providing material benefits, as well as air space and territory as a transit area for the west to infiltrate Afghanistan. This is contrary to its official military doctrine – western military in former soviet countries as threats. One advantage was the elimination of the Taliban government which has been the cause of much instability in the region, which could have spread throughout the region. However, one negative aspect of NATO presence and the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan for Russia is the proliferation of drug trafficking from Afghanistan into Russia (Trenin 2010: 17). At the commence of the TAPI pipeline dream, Russia had opposed the construction of it due to tight competition for oil and gas resources in the region, however, it later sort to engage in the project. Turkmenistan blocked Russia's involvement in the project due to negative prior experiences, and Turkmenistan is still trying to acquire independence from Russia and access the European market (Abbas 2012:19 – 21). Similar to the US invasion of Afghanistan, Iraq was in a similar predicament 2 years later.

6. The war in Iraq

The US Congress passed a joint resolution (H.J. Res. 114) in October 2002, for the use of military force against the Iraqi regime, ruled by Saddam Hussein, as it was perceived as a threat to not only US, but to international peace and security. Hussein's regime was accused of possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and also host and supporter of terrorist organizations. This was after former-president, Bush urged the UN to take action against Iraq by enforcing the Treaty of the Non-proliferation of Nuclear weapons of 1 July 1968. The UN Security Council responded by passing Resolution 1441 in November 2002 urging Iraq which specified a more thorough inspection of its weapons. It ordered Iraq to deliver a declaration on the status of their WMD program with dire consequences if they did not comply. Iraq had violated 16 UNSC resolutions; it has been in-transparent about its development of WMD programs, and supported international terrorism. Bush demanded that the UN fulfills its duties in the charter and that Iraq removes its WMD. The US perceived Iraq as a threat to its interests and allies. Iraq has a reputation of developing and possessing WMD which it used against its own people as well as Iran. It is also listed in the State department's annual list of countries supporting terrorist attacks. The US also advocated a change of Saddam Hussein's regime to a democratic one which is only possible through military action. Critics of US invasion of Iraq stated that it should have exhausted all means of diplomacy before heading into Afghanistan. It should have waited for feedback from UN inspector's WMD programs in Iraq's reports. Once the reports have been completed and the accusations were found to be true the US military intervention could have been warranted. However, the invasion took place before any verification could be made. The UN inspectors suggested that if more time were given it would have been a good investment in peace (Prados 2003).

On the 17th March 2003, Bush offered an ultimatum in which Hussein and his sons could leave Iraq in the next 48 hours. On the 19th March, air strikes were employed against the Iraqi government officials. By the 15th of April the US occupied major Iraqi cities. The combat operations were ordered to end as there were no WMD found. By June 30th 2007, 3572 US troops and 7202 Iraqi Security Force members had died in the operation (Bowman 2007; Prados 2003). There was a major loss of life due to the false claim of WMD. Russia on the other hand had first opposed the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and proposed for nonmilitary means in confronting the issue of WMDs in Iraq. However, Russia changed its position a few months later, and helped legitimize the US intervention through the UN. It also did not want the US to leave before achieving stability. After the new Iraq government had been put in place, Russia reestablished ties with Baghdad. Russian oil companies benefited from contracts under Saddam Hussein. After the war Russia considers Iraq to be an important country due to energy resources and it geopolitical position (Trenin 2010: 7–8).

"..Iraq invasion along with plans to exploit the oil reserves, were discussed by government ministers and oil companies long before the war had begun."

With regard to energy resources, Iraq holds the world's second largest reserves for oil and is the second largest oil producer of OPEC. About 11% in the world's total with 112 billion barrels of oil reserves. 17 to 80 oil fields have been developed, the main ones being Kirkuk in the north and Rumaila in the south. Iraq also has undeveloped natural gas reserves. The Department of Energy reports state that Iraq is the best prospect for long-term petroleum. To demonstrate its potential, the US is able to produce 10 barrels of oil per day while Iraq can produce about several thousands. After Saddam Hussein was removed and his regime had changed, Iraq's oil production had increased after the brief disruption during the fighting. The damage to wells, facilities and refineries slowed down slowed production. The democratically elected president, Jalal Talabani hoped to stabilize the northern region with the presence of the oil fields and export pipelines. With the new president, revenue allocation is being negotiated. However, production depends highly on security (Kumins 2005:1-5). Hussein had nationalized oil and gas in 1972. The main reason for the US invasion of Iraq was to liberalize the oil and gas market to foreign states and oil and gas companies. Due to the US national interests mainly security for the nation, the economy, and to power up industries, the US relies heavily on oil and gas imports from the middle east, free access to the gulf's oil and the free access to Gulf's exports to world markets while being military prepared for any disruptions in access to low cost oil. These states do not lower oil prices nor are investments

Syrian government forces patrolling in the central city of Homs (2013). Essential to the government's resurgence has been its well-armed military. Long trained for a traditional land war with Israel, it has become increasingly adept at fighting an insurgency. (Photo Credit: AFP/Getty Images)

made to improve and expand infrastructure to increase oil production to keep up with international demand. Iraq is the main oil producing country, exporting oil and gas to the US. The US is facing shortages and high prices for energy. Americans are also vulnerable to the fluctuation in energy prices. Bignell (2011) states that the Iraq invasion along with plans to exploit the oil reserves, were discussed by government ministers and oil companies long before the war had begun. In November 2002 Deals were made with British energy companies to get a share in the oil reserve as a reward for supporting the invasion. The British Petroleum (BP) company was invited by the foreign office to discuss oil opportunities once Iraqi regime has changed. 1000 documents were found under the Freedom of Information. A 20 year contract was signed during the Iraqi invasion regarding half of Iraq's oil reserves which can produce 60 billion barrels of oil which can make $658 million per annum from the south filed of Rumaila. Critics of the invasion state that the US main intention for invading Iraq was to procure cheap oil. Governments made clandestine deals with oil companies to gain cheap access to oil. With regard to Iraq, the war was clandestinely based on access and exploitation to Iraq oil fields and natural gas. The US' accusation IRAQ holding of Weapons of Mass destruction proved to be false, yet there are still US military bases close to and surrounding the oil rich regions. The next country which is of geopolitical and strategic importance with oil and gas resources is Syria.

7. The civil war in Syria

The civil war in Syria began in March 2011, with public protesting for the release of child prisoners who had criticized the government with statements painted on walls. Freedom of speech and media is prohibited under Syria's authoritarian regime ruled by Bashar Al-Assad. It had been in a state of emergency for 48 years. The government forces tried to suppress these protests by beating, shooting and arresting protestors. Naval ships and army tanks were deployed against Syrian citizens as well. The child prisoners were eventually granted amnesty, but the violent retaliation had escalated from the side of the Syrian protestors and the side of the military forces. This led to an intractable civil war. A human rights and humanitarian crisis had emerged with systematic acts of brutality. The Human Rights Council and Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) launched an investigative mission into the situation and called the attacks a crime against humanity. The protesters and activists organized themselves in Istanbul in August 2011 and formed the Syrian National Council (SNC). International communities were shocked when news spread about the atrocities, but were reluctant to intervene as it did in Libya (BBC 2012; ICRtoP 2012). There were fears of the violence flooding over to neighboring borders such as Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Russia and China opposed any sort of foreign intervention in the conflict and argued that it would undermine the legitimacy of

Assad's government (Bloomberg 2011). Disregarding the international's community's agreement to take responsibility to protect civilians if their state fails to do so, especially in cases when systematic and widespread acts of violence are taking place. The United Nationa initiative, the Right to Protect (R2P) gives other nations the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state in order to protect its citizens, collectively and in a timely manner. Navi Pillay says the Syrians are in urgent need of protection. The Security Council failed to reach a consensus because of different stances. Russian and China vetoed against the Resolutions on Syria arguing against international intervention as it would undermine Syria's sovereignty, territorial integrity and says that the situation does not pose a threat to international security and peace. It also used the failure of RtoP in Libya with Resolution 1973 to argue its point. Russia and China however did condemn the violence in Syria and threatened Syria with sanctions if the situation worsened. Russia then introduced a draft resolution condemning the violence in Syria, but prohibited any kind of military intervention. The US and its allies argued this draft resolution was not aggressive enough. The League of Arab states introduced the resolution advocating Assad's removal from power and replace him with the unity government. The resolution included an end to the violence, the release of prisoners and access for the UN, NGOS and human rights monitors. This resolution was supported by the US and its allies, France and the UK. However it was once again vetoed by Russia and China. Khofi Annan tried to implement a six-point proposal to reach a settlement for the crisis. The Security Council finally agreed on this proposal and Ban-Ki Moon was pleased with the Council's unity and progress.

A resolution was passed by the General Assembly condemning the Syrian government's treatment of its citizens; however it had no impact because of legalities. The Syrian envoy declared the international actions as a "Diplomatic war" as Russia along with its allies abstained from voting. The second General Assembly passed a resolution with regard to a peace plan created by the Arab league which included allowing observers into the country. A third resolution was passed by the General Assembly to deal with these human rights abuses in the international criminal courts (ICC) so that those who are responsible do not go unpunished (ICRtoP 2012).

Looking deeper, one can see that the members of the Security Council were not acting in the interests of the Syrian people, but rather their own political and economic interests. Those against international intervention argued on the basis of not interfering with the sovereignty of the states, versus those arguing for the prevention and prohibition of systematic human rights violations. Russia has had a close relationship with the Syrian government, with military and energy interests, and Syria being its main Middle Eastern ally. Syria is of geopolitical importance when it comes to the transit of oil and gas in the region with 2 pipelines, namely, Kirkuk-Baniyas and the Iraq-Iran pipeline. The Kirkuk-Baniyas pipeline is close to Russia's last naval base in the former Soviet Union, at Port Tartus along the Syrian coast. The Kirkuk-Baniyas is currently closed but will soon operate. The Iran-Iraq pipeline is located in the north of Syria which runs along the Turkish border. Russia is also known to export arms to Syria and was believed to be supporting the Syrian regime with arms which explains Russia's opposition to any type of sanctions against Syria. Another important reason why Syria is of strategic importance is because of its location close to the Levantine basin – a newly discovered off shore gas field close to Lebanon, Israel and Cyprus. It is claimed to contain 8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The European Union and Russia is competing for investments in this region. Russia secured a deal with Turkey for the construction of the South Stream pipeline which will transport gas from Russia to Europe. Europe depends on Russia for 50% of its oil and gas resources. The development of these pipelines is highly dependent on the stability of Syria. These projects and present pipelines are at risk of bombings, fire arm, and military force. It will directly affect its neighbors; Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan. I argue that this is the reason behind Russia's opposition against international intervention and military forces. If

NATO were to intervene in Syria it would be in conflict with Russia's interests. NATO has however established a radar station in the south of Turkey, while Russia has a radar station south of Damascus (Worldview from off the Strip 2012). Regarding the political interests of the US government, there is no coincidence to the regime changes in the Middle East and North Africa. Syria is argued (Washington's Blog 2012) to be one of the targets for a regime change as it weakens its close allies power in the region, namely Iran and Russia. Similar to the regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq, Syria did not cooperate with Western interests regarding energy. Assad also posed a threat to US and its allies, Turkey and Israel regarding the flow of energy in the region (Washington's Blog 2012). In addition, prior to the escalation of war and the world exposure to Syria's human rights violations, the US had been a close ally to Syria for the 'War on Terror". The US had sent suspects linked to terrorist groups for serious questioning and even torture. The US interrogators worked with the Syrian torturers. This behavior is contrary to US arguments for the promotion of human rights in Syria (Hasan 2012). There are also other players in this political game that hope to win a stake in the matter, namely Qatar. Qatar is clandestinely supporting rebel groups in Syria with weapons, and hopes to achieve its own agenda - the construction of its pipeline to transport natural gas from the South Pars through Jordan and Syria to Turkey. Jordan will receive free gas because of it allowing Syrian rebel forces to train and launch attacks from its territory (Editorial Dept 2013). Syria therefore is a key role in power politics in the Middle East region. Whoever has influence and control over Syria is able to have access and procure oil and gas resources despite any political instability. Iran seems to be the next target on the list as it does not cooperate with the west either.

8. The potential for war in Iran

Iran has been sanctioned and accused of pursuing nuclear programs which could eventually lead to the development of a nuclear bomb. The US argues that this is a threat to international security and peace and against the agreement under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. However, Iran argues that this is not the case. It is not pursuing a nuclear program for destructive purposes such as nuclear weapons, but in the contrary, it is using its nuclear energy for electricity and medical purposes. This debate worsened since November 2011. In August 2012, the International atomic energy agency (IAEA) reported that Iran installed nuclear centrifuges to produce nuclear fuel. It also cleared ground to conduct nuclear experiments. Israel feeling, threatened urged the international community to put pressure on Iran to stop its nuclear capabilities to enrich Uranium, even urging the United States to take military action. UN inspectors reported that Iran was increasing its Uranium enrichment after installing the centrifuges of which its products will be sufficient for a bomb. International sanctions were imposed on Iran effecting its finance, metal and natural gas sectors and gravely affecting is economy resulting in a decrease of value of its currency (The New York Times 2013).

Trenin argues (2010:12) that Iran's nuclear goals are part of its plan to restore its power in the region. Informed Russians are aware of Iran's nuclear aspirations, and that it is not only meant for peaceful purposes. Iran has a few allies in the region, besides Syria, which is currently in an unstable situation. Russia and China are not completely committed allies either. Iran is threatened by the US as it is in the middle of Afghanistan, Iraq, and the gulf in the south, surrounded by US military bases. In addition, Pakistan and Israel possess nuclear weapons. Possessing nuclear weapons deters any powerful state from intervening as shown in the case of North Korea. Russia has been in support of non-aggressive sanctions against Iran for its nuclear activity. Russia believes that Iran cannot be deterred from pursuing its nuclear aspirations, but rather its security dilemma should be acknowledged. If Iran's security and technological advancement is guaranteed it could relinquish its nuclear activities. Iran is at loggerheads with the US. Russia is however supporting Iran and supplying it with arms during international sanctions. It is of geopolitical, strategic and resource importance to Russia (Trenin 2010:12-16). Russia together with Iran controls 20% of the world's oil reserves and 50% of its gas reserves (Escobar 2009). Iran holds the world's second largest gas reserves – over "93 billion barrels of oil and 4.17 million barrels per day in 2009". Iran exports mainly to the European Union which is 18% of Iran's energy exports. The Turkmenistan-Iran gas pipeline was the first pipeline to emanate from central Asia built in 2007. Iran signed a huge deal worth $120 billion with China in 2004, supplying China with about 10 million tons of liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for 25 years. This gives China's state oil company the opportunity to explore and drill for oil and gas reserves in Iran. Iran intends to sell gas to Europe which will compete with the US owned Nabucco pipeline (Abbas 2012, 8; Independent Media Review Analysis 2006).

According to Peimani (2011), Iran is the world's third largest consumer of gas and oil, and therefore imports these resources because their demand exceeds their supply. Oil is Iran's main energy source. Iran and the United Arab Emirates are the regions (Middles East regions) largest producers of natural gas (Business and Economics Research Advisor 2010; Washington's Blog 2012). Due to Iran's possession and control over its oil and gas resources, and its growing nuclear capabilities, it is a power in its own right. Iran has even attempted to block off the Strait of Hormuz of which 20% of the world's oil and gas exports are transported. It therefore has the power to stop energy supplies control oil and gas prices. President Mahmoed Ahmadinejad warned the West that crude oil has not yet reached its true value. Iran's leaders has made many threats regarding the distribution of oil from the Persian Gulf if any move were to made against it. The US has pointed out the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of Iran's position, such as pressure from the international community and its dependency of foreign energy supplies. It imports oil and gas in order to meet domestic demands, and the costs of these imports could be raised with international pressure (Berman 2006; Sedghi 2012).

With regard to TAPI, Iran prefers to be used as an energy transit route to transfer natural gas to the south of Iran instead of using other countries, such as Afghanistan. Iran opposes the construction of the TAPI pipeline as it will weaken its influence and power in the Central and south Asian region (Seiff 2010). The US and Europe is attempting to lower international dependency on Iranian gas exports for economic and political reasons. The pipeline route was purposely planned to cut through the unstable, insecure and riskier region of Afghanistan over the secure and cost-effective, less technical option of Iran. The TAPI project is therefore more political than one first realizes. It therefore is possible, that the current isolation and accusations against Iran will eventually result in another military intervention by the US in Iran, based on the argument of world threatening nuclear activities. This possibility follows from previous cases of arguments similar to those used for the US invasion of Iraq. Russia will be a determinant factor in this potential war depending on its interests and commitment to ties with Iran.

9. Conclusion

One can clearly notice a trend of the US, accusing Central Asian and Middle Eastern governments of supporting terrorist organizations and possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction. Illegal wars were declared on some countries along with sudden and violent regime changes. The US opposed regimes and persons who opposed their economic and political interests. If not directly, then indirectly eliminating them through supporting an opposition. Anything that stood in their way of achieving national goals was threatened on an international platform rallying domestic and international support to back-up their military and non-military actions. The US was using the Middle Eastern countries to obtain control of the coveted energy resources while competing and sometimes cooperating with Russia. Russia fights backs in a more diplomatic way, through its veto power in the UN Security Council holding onto its symbolic and economic power in the former soviet and Middle East region. One can see the detrimental effects of the power politics between the US and Russia such as war, tortures, arrests, refugees, death and in some cases crimes against humanity. Control over the oil and gas resources has led to conflict, war and many innocent deaths. This unfortunately, is not likely to end until fear and security issues are resolved. One recommendation is for public awareness of clandestine national agendas that are not transparent. If people are informed of strategies governments are using to manipulate and promote their interests there would be stronger unifying pressure from the public, especially those in more democratic countries who have access to information. This will influence governments behavior which if not monitored could leave citizens from several countries at a loss from the scourge of war. Once people are informed, governments would have more incentive to change their behavior if only for a vote.

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By Lorna Balie

Lorna Balie did her Bachelors in Political Science, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Stellenbosch. She completed her Masters in Peace and Conflict Studies at the European Peace University in Austria where her thesis focused on the impact of peace education on youth in South Africa. Lorna is currently a doctoral candidate in Education at the Centre for International Teacher Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Democratic Peace-building
The Case of Post-war Iraq

Farinaz Aryanfar

Introduction

The second American Gulf War, which started in 2003, gave rise to much debate and a large amount of academic literature. Most of this literature has focused either on what led to the Iraq war and whether the war can be justified, or on the war strategies and the involvement of each country in this war (McGoldrick 2004, Copson 2003, Nikolaev and Hakanen 2006, Lewis 2006, Harvey 2012, Cordesman 2003). In this paper, however, the post-combat period of this war will be taken into concideration, while concentrating on state-building policies implemented in Iraq and their implications. To be more precise, this paper will try to answer the research question: 'to what extent has democratic peace-building been successful in the case of Iraq?'. In order to do this, this paper will be divided into two sections of analysis. First, a theoretical analysis will be made of the theories regarding state-building and democratic peace-building. Secondly, Iraq's post-combat period will be analyzed, using the previously mentioned theories, after which a conclusion will be drawn that answers this paper's research question.

Theoretical Analysis

In order to make a case analysis of the post-war state building in Iraq, the term 'state-building' needs more clarification. State-building can be described as the construction of legitimate, effective governmental institutions in post-war countries, in order to fight poverty and violence in these countries and to create an environment for a long-term peace (Paris and Sisk 2007, p.1). After the Cold War, the United Nation's (UN) peace-keeping missions changed, involving the implementation of multi-faceted peace agreements, which incorporated humanitarian, political, and economic factors, in addition to the previous monitoring of ceasefire missions (ibid., p.2). After some of these speedy peace-building missions failed in 1990s (in Rwanda and Angola, for example), there was a shift towards a greater emphasis on building 'governance capacity', which in turn developed into state-building (ibid., p.2-3).

According to Marquette and Beswick (2011, p.1703), state-building theory has interlinked security and development since the 1960s. Where development aid previously focused on diminishing poverty, since state-building emerged in international relations, the focus has shifted also to human security. Proponents of state-building believe that state-building will diminish internal conflict and insecurity of a country, which are not only a threat to development but also a threat to international security (ibid, p.1704). On the other hand, many critics correspond state-building with the policy makers' agenda to establish neoliberalism as the organizing principle in developing economies (ibid, p.1705). Important themes in state-building are 'who' wants to build, and 'what' is being built (ibid. p.1706). This refers to the agendas of the state-builders and which specific government model they favor building. Here, the notion 'democratic peace-building' comes to the fore, where state-building happens by the hands of the liberal democratic state with the means to build a democratic state with Western values, institutions and norms. Liberal democracies favor building a democratic state because it is believed, according to democratic peace theory, that democracies rarely fight each other (Rosato 2003, p.585). The idea behind the democratic peace theory is that because democratic states have the same norms (for example, a universal declaration of human rights, freedom of speech, accepting diversity), they mutually respect and trust each other (ibid. p.585-587). Therefore, building democratic states after a war will not only lead to peace inside the post-war country, but will also lead to international peace.

The democratic peace theory also has its critics. According to Burnell (2006), democracy and peace do not necessarily coincide. He bases his criticisms on other democratic theorists' works, such as Przeworski, et al., Hegre, et al., and Mousseau, in which it is estimated that a democracy's survival will only be guaranteed when a country has at least a $6000 income per capita (Przeworski, et al. 1996, p.), and that statistical analysis suggests that the democratization process does not occur in a linear fashion, but rather has fluxes that increas the risk of conflict in the process of change (Hegre, et al. 2001). Mousseau (2001) even concluded in his research that in ethnically heterogeneous countries, autocratization was less risky to lead to conflict than democratization. This is because it is more difficult in an emerging democratization to keep the peace between different ethnical communities. Here, the effectiveness of governing institutions take precedence over keeping the population happy: thus a(n autocratic) power that is able to hold all sides to their agreements is more favored than, for example, a newly established multi-party parliament where no coalition or cooperation can exist between the party members to reach an agreement. Wimmer & Schetter (2003) suggest more radical steps. In their view, Afghanistan is such a case where institutional reform and democratic

decentralization was a hindrance. Instead, the focus should have been on the means of physical oppression and centralizing the power over critical economic sources (which can produce the money to persuade the tribal-, ethnic community chiefs, and the Taliban to cooperate with state negotiations).

To sum up, according to the literature, while state-building is needed to decrease poverty and increase security in post-conflict areas, whether democratic peace keeping should be the state-building agenda remains the question. This essay will proceed with a case study of post-war state-building in Iraq, using the aforementioned theories, to contribute to the analysis of state-building in multi-ethnic countries with more in-depth research.

Post-war State Building in Iraq

As was mentioned in the previous section, several peace-keeping missions of the UN occurred after an internal conflict or a war in numerous countries. In Iraq's case, state-building occurred during the United States' military intervention in Iraq, while using its decapitation strategy. A decapitation strike is a targeted attack on essential government installations, which separates the head (leaders) from the body (country), in order to paralyze the enemy to strike back (Goldman 2011, p.89). The attack is usually used in case the enemy has a nuclear weapon, since it renders a 'leaderless' enemy that will not be able to launch a nuclear strike (ibid.). The decapitation strikes were performed in March 2003, with the aim to deprive Iraq of its armed forces, as well as its leadership (Cordesman 2003, p.58-60). Without Saddam Hussein and his Ba'ath party supporters, American strategists thought, it would be simple to install a new government after a democratic election.

After capturing the capital, Paul Bremer was installed as Presidential Envoy to Iraq, who decreed Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number One and Two that called for the removal of all Ba'ath affiliated staff from government institutions and dismissing all Iraqi soldiers (U.S. Department of Defense 2003, The Coalition Provisional Authority 2003, Coalition Provisional Authority 2003). Because of the high affiliation of Sunni Iraqis with the Ba'athist party, de-Ba'athification led to the exclusion of thousands of Sunni Arabs from public services. Only few leaders within the Sunni Arab community were willing or capable of organizing legal parties that could participate in the political sphere (Hendrickson and Tucker 2005, p.21). While Shia dissidents, domestic and exiled, formed various political parties and dominated the government (of course they are also the majority population in Iraq), there was a lack of Sunni representation in the newly established government (ibid., p.23). The result was a gap between Shia Arab, Sunni Kurdish, and Sunni Arab organization in the political sphere, which in turn led to a complete disintegration of Iraqi society along ethnic and religious lines.

De-Ba'athization also had its effects on administrative and economic processes in Iraq. Because of the removal of all previous technocrats, who were all affiliated with the Ba'athist party, government institutions ceased to function well or at all (Ferguson 2008, p.161-162). Many ministries were understaffed, and the new staff did not have the competency or the experience to work effectively (Chandrasekaran 2006, p.82-123). As a result, government compentency declined with many basic services not provided (ibid). This government incompentence reached its peak when former Ba'athist affiliated employees that had been released started protesting. Because of the lack of government organization, the disentanglement of the army, and the increase in unemployment which reached 27 percent, unrest grew and contributed to the lack of order in the country - it slowed down a peaceful process of state-building (ibid., p.213).

Linking the previously described case to the theories, it is elucidated that democracy and peace-building did not coincide in the case of post-war Iraq. While opening the government functions to other ethnic and religious groups was a democratic measure, it also broke with the traditional and historical process of governing in Iraq. Iraq had been traditionally governed by the Sunni Arabs, who had gained the skills and training to successfully fulfill public service functions. Even though they formed the minority of the population, and had violated many universal human rights laws during the years, excluding them from these services was an inept decision that threatened security and development of the country.

Conclusion

In this paper, the democratic peace theory was explained, which is a theory that assumes that democratic countries rarely go into war with each other. This theory has been the basis of turning state-building policy into democratic peace theory. While state building-used to be UN's main focus in peace missions in post-conflict or post-war countries to supervise a speedy elections or disarm different armed rebels, it shifted its focus towards multi-faceted operations that not only negotiated between different groups for human rights and economic agreements but also focused on the governance system. The democratic peace theory has thus linked the developmental part of the UN's concerns with the security concerns of the international (liberal democratic) community.

However, the democratic peace theory proves to have its errors. As critics have pointed out, democracy and peace do not always coincide, especially in multi-ethnic countries. While ethnic diversity and conflict are not necessarily related, the process of democratization does not go as smoothly as expected in many cases of ethnic diversity. The case of Iraq shows the example where the minority elite leaders and government administrators are set aside for the country's majority to rule, as in a true democracy is the case. The exclusion of the Ba'athists from the country's administration led to the formation of new clusters of society along religious and ethnical lines, instead of opinions about what political party plans are most effective for the future of the country. This resulted further in a deformation of democracy, with majority communities ruling the country, instead of voted majority ideas and political programs. Moreover, this also led to unrest and more security threats than a peace mission would want to.

Furthermore, however imperfect a government system might be, each society has its own rich history and constructions. Drastic changes into a country's government system can lead to instability and chaos. While the liberal democratic values of governmental accountability, representativeness of population, good governance, and the social responsibility of economic management all make a democracy appealing irrespective of the peace theory, democracy should not be injected into a country, rather for its long-term legitimacy, its people need to own it. Going back to the research question of this essay, the democratic peace theory did not prove applicable for Iraq, because of the drastic measures that were taken to democratize the country. As in the case of Afghanistan, as researched by Wimmer & Schetter, the priority in Iraq had to be centralizing and securing its economic sources and a much slower process of democratization where the Ba'athist members were not dismissed from government services. Therefore, it can be concluded that the democratic peace theory should be applied with more caution, using critics' researches and studying the histories and constructions of the country that needs state-building.

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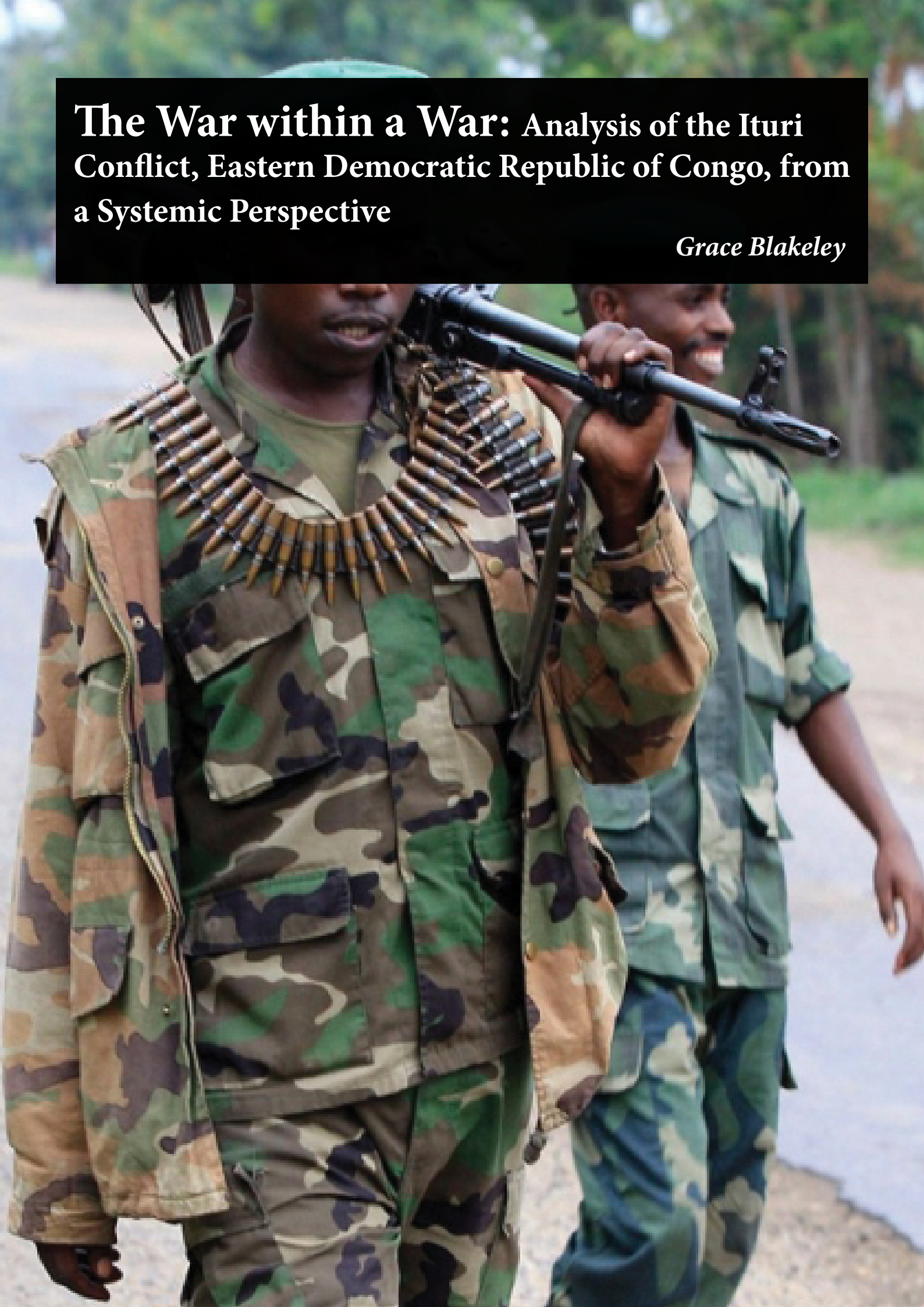
By Farinaz Aryanfar

Farinaz Aryanfar is a Dutch-Iranian researcher focusing on conflict analysis in the Middle East. She has a Bachelor's degree in Middle Eastern studies from Leiden University, and a Master's degree in Global Affairs from Gothenburg University. As an active analyst in media, she received the 'Most in the News Women' prize in the Netherlands in 2009. Ms. Farinaz has presented her papers at several conferences including World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (2014). Currently, she is studying the polarization threat of European societies as an effect of Islamic extremism (2015-2016).

The War within a War: Analysis of the Ituri Conflict, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, from a Systemic Perspective

Grace Blakeley



1. Introduction

It is the contention of this paper that analysis of the war in the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) so far has suffered from one major problem; that is the tendency to oversimplify the complexity of the conflict by understanding it through certain preconceived narratives and frames. Such a tendency leads to certain dynamics being obscured, whilst others are overemphasised (Autesserre, 2012). I will be arguing that the application of systems theory to the study of conflict offers a unique opportunity to overcome some of the disadvantages associated with framing. Rather than attempting the impossibility of gaining a 'perspective from nowhere', systems theory brings us closer to gaining a 'perspective from everywhere'; i.e. as opposed to attempting to reduce the influence of frames on analysis, it allows us to include insights from a multitude of perspectives such that the influence of each individual narrative is reduced (Coleman, 2006). Systems theory also provides us with unique insights into the nature of intractable conflict; only through holistic analysis, incorporating dynamics such as causal interaction and feedback, can one come to understand the nature of complex, intractable conflict. What's more, conceptualising conflict in such a way provides distinctive opportunities for intervention which are often missed by more linear approaches; innovations in conflict interventions based on a systemic perspective such as systemic action research outlined by Burns (2007; 2011) give the peace builder different ways of understanding a conflict, often enabling her to identify new avenues for intervention.

Coleman (2006: 326) argues that systems theory should be used as a 'superordinate frame that employs a process of multi-perspective reframing, and a methodology for analysing, intervening, and using feedback to address conflicts.' Rather than attempting to negate the influence of individual narratives, systems theory allows the researcher to combine different approaches based on different epistemological frameworks into a comprehensive conceptualisation of the conflict as a whole, including the perspectives of a number of stakeholders. By recognising the explanatory power of individual paradigms used by different authors in their analysis of the war in Ituri and combining them into a single conceptualisation of the conflict, it becomes possible to gain a broader and more nuanced understanding of the conflict under examination (Coleman, 2006).

The war in Ituri and the wider Congo war of which is was a part is continually described as a complex phenomenon. Jason Stearns (2011: 2) writes 'I do not have a Unified Theory of the Congo War, because it does not exist. The conflict is complex and knotted, with dozens of different protagonists.' Reyntjens (2009: 1) writes that 'in order to understand the multifaceted and complex nature of the conflicts, an eclectic approach to factors is required; some factors occurred simultaneously, whilst others were successive.' Autesserre (2010: 2) writes '[s]cholars and policy makers consider the Congo wars of the 1990s and their aftermath as some of the most complex conflicts of our time.' Daley (2006: 304) argues that traditional accounts of the Congo wars (as well as those in Rwanda and Burundi) '[fail] to address the complexity of politics in Africa'.

The Ituri conflict, which was at once separate to and also fundamentally linked with the broader national conflict, has been described using a similar lexicon. Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2004: 394, 388) write about how the Ituri conflict was 'complex and highly unpredictable' and that it should be understood as a 'complex of dynamics'. Pottier (2008: 427, 445) characterises the conflict in Ituri as a 'complex emergency', also warning about the 'temptation to go easy on Ituri's history and dilute its complexities'. These quotations demonstrate the powerful appeal of applying the concept of complexity to the national war in the DRC and the Ituri conflict which formed a part of it.

There is a tendency among academics and laypersons alike to make sense out of this apparent complexity by filtering information through particular narratives or frames; in the context of the war in the DRC these often take the form of either 'good guys' versus 'bad guys' logics, or the kind of New Barbarism thesis advocated by authors such as Kaplan, which see no rhyme or reason in the African conflicts of the twenty first century, only chaos (Autesserre, 2012; Prunier, 2009: 357; Dunn, 2003). George Lakoff (2011: 25) describes mental frames as 'the mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality— and sometimes to create what we take to be reality'; such frames determine which ideas we have, the way we reason and even what we perceive and the way we act. He describes how these frames are combined in our minds to create narratives which are stories that help 'transform a set of values, principles, beliefs, and

statistics into stories with a beginning, a middle, and an end' (Lakoff, 2011: 129). The most fundamental narrative roles are 'hero, villain, victim and helper' who interact in the basic narrative processes of self-defence, rescue, overcoming obstacles and achieving potential (Lakoff, 2011: 129). These narratives are so strong and deeply felt that they determine the way we reason and what information we take in; this unconscious confirmation bias can distort our conception of reality (Lakoff, 2006; Westen, 2008). This effect is intensified when the media pick up on and reinforce our unconscious frames; the marked tendency of the American press to do this is noted by Jamieson and Waldman (2003).

Prunier (2009: 357) writes of how the complexity of the situation in the DRC is so pervasive that many 'fall victim to the syndrome of desperately wanting to find 'good guys' and 'bad guys' who could restore meaning and clarity to such moral gloom'. In this context Prunier is referring to the American tendency during the First Congo war to unquestioningly accept the official RPA line, especially regarding the fate of the Hutu refugees in the Congo, because they were still seen as 'victims' after the genocide. The reality of the Rwandan genocide threatened to undermine the story of the Americans as 'heroes' to the African 'victims' (the Tutsi) threatened by other African 'villains' (the Hutu); the Americans had done nothing to stop the genocide and as such felt an acute sense of guilt for letting the 'good guys' suffer alone. However, the rise to power of the RPF and the subsequent Congo war allowed them to recover their self-image without altering their narrative. Reyntjens (2009: 27) describes this phenomenon succinctly; '[f]rom the first days after the RPF's victory, abuse was veiled in a conspiracy of silence, induced in part by an international feeling of guilt over the genocide and a comfortable 'good guys-bad guys' dichotomy'. By seeing the war in the DRC through the 'frame' of 'good guys' vs 'bad guys', one can ignore the complexity of the situation and adopt a narrative which affirms one's beliefs, whilst dismissing or rationalising information which contradicts that view.

When these simplifications are found wanting, when, for example, the RPA (Rwandese Patriotic Army) was implicated in the murders of hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees in the DRC (see page 24), it is tempting to stop attempting to find meaning in the chaos at all. Richard Kaplan (1994) writes in his well-known article The Coming Anarchy about how Africa is slowly imploding due to 'scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism and disease'. He tells of how African countries make 'no geographic or demographic sense' and that, as a consequence, 'Africa is reverting to the Victorian atlas'. Dunn (2003: 166) writes about how this kind of fatalistic and 'subtly racist' logic has coalesced in the form of the 'New Barbarism thesis', the main tenet of which is that Africa cannot sustain the basic elements of human civilisation. Dunn (2003: 166) claims that: 'Western… responses to the crisis in Zaire and the Great Lakes were largely informed by this trope', in large part due to a media which portrayed the crisis as one of 'chaos, tribalism and irrational African violence'. The temptation to make sense of the obvious complexity of the wars in the Great Lakes by reverting to either of the two aforementioned frames is strong, and understandable. But it is not always necessary; if we approached the analysis of conflict from a different perspective, the apparent chaos of contemporary African conflicts is rendered more comprehensible.

However, whilst the influence of narratives can be reduced, it is never possible to approach analysis completely objectively. According to the observer principle this is because the mere process of observation involves the researcher intimately with the system they are trying to observe; observation cannot be objective, and must account for the presence of the observer within the system (Bernshausen & Bonacker, 2011; Körppen & Roppers). Similarly, any analysis of the war in the DRC takes place within the context of a particular perspective – the one which is chosen by the researcher (Coleman, 2006). One has to accept the impossibility of providing a strictly objective analysis of conflict; the conclusions that are reached will always be dependent upon the subject deriving them (Bernshausen & Bonacker, 2011; Cilliers, 1998). Coleman (2004: 198) talks of 'frame-driven' analysis in which the cognitive structures the analyst brings to bear in conceptualising a conflict deeply affect what he finds; he writes 'our reading of any conflict will depend largely on… the cognitive structures we bring to the analysis… This is particularly true when the situations we face are difficult to comprehend: vast, complex, volatile, and replete with contradictory information.'

However, according to Coleman (2006: 325), analysing a conflict from a systemic perspective can lead to 'frame-breaking' insights and the identification of

opportunities for sustainable change. Adopting such an approach allows the researcher to identify key variables from all the aforementioned perspectives, along with many more, and identify the ways in which they are linked (Coleman, 2006). Linking, for example, structural factors such as the collapse of the state with more historically rooted analyses of local cultures, as well as individual sense making narratives – what Lederach would call switching lenses – provides for a conceptualisation of conflict which is not only more exhaustive, but also more robust (Coleman, 2006; Lederach, 1997).

Conducting analysis in this way enables the researcher to 'generate a comprehensive understanding of complicated situations and events' (Coleman, 2006: 326). Coleman uses the example of a researcher who is attempting to understand a certain ethnic conflict; if she were seeking to understand power and authority within the group context, she might use a political lens as one aspect of a framework, complementing it with cultural and psychological lenses to shed light on inter-group power struggles. Purposively changing perspectives in such a manner 'forces us to reflect on our assumptions and consider viable alternatives' and therefore helps to 'highlight the limitations of our initial frames and can lead to new understanding' (Coleman, 2006: 326). What's more, using a certain frame allows the researcher to see connections between dynamics which might not be as salient from another perspective; often, dynamics which seem incompatible, arising as they do from radically different epistemological perspectives, are found to be linked to one another. These linkages are not, however, simple, linear and transitive; they are complex non-linear and cotemporaneous. Systems theory is one of the only perspectives capable of linking all the pertinent dynamics in a complex conflict system, and elucidating the complex, non-linear interaction between them involving phenomena such as positive feedback and emergence (Gallo, 2012; Hendrick, 2009; Ropers, 2005).

Many authors engaged in analysis of the war in the DRC have failed to adopt such a perspective; Prunier (2009: 357) writes '[m]any writers routinely warn about 'complexity' and 'contradictions' and then immediately proceed to re-create a coherence that contradicts the wise warnings they have just uttered'. Writers who are deeply aware of the limitations of traditional modes of analysis for analysing such a complex conflict have often presented a conservative portrait of the conflict, which, whether structural or cultural, critical or constructivist, never challenges underlying assumptions of causal linearity. As demonstrated above (pages 5-6), there is often talk of complexity and causal interaction, but this is never elaborated into a broader framework of which causal interdependence is a cornerstone, not an anomaly.

As such, the purpose of this thesis is to apply a complex systems paradigm to the ethnic conflict which ravaged Ituri from 1999 to 2003, in the hope that the insights gained from this study might be useful in analysing the conflict in the DRC more broadly and indeed modern African conflict in general. First I will outline the theoretical framework I will be using for the purposes of my analysis, as well as presenting my methodology including an outline of the interview process used when I travelled to Ituri. Next I will give a brief background to the Ituri war as well as the Second Congo war of which it was a part, followed by a review of the current literature on these topics. In the following chapter I will apply my theoretical framework to the conflict in Ituri, constructing a model to elucidate this, and will explain how such an approach not only improves our understanding of the conflict in Ituri but is also a helpful framework for the analysis of modern African conflict more generally. This will be followed by a brief conclusion and recommendations for further research.

2. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Systems Theory

Systems theory first emerged in the 1940s as a result of theoretical advances in the natural sciences but quickly evolved and was applied to a number of different disciplines such as biology, computer science and economics. As such, 'defining what we mean by systems theory… is virtually impossible outside the context of a particular discipline' (Langlois, 1983: 581). Therefore I will present an outline of systems theory here as it is usually understood by social scientists. Because systems theory is such a broad theoretical framework, there is a great deal of disagreement as to how to approach complexity even within the social scientific community. However, the majority of social scientists applying systems theory to their discipline share a number of key assumptions (Loode, 2011; Hendrick, 2009).

A system, firstly, is an arbitrarily defined network

of interaction; on the international level, for example, relationships between states, international organisations and international institutions, among others, make up the international system. On the national level, on the other hand, relationships between groups in society make up national systems. Where the line is drawn between a system and its environment – the system's boundaries – is determined by the particular dynamics the researcher wishes to analyse. Midgley (2000: 205) claims that: 'the boundary concept is at the heart of systems thinking: because of the fact that everything in the universe is directly or indirectly connected to everything else, where the boundaries are placed in any analysis becomes crucial'. Complex systems are open systems; unlike closed systems, they can only be understood in terms of their relationship with the environment (Woermann, 2010). As such, the boundaries we use to isolate a particular system should be seen as both a real, physical category and mental category or ideal model (Morin, 2006).

One thing that differentiates systems theory from other conceptual frameworks is a rejection of reductionism in favour of the study of systems holistically (Byrne, 1998). According to the traditional scientific paradigm, which is predicated on a reductionist approach, all systems can be understood in terms of their component parts; this hypothesis is rejected by systems theory which calls into question the 'metatheoretical foundations of much of traditional science' (Matthews, White & Long, 1999: 440). Cilliers (1998: 106) writes '[a]s a result of the complex patterns of interaction, the behaviour of a system cannot be explained solely in terms of its atomistic components, despite the fact that the system does not consist of anything else but the basic components and their interconnections.' The early systems theorists realised that whilst simple systems could be understood in a reductionist framework, complex ones could not (Waldrop, 1996). According to Langlois (1983: 582), the 'systems theorists discovered – or rather rediscovered – complexity'; equally, Flood (1993) claims that systems theory is all about dealing with complexity. As opposed to studying the component parts themselves, systems theorists are interested in studying the complex interrelationships between the parts, as it is these relationships which give rise to the self-organised, non-linear, and emergent behaviour which characterises a complex system (Byrne, 1998; Cilliers, 1998).

Emergence is the idea that the behaviour of a system on certain levels cannot be predicted based on analysis of the properties of that system at lower levels; dynamic causal interaction gives rise to phenomena that are 'dependent on the base but simultaneously supersede that base' (Woermann, 2010: 4). Linked to the dynamic organisation which leads to emergence is the property of complex systems called self-organisation; this is the idea that 'internal structure can evolve without the intervention of an external designer or the presence of some centralised form of internal control' (Cilliers, 1998: 89). What all of this also means is that, depending on your view, complex systems are either impossible or very difficult to predict; according to Cilliers (1998: 110) 'predictions can be attempted, but never with certainty'. One reason for this is that complex systems are highly sensitive to initial conditions; a very small intervention in a complex system produces 'very different and therefore uncertain results' (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2011: 58). This also means that complex systems are path dependent; they can develop in a number of different ways and an intervention at some point in the past can create behaviour in that system which then becomes entrenched (Waldrop, 1992; Hendrick, 2009). Relatedly, complex systems also exhibit feedback loops; negative feedback is common in simple systems, but positive feedback in which certain trends are continually reinforced leads a system to behave nonlinearly (Coleman et al., 2011). Feedback loops are circles of interaction in which the effect of an activity feeds back onto itself; sometimes this involves direct feedback in which the process is self-reinforcing, and sometimes it occurs through a number of intervening stages (Cilliers, 1998). Feedback loops can be either positive or negative; positive feedback loops reinforce interaction whilst negative ones inhibit it; interaction between positive and negative feedback loops further augments this causal complexity (Coleman et al., 2011).

The Application of Systems theory to Conflict Resolution

It is possible to identify four 'generations' of literature within the field of conflict resolution (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2011; Graf, Kramer & Nicolescou, 2010). Whilst the precursors to the discipline emerged in the post-war period, it was not properly institutionalised until after the Second World War. The study of conflict resolution continued to develop throughout the twentieth century, linked to developments in, for example, game theory, psychology

and sociology, and centres were established in areas of protracted conflict (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2011).

The fourth generation emerged in response to the end of the Cold war and the much touted phenomena of the 'New Wars' (Kaldor, 1999), the 'new world order', and Boutros Boutros Ghali's prescription of the 'agenda for peace' (Woodward, 2007; Chandler, 2013). Fourth generation theorists realised that the conflicts they were analysing were complex systems, and consequently that the aforementioned innovations of systems theory would better equip them to understand modern conflict (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall, 2011). This revelation was in part a result of the inability of traditional explanations within political science to explain the new wars; approaches emphasising either cultural or economic factors as the 'root causes' of the civil wars which emerged in the 1990s have been subject to 'criticism and disproof' (Woodward, 2007: 153). Such approaches are based on firstly, Western liberal assumptions about state-society relations and secondly, upon the reductionist scientific method (Chandler, 2013; Diamond, 1997; Ricigliano, 2011). The weaknesses of the traditional, liberal approach have led to the emergence of a new processed based, systemic or non-linear understanding of conflict (Körppen & Ropers, 2011).

This new understanding of conflict manifested itself in a number of innovations, both theoretical and practical, in the nascent study of peacebuilding. Authors such as Körppen and Roppers (2011) associated with the Berghof Institute have developed the concept of 'Systemic Conflict Transformation' (SCT) based on principles such as multi-partiality and inclusivity premised on the understanding of conflict as a system. Much of the work of the Berghof institute is based on the seminal work of John Lederach who was one of the first of the 'fourth generation' theorists in the conflict resolution literature. Lederach (1997; 205) argued for a paradigmatic shift in peace building theory and practice, contending that those working in the field must address not only the immediate issues in a conflict but also the broader systemic and sub systemic concerns. Different 'lenses' should be used for analysing these different aspects of the conflict, but no one way of looking at things should be prioritised over any other; all of these processes should be seen as fundamentally interconnected.

One author who has proven particularly influential in the field is Peter Coleman. From 2003 to 2006 he released a series of papers in which he attempted to develop a 'metaframework' for addressing protracted, intractable conflict using insights from complex systems theory (Coleman, 2003; 2004; 2006). He claims that protracted, intractable conflict should best be understood as 'a complex, dynamic, nonlinear system with a core set of interrelated and mutually influential variables' (Coleman, 2003: 7). In part II Coleman identifies five major approaches which have been used to analyse protracted conflict; he argues that each of these perspectives are useful in helping us to 'organise our thinking about our work', but in limiting our analysis to one of these 'explicit frames' we lack an 'understanding of the full complexity of the situations that we engage' (Coleman, 2004: 198). Systems theory is the only perspective which allows us to 'see the whole'; it presents the 'political, relational, pathological, and the epistemological as simply different elements' of one system of conflict (Coleman, 2004: 228). As such, it is the only theory capable of organising all of the aforementioned paradigms into one, coherent way of looking at conflict.

Many authors working in the field agree that we should be applying systems theory to conflict resolution because it allows us to understand conflict far better than any other individual perspective. Gallo (2012: 1) argues that: '[a] systems approach is essential for correct understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of conflict'. Körppen and Roppers (2011: 11) also hold that systemic thinking can 'enrich the theory and practice of conflict transformation' and that it is better situated to 'cope with the challenges of nonlinearity in human interaction'. Van Brabant (2010: 2) has also suggested that a systems perspective is well placed to address several shortcomings of traditional framework as it 'helps us understand reality in a way that incorporates complexity without overwhelming'.
I will be deploying insights selectively from each of these authors as, whilst they work on different conflicts using slightly different assumptions, they agree on far more than they disagree; all see conflict as a complex system, and all attempt to analyse and construct potential avenues for intervention based on this outlook. Adopting such an approach allows the analyst to gain an understanding of conflict which is not constrained by the assumptions of the particular frames mentioned by Coleman (2006). When looking at the war in the DRC it is not necessary to choose

between, for example, a 'greed' or a 'grievance' approach to the motives of the belligerents; both of these factors can be seen as functional variables which interact with one another to produce the complex situation we see in Ituri (Anten, 2010; Githaiga, 2011). Adopting systems theory as a method of analysis provides us with the capacity not only to see past our implicit and explicit frames, it also recognises the merit in each of these frames and allows us to combine the insights gained from each one into a broad but coherent conceptualisation of the conflict we are seeking to transform (Coleman, 2006; Lederach, 1998).

Whilst there are many points of agreement between the authors working on complexity in conflict resolution, there are also disagreements as to how the insights from systems theory should be applied to the discipline (Körppen and Schmelzle, 2005). Some argue that systems theory is that the coup de grâce which will replace all other perspectives, whilst others contend that it should be adopted alongside other approaches to conflict studies, as it can offer helpful insights but is not exhaustive.[1] There is also the debate within the systems theory literature more generally as to whether systems theory falls into the realist, constructivist or postmodern epistemological paradigms.[2] These are lively and interesting debates in themselves, but I do not have the time or space to go into them in detail. I will not be assuming that systems theory is capable of replacing all other perspectives on conflict; rather I will be presenting my analysis as a new and potentially helpful way to view modern warfare. With regards to epistemology, I will primarily be adopting a constructivist perspective; however, it is important to note that this merely means I will be viewing the model I will create as a social construct, as opposed to some sort of objective representation of the conflict (Ropers, 2008). Ropers adopts the same perspective with respect to his analysis of Sri Lanka; acknowledging that there are many different ways to approach systems theory epistemologically, he writes from a constructivist perspective based on the assumptions that '(1) all statements have to be seen in the social context of the persons making them, and that (2) explanations for social phenomena are most often complex and of circular character' (Ropers, 2008: 14).

Adopting such a schema will allow me to incorporate previous generations of thinking on the subject of the Ituri wars and the DRC wars more generally, into a paradigm which emphasises the interconnectivity and mutual dependence of each of these perspectives for providing a full account of the violence which wracked Ituri from 1999 to 2003. The trend in the literature seems to be to cite certain dynamics as the 'most important' in causing or perpetuating the wars in the DRC[3]; my account will diverge from this in the sense that I will not be assigning primacy to any of the causes identified by previous authors because, according to systems theory, this is neither correct nor helpful (Hendrick, 2009). Instead, I will attempt to show that it is the interaction between the factors identified by various authors in the literature, and not individual factors themselves, which is most important in understanding the 'complex political emergency' in Ituri.

Methodology

Whilst the primary focus of my research will be theoretical, I will seek to combine a theoretical analysis of the literature on the subject with qualitative, empirical data I gathered whilst in the DRC. The conceptual approach is supplemented by on the ground interviews which will bring in alternative frames which in some way can test and challenge the conceptual

1. See e.g. Hendrick (2009) who argues for a more limited application and Graf, Kramer and Nicolescou (2010) who argue for complexity theory as an all-encompassing meta-framework.
2. See e.g. Cilliers (1998) who argues that complexity and post-modernism are compatible and Byrne (1998) who argues for complexity as a fundamentally realist doctrine.
3. E.g. Autesserre (2010) – unresolved land issues '[t]he first theme [the primacy of land] is crucial. It helps us to understand why violence started, why it became so pervasive, why it continued after the Congo embarked on a transition from war to peace and democracy' Clark (2006) – state failure coupled with intervention of neighbours 'Congo's weakness was a 'permissive condition' but it was scarcely an efficient cause… one must look inside the intervening neighbouring states for an explanation for the Congo war'; Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) –neo-colonialism 'the struggle for democracy in the Congo is inextricably linked to the struggle for national liberation… genuine liberation from colonialism and neo-colonialism in all its forms'; Stearns (2011) – state failure 'But instead of being a story of a brutal bureaucratic machine, the Congo is a story of the opposite: a country in which the state has been eroded over centuries'; most NGOs (e.g. Global Witness, Enough!) – illegal resource exploitation 'This is the key to unlock the drama of Ituri. The drama played out there is not a question of one community against another. There are individuals who are benefiting from these confrontation' (Pole Institute, 2003)

approach. The introduction of different views on the conflict from those who have lived through it aligns with complexity theory's emphasis on bringing in multiple lenses. It is particularly important to include the views of those who are involved in the conflict in any conflict mapping exercise as the way individuals on the ground frame the conflict can fundamentally shape the way the conflict is interpreted and the way it plays out (Ricigliano, 2011; Ropers, 2008). As such, I decided to travel to the Ituri region of the DRC to conduct my own small-scale interview-based study; the methodology of this study is analysed in this chapter.

Data collection

From the 25th August-3rd September I travelled around the North Eastern DRC in order to conduct interviews with individuals who had experienced the war in Ituri. During the short period I was in the DRC I managed to meet and conduct recorded interviews with eight people and talked informally with a number of others; all the people I spoke to had been affected by the violence which has afflicted Ituri since 1999.

I was only able to travel to the DRC thanks to the help of a contact with roots in the Ituri region. Her contacts in the DRC are mainly in the Anglican religious community in Bunia and Aru, and therefore the people I met and spoke with mainly fit this profile. Whilst some of the interviewees had remained in their home towns throughout the war, others had fled to other places within the DRC, or to other countries, once the violence began, and returned to Ituri only when it ended. However, all of the interviewees had had some direct experience of the violence; generally, those who were in Bunia experienced more intense violence than those in Aru. The interviewees came from a range of social backgrounds, with incomes ranging from very low to middle range. All had received primary education, and as such were able to converse with me in French; however, whilst some had no secondary education, at least two were educated to University level.

I was able to talk with eight people who allowed me to record the conversation. These interviews were conducted in French, and professionally transcribed and translated upon my return to the UK. For both practical and ethical reasons, the identities of the interviewees will remain anonymous. On the practical side, it was easier to convince people to talk to me, and to allow me to record our conversation if I assured them that their testimony would remain anonymous. This was undoubtedly because, on the ethical side, whilst the situation in Ituri is no means as volatile as it once was, it is still dangerous and many of the tensions which precipitated the outburst of violence in 1999 still have some traction. What's more, the government is now also perceived to constitute a threat to those who do not tow the official line. As such, in order to increase the amount of people who would be willing to talk to me and who would allow me to record our conversation, and to ensure that these people would be protected from the retaliation which might occur if their testimony was revealed, the identities of the interviewees will not be revealed.[4]

It is of course important to note that this is a small-scale study using a convenience sample and results cannot be generalised to the wider population, particularly given the homogeneity of the interviewees' geographical locations and backgrounds. Nevertheless, the interviews provide a very important insight into how the war has been understood on the ground by at least some of those who have been affected by it. Whilst the bulk of my argument is based upon secondary sources, these primary sources supplement my argument in many important ways whilst also grounding the topic in the individual realities of those who experienced the war. This is important because, according to Geertz (2003: 156) we should use 'the power of the scientific imagination to bring us into touch with the lives of strangers'.

In analysing my data, I first want to draw on a distinction made by Wolcott (2008) between analysis and interpretation of qualitative data. Analysis, according to Wolcott, 'follows standard procedures for observing, measuring, and communicating with others about the nature of what is 'there"; data is subjected to 'procedures generally understood and accepted' among social scientists (Wolcott, 2008: 29). Interpretation, on the other hand, arises from our efforts at 'sense-making' which Wolcott defines as an activity which includes 'intuition, past experience,

4. This is standard practice for interview data from the DRC; see e.g. Autesserre (2012; 2012). Ethical permission was obtained from the University of Oxford; a risk assessment was also completed for the university and travel insurance obtained.

emotion' (Wolcott, 2008: 30). In this write up of my findings I will be attempting to interpret the data to discern the ways in which the apparent attitudes of the people I interviewed either confirm or contradict my theory. This will be approached in a more normative way drawing on my own intuitions and experience, as well as on insights from systems theory.

The first thing to note is the large variation in respondent's views on the causes of the war in Ituri and in the DRC more broadly; this is perhaps surprising given the relative geographical and social homogeneity of the group. The data was coded based on whether participants identified the causes of the war in Ituri and in the DRC more broadly as economic, political, foreign, land-/ethnicity-based or 'other'. Whilst some respondents were more likely to prioritise certain causes over others, none gave a mono-causal account of the emergence of the war, and each gave an account which combined these factors in different ways. Many participants, when asked about the causes of the war, claimed that they believed there to be a number of causes.[5]

In constructing a model of any conflict it is important to include the perspectives of as many stakeholders as possible; as such the model I created was based not only on secondary sources, but also on the accounts of those I interviewed. Whilst there was not a huge amount of divergence between secondary sources and my interviews, the interviewees tended to emphasise certain factors (for example, political corruption) over others. Whilst it would have undoubtedly been preferable to conduct interviews with a larger sample, the inclusion of interview data in the model gives an insight into individual sense-making on the ground which would be missing in a model based solely on secondary data. Insights gained from the analysis of the interview data are discussed in more detail in second last chapter.

3. Background and Literature Summary

Background to the national war

The first Congo war began in 1996 as a regional intervention to overthrow the then-leader Mobutu Sese Soko. The operation was spearheaded by Rwanda and Uganda. Rwanda, after the victory of the Tutsi Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) in the civil war and the mass exodus of 2.1 million Hutu refugees, including a number of genocidaries[6], primarily into Zaire, had been experiencing incursions into its territory by the former regime and saw it necessary to invade Zaire in order to resolve this problem (Prunier, 2009). Uganda was also concerned about the presence of armed movements such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the eastern Congo which, Kampala alleged, posed a threat to its security and led to its desire to create a 'buffer zone' on its western border (Reyntjens, 2009: 59). Similarly Burundi, concerned about the presence of groups such as the Conseil National de Défense de la Démocratie and the Forces de Défence de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD) in the eastern Congo as well as the embargo which had been recently imposed on it, joined Rwanda and Uganda's foray into the Congo (Reyntjens, 2009). Mobutu's toleration of the rebel groups operating in the east of his country and the presence of a hostile, stateless territory on their eastern borders was the first, but by no means the only reason for the hostile relationship between Kinshasa and Kigali-Kampala-Bujumbura; the motivations for their interventions were multifarious, and continued to evolve throughout the conflict (Prunier, 2009; Reyntjens, 2009, 2006; Lemarchand, 1997).

The aggressors created an organisation, the AFDL, led by Laurent Kabila, and disguised it as a Congolese rebel movement, thus portraying what was in fact an invasion as a Congolese insurrection (Prunier, 2009; Stearns, 2011). Owing to the years of decay facilitated by Mobutu's kleptocratic 'vampire' state, and particularly to the fact that the army had not been paid, trained or equipped in years, the AFDL swept through the country with unanticipated speed (Thompson, 2000; Prunier, 2009). Many of the Rwandan and Burundian refugees present in eastern Congo were forcibly repatriated, other primarily Rwandan refugees fled west. When the rebels caught up with them they were either rounded up by the RPA and returned to

5. 'Here, in the DRC, there are really a number of causes' (interview 2) Well, I really think that there are multiple causes' (interview 5) 'In general, there are a number of causes' (interview 7).

6. The number of refugees in Zaire and the proportion of genocidaires among them is disputed, but estimates are not dissimilar: 1.5 million refugees in Zaire, 15% of which were genocidaires according to Reyntjens (2009); 850,000 refugees in North Kivu, 30,000-40,000 of which were genocidaires according to Prunier (2009); 1.1-1.25 million refugees in Zaire of whom 20,000-25,000 were ex-FAR and 30,000-40,000 were ex-militiamen according to Kisangani (2000)

Rwanda or killed; the fate of most of the refugees is unknown, attempts by Robert Garretón to investigate on behalf of the UN were continually thwarted, but reliable estimates put the figure at around 210,000-260,000.[7] Witnessing the success of the AFDL, and aggravated by Mobutu's support of UNITA, at that time a genuine threat to the MPLA regime in Luanda, Angola declared their support for the rebellion and sent troops to support the AFDL. These troops facilitated the almost bloodless overthrow of Mobutu in May 1997 after which point Kabila was sworn in as president.

Kabila soon fell out with the regimes in Kigali and Kampala; there was a growing sense among Congolese that the rebellion had been less a Congolese initiative and more of an external invasion, and that Kabila was nothing more than a Rwandan puppet (Reyntjens, 2009; Deibert, 2013). He began to manoeuvre himself away from his former backers, replacing the Rwandan Tutsi James Kabarebe as head of the armed forces and, in July 1998, making the directeur de cabinet of the Defence ministry declare that 'Rwandan and other foreign military' were to leave the DRC (Reyntjens, 2009: 293).

Seeing that their puppet was going to be increasingly difficult to control, Rwanda and Uganda launched another rebellion to replace him (Reyntjens, 2009; Deibert, 2013). They created another 'rebel' movement, the Rassamblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD) and attempted to retake Kinshasa. However, this time Angola, as well as Zimbabwe and Namibia, intervened to defend Kabila; later troops from Chad and Sudan were also sent to bolster the regime. Meanwhile, divisions had opened up between the two belligerents and in November Uganda began backing its own rebel movement, the MLC (Prunier, 2009). Increasing differences between Rwanda and Uganda also came to manifest themselves within the RCD itself. The pro-Kampala and pro-Kigali wings of the RCD were moving further apart, both ideologically and geographically; Wamba dia Wamba, Uganda's man, had moved the RCD faction which supported him to Kisangani whilst the faction loyal to Rwanda remained in Goma. As such, they came to be known as the RCD-Kisangani (RCD-K) (by the end of 1999 it had become the RCD-Mouvement de Libération (RCD-ML)) and RCD-Goma (RCD-G) respectively. In August 1999, these differences exploded into violence as the RPA and the UPDF

7. Again, the number of refugee deaths is also disputed, not least because of the political implications of the figure (discussed by Reyntjens (2009: 80-110) and Prunier (2009: 143-148)) but from estimates compiled by the following authors the number is likely to be somewhere around the 200,000 mark: 300,000 refugees dead in total, including 35,000 from Burundi, so 265,000 Rwandan refugees dead in total according to Prunier (2009); Kisangani (2000) puts the number at 232,000; Deibert (2013) puts the number at 213,000

fought one another on the streets of Kisangani.

By 1999, whilst Kinshasa and the surrounding areas (bas Congo, the Kasais and most of Katanga) were safely under Kabila and his allies' control, the rest of the country was controlled by the now multiplying rebel movements, and the DRC was divided into three main sections. Most of the North including Equateur and Orientale provinces were controlled by the Ugandans and Bemba's Mouvement de Liberation du Congo (MLC), whilst the RCD and the Rwandans held a very large zone centring on the two Kivus, but including parts of Katanga the Kasais and Orientale (Reyntjens, 2009).

Meanwhile, on the diplomatic font there had been a number of abortive attempts to negotiate ceasefires and peace agreements. The first major hurdle was crossed when the Lusaka accord was signed on 10th July 1999 with 15 countries represented and most of the main rebel groups. The basic principles of the Lusaka agreement were that a ceasefire would commence within 24 hours, that the armies involved would create a Joint Military Council (JMC) to organise the disarming of negative forces, that a national dialogue would take place 45 days later and that after four months, all foreign forces would leave the Congo to be replaced by a UN force (Prunier, 2009). The agreement was effectively ignored, especially in the east where the 'confused violence' went on as always (Prunier, 2009: 227). In late 1999 Wamba renamed his movement the RCD-ML and a new faction, the RCD-National (RCD-N), had sprung up under the leadership of a former RCD-G leader. By 2000 it was evident that Lusaka was dead, as skirmishes between the various rebel movements and 'negative forces' continued in the east and the fighting resumed between the government and the RCD-G and the MLC; for Prunier (2009: 225) this was the moment at which the 'reality gap' opened up.

Literature Summary

Those theorists studying the Ituri conflict separately from the wider Congo war, the most prominent of which are Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2004), Vircoulon (2010), and Pottier (2003; 2008; 2009), tend to put primacy on the micro-level issues of ethnicity and land (Camm, 2012). Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2004: 385) claim that: 'the outbreak of violence in Ituri has been the result of the exploitation , by local and regional actors, of a deeply rooted local conflict over access to land, economic opportunity and political power.' They, in a highly detailed and insightful article, chart Hema-Lendu relations from pre-colonial times, through the colonial and post-colonial period to the emergence of the war in 1999. The 'root causes' of Hema-Lendu tensions, it is argued, are the 'inequality in land acquisition… along with the dominance of one particular community in terms of education, politics and economics' (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004: 388) These have been present since pre-colonial times, however they were exacerbated during colonial rule because the Hema, who better understood the advantages the colonists could offer them, gained privileged access to education and the colonial administration.

The policy of Zaireanisation further privileged a select group of Hema families and created a 'landless rural class' of Lendu (ibid: 390). During democratization the tense relations between the two groups were exploited by local politicians 'in search of a new power base', partly as a result of the Mobutuist strategy of divide-and-rule (ibid: 390). The AFDL rebellion promoted the proliferation of light weapons and of armed groups in the region, coupled with total state and economic collapse. At this point, they argue, 'the conflict… has to be seen in the larger regional context of economic competition and the privatisation of violence' (ibid: 391). The authors go on to discuss how other variables, such as Mobutuist clientelistic relationships, the proliferation of light weapons, and tension between the Hema and Nande traders from North Kivu came to interact with the aforementioned factors to shape the way the war played out. Though Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers (2004) claim that land, ethnicity and foreign intervention were the primary causes of the war, their essay suggests that a plethora of different variables interacted in a non-linear fashion to create the 'perfect storm' in Ituri. They make this explicit when they say that it was the 'interplay between… interconnected dynamics' which has caused the violence in Ituri (ibid: 412).

..war between Hema and Lendu was primarily based on an historical ethnic cleavage which was aggravated by competition over 'agriculture and gold'.

Vircoulon (2010: 209), similarly to Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, argues that the war between Hema and

Lendu was primarily based on an historical ethnic cleavage which was aggravated by competition over 'agriculture and gold'. When Hema domination was fully consolidated under Mobutu, a series of clashes broke out; these escalated into full-blown war 'when Lendu peasants were expelled illegally from 'their' land by Hema landowners' (ibid: 209). He then argues that this conflict 'coupled with the direct military interventions of neighbouring countries and the absence of a stable political authority, led to a full-scale ethnic war' (ibid: 211). The proliferation of armed groups which accompanied the national war and the concomitant shifting of alliances between them exacerbated this and made the Ituri war look like 'a confused war of proxies' (ibid: 211). However, what actually connected the local and regional dynamics was the issue of land. This account, very similar to the one given above, also clearly emphasises complex causal interaction between different dynamics as opposed to a more simplistic, linear account.

Pottier (2003; 2008; 2009), the last of the three major scholars on Ituri, presents a slightly different account to those outlined above, though it is similar in most important areas. He presents a similar account of the evolution of Hema-Lendu relations, though questions some of the received arguments about the structure of pre-colonial Lendu society; for example he challenges the assertion that pre-colonial Lendu society was rife with infighting, and points out that relations developed differently between the two groups depending on whether they were north or south of the Irumu-Bogoro-Kasenyi route (Pottier, 2008; 2009). He also places more emphasis on the social construction of ethnicity and warns against essentialist portrayals, maintaining that both groups have always been highly interrelated and have resisted attempts to separate them, highlighting the ethnicity-land nexus as a primary driver of conflict as opposed to ethnicity per se (Pottier, 2008; 2003). He claims that the conflict in Ituri is a modern one and that conflict over land for both resource-extraction and agricultural purposes is the main driver of the conflict (Pottier, 2008). The main reason for land conflict is, according to Pottier, Mobutu's Zaireanisation campaign and specifically the Bakajika land law (Pottier, 2008; 2003). The land laws, however, would not have been as successfully exploited by wealthy Hema had they not co-opted the opportunistic UPDF into conducting land seizures for them (Potier, 2009). He also argues that national politics, the national army and the international community, especially the UN, have either failed to prevent or, in some cases, exacerbated the crisis (Pottier, 2008). Overall, similarly to the accounts above, he argues that tensions result from the interaction of a number of variables including competition over land, historical Hema-Lendu relations, foreign intervention, resource exploitation, the proliferation of armed groups in the area, as well as international support for the rebels in the form of 'elite criminal networks' (Pottier, 2003: 5). All of these points, he claims, 'reveal the full complexity of the Ituri crisis' (Pottier, 2003: 6).

Similarly, for Autesserre (2010) the land conflict-ethnicity nexus was a primary driver for the Congo wars, including but not limited to the Ituri conflict. According to Autesserre (2010: 9), 'the causes of the ongoing conflict were distinctively local', based on a number of different conflicts between various different groups primarily over land, some dating back decades. These conflicts were exacerbated and sustained by a number of different top-down dynamics, including interventions by neighbouring states, ethnic entrepreneurship by local and national politicians and certain unscrupulous individuals attempts to enrich themselves through corruption and pillage. It was the interaction between these bottom-up and top-down causes which made the war so intractable. Autesserre argues that the dominant international peace building culture prioritise top-down causes over local issues, and this is the reason that violent micro-level conflict continued even after the official end of the war. Whilst Autesserre undoubtedly prioritises local over national explanations for the war (understandably given the nature of her argument), she demonstrates an acute appreciation for the fact that it was the interaction between micro and macro level tensions which gave the war its distinct character. She writes:

> *'The interaction with regional and national cleavages during the war thus reinforced local hostilities: It induced a series of new local cleavages, enhanced decentralized violence in places where it existed prior to the generalized fighting, and transformed latent antagonisms into open conflicts in places where tensions had been previously contained' (ibid: 150)*

Such accounts would, according to the Pole institute (2003: 3), place too much emphasis on the so-called 'cultural dimension' without adequately presenting the

political or economic stakes; the institute argues that the war in Ituri is a 'game in which Hema and Lendu are only pawns in this murderous farce'. This account places emphasis on Ituri as a 'war within a war'; i.e. local issues are ignited by the broader conflict taking place in the DRC. It is argued, correctly, that 'even at the nadir of Mobutu's regime, the conflicts between the two communities never reached such a level of horror and destruction as today' (ibid: 1). As such, the drama is not one of communities fighting each other, it is of 'arms dealers, the mafia networks exploiting precious metals who shrink at nothing to carve out their territory and keep it through a rule of terror, silencing anyone who works for or leans towards peace in this Wild West, where war lords, mafia lobbies and Ugandan army officers hold sway' (ibid: 3). What is really at stake in Ituri, it is argued, is political power and individual economic gain; this is '[b]ecause the ghost of King Leopold still haunts the Congo' which has meant that 'violence has been transformed into a political system' (ibid: 3). The Pole Institute argues that violence in Ituri is the result of collusion between rebel groups, neo-colonial states and elite criminal networks engaged in the exploitation of Ituri's mineral resources for personal gain, which, in turn, can be seen as a legacy of colonialism.

The Ugandans sponsored rebel groups 'acting like puppet masters, wielding control and providing arms and advice' so that they could conduct their illegal mineral exploitation under the cover of chaos.

Eichstaedt (2011: 36) presents a similar account to this, giving primacy to illegal resource exploitation as the cause of the conflict in Ituri. He writes in his chapter 'gold from blood' that the Ituri conflict and those like it are not 'spontaneous events arising out of raw ethnic hatred.' Rather, they are caused by 'outside interests, specifically those of Uganda and Rwanda' who are aware 'how easy it is to manipulate and control Eastern Congo' and they do so for one reason: gold (ibid: 36). The Ugandans sponsored rebel groups 'acting like puppet masters, wielding control and providing arms and advice' so that they could conduct their illegal mineral exploitation under the cover of chaos (ibid: 37). Linked to this is Young's (2006) argument about the emergence of a new type of war in Africa; wars are no longer driven by ideology, but instead have been replaced by wars between warlords vying for control of natural resources and political power. This is linked to the collapse of the Cold War and the consequent increase in the pace of globalisation which makes it easier for relationships between nonstate actors such as warlords and large multinational corporations to develop (Clark, 2006). This can be seen as part of the 'New Wars' discourse outlined by Kaldor (1998).

This debate should be seen in the context of the literature on greed and grievance; those who argue for a more sociological approach to the study of the conflict in Ituri can be placed in the grievance camp, whilst those citing economic factors are advocating a 'greed' approach (Collier & Hoeffler; 2004). For scholars such as Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, conflict in Ituri arises from historical conflict over identity combined with the more immediate issues of land, natural resources, and foreign intervention, among others; as such, the motives for the belligerents in Ituri are seen as historically rooted grievances. However recent scholars such as Paul Collier (2004; 2006) have disputed this logic, claiming that the fundamental motive of the belligerents in most modern African civil wars is to capture revenues, whether this derives from capturing the state itself, or merely from controlling the trade in resources. This economic approach to the study of conflict has been in particularly influential among many international institutions, and the idea that the war in the DRC is primarily a 'resource war' is one which has gained a lot of traction (Autesserre, 2012). Many NGOs and IFIs released reports on the war in the DRC highlighting illegal resource exploitation and the problems associated with it; Global Witness was one of the first NGOs to bring public attention to this trend which led to the creation of the UN Panel of Inquiry to investigate illegal resource exploitation in the Congo (Autesserre, 2012; United Nations, 2003; HRW, 2005; Pole Institute, 2010). This increased awareness of and sensitivity to the question of illegal resource exploitation was institutionalised with the inclusion of Section 1502 in the Dodd-Frank act, passed by the United States Congress in 2010, which increases scrutiny of natural resources emanating from the DRC and surrounding countries.

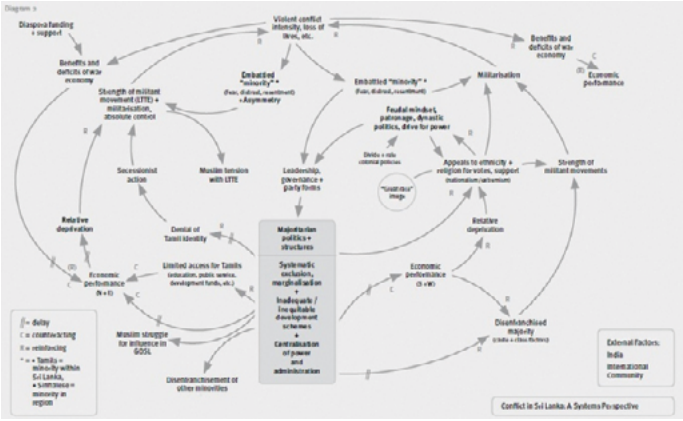
Another prominent perspective is that the primary reason for the conflict in Ituri is the decay of the Congolese state. For example, Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002: 214) claims that: 'the major determinant of the present

conflict and instability in the Great Lakes region is the decay of the state and its instruments in the Congo'. He claims that it would only be possible for a 'Lilliputian state' the size of Uganda or Rwanda to invade and loot the Congo had the DRC government not exercised effective control over its territory; Rwanda and Uganda 'took advantage of the disintegration of the Congolese state and armed forces to create territorial spheres of interest within which they could plunder the Congo's riches' (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002: 214, 227). For Nzongola-Ntalaja the story of the Congo wars is one of state failure, partly due to a colonial legacy, coupled with resource-driven neo-colonialism on the part of Congo's irresponsible neighbours. Clarke (2002) also claims that one major perspective on why the Congo wars emerged was the collapse of the state facilitated by irresponsible colonial rule and Mobutu's particular brand of 'nondevelopmental authoritarianism' (Clarke, 2002: 2). However, as in Nzongola-Ntalaja's account, the collapse of the state is seen as a 'permissive factor' rather than an 'efficient cause' of the war because it enabled unscrupulous neighbours to intervene in the Congo for the purposes of regime security and economic gain (Clark, 2006: 4). Another advocate of the state collapse view is Lemarchand (1997) who conceptualised this state collapse in the Great Lakes region as arising from a number of dynamics. These include the 'head-on collision between the 'premise of inequality' inherent in [great lakes societies'] traditional value orientation and the egalitarian message of liberal democracy', 'violence on a genocidal scale', refugee movements, the 'kin-country' syndrome and the end of the Cold War, accompanied by catalysing 'triggering events'.

These perspectives can be linked to the broader African literature on state failure. Zartman (1995: 1) argues that the phenomenon of state collapse is very widespread in modern Africa, defining it as 'a situation where the structure, authority… law and political order have fallen apart and must be reconstituted in some form, old or new. On the other hand, it is not necessarily anarchy'. Jackson and Rosberg (1990) advance the model of the 'juridical state' in contrast to the 'empirical state'. The former is propped up by the recognition of the international system that entitles it to claim various economic and political benefits (e.g. aid transfers) despite the fact that these states often do not live up to even the most minimal definitions of Weberian statehood. Davidson (1992) claims that the state in Africa is a colonial imposition, the 'black man's burden', which completely alien to Africans. The nation-state was artificially grafted onto pre-colonial African social relations and which is therefore doomed to failure due to its lack of internal legitimacy. Cooper (2002: 157) argues for African states as 'gatekeeper states' which gain revenue from taxing imports and exports but are weak in most other areas and have had difficulty making themselves into 'something which inspired loyalty'. There is a vast literature on the state in Africa which generally paints it as weak or illegitimate; other examples include Mamdani's 'bifurcated state', Bayart's 'criminal state' and Bratton and Van de Walle's 'neopatrimonial state' (Mamdani, 1996; Bayart et al., 1999; Bratton & Van de Walle, 1994). The Zairean state had, by the 1990s, clearly ceased to exist in even a minimal Weberian sense, and propped itself up in the areas which it controlled based on international recognition, heavy taxation and through sustaining clientelistic networks of patronage.

Needless to say, not every perspective has been outlined here, and those that have have not been elaborated in extensive detail; however, most of the major perspectives have been covered in as much detail as possible given restrictions on space. Whilst some of these accounts undoubtedly have more explanatory value than others, they all point to dynamics which have either at least partly caused or exacerbated the violence in Ituri and in the DRC more broadly. Most of them recognise the multiplicity of variables involved in the outbreak of violence, however most are then drawn to emphasise one particular cause over all the others.

The nature of the causation in the complex conflict system which has emerged in Ituri is such that particular causes cannot be isolated and given an independent weight; what determines the emergence of violence, and the severity and development of that violence, is the way in which these multiple variables interact (Loode, 2011; Hendrick, 2009). In such a scenario, simple lines of causation cannot be perceived, and the properties of the system itself cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts; it is thus important that the system is conceptualised in a holistic manner (Ricigliano, 2011). What is important is not identifying the mythical 'main cause' of the Ituri conflict, but analysing the dynamics involved in the emergence of violence and attempting to analyse the relationships between them (Gray & Roos, 2012) . In doing so, dynamics such as positive feedback loops and



attractors which make conflict particularly intractable can be identified and, hopefully, broken (Coleman et al., 2005). As has been demonstrated on a number of occasions, logic of the kind 'the conflict in the DRC was caused by state failure. Therefore we must rebuild the state' involves a hopelessly simplistic and flawed description coupled with an equally flawed and in some cases dangerous prescription (Gray & Roos, 2012; Körppen, 2011). It is hoped that by analysing the conflict in Ituri as a dynamic system of conflict the complexity of the conflict can be elucidated in a way which is comprehensible, and, as a result, that analysts and the practitioners might come slightly close to understanding what happened in Ituri and what might have been done to prevent it.

As such, the aforementioned perspectives need to be understood as discourses on the war in Ituri; like all the narratives people use to comprehend the world they involve particular ways of framing the situation which include certain dynamics at the expense of others (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 2006). Severrenne Autesserre (2012), in her Dangerous Tales, comments on the role the discourses have played in shaping the international understanding of the war in the DRC. She claims that the dominant framing is such that there is a single cause of the war – resource conflict – a single consequence – sexual violence against women – and a single solution – rebuilding the state. However, according to Autesserre, these frames were chosen precisely because they offer simple explanations for the conflict, suggest workable solutions and resonate with international audiences (ibid). As such, these discourses tell us less about the conflict itself than they do about the motives and interests of those utilising them. Whilst most of the perspectives outlined above do not simplify their analyses to the same extent as the NGOs and international institutions to which Autesserre is referring, and indeed some show an acute appreciation for the complexity of the conflict, they still constitute distinct discourses which privilege certain explanations of the conflict at the expense of others.

4. Analysis of Ituri war from a systems perspective

Using a systems theory as a metaframework for analysis can significantly enrich our understanding of contemporary African conflicts (Gray & Roos, 2012; Khuzwayo et al., 2011; Coleman et al., 2010). Such an approach has been used before in the study of a number of other intractable conflicts. Some examples include the protracted conflicts in South Sudan, Mozambique, those in Sri Lanka and Nepal, and post-electoral violence in Kenya; In each case, the use of systems theory has yielded important insights, aiding the comprehension of the conflicts but also assisting in their resolution (Smith, 2008; Gray & Roos, 2012; Coleman et al., 2011; Ropers, 2008; Baechler, 2008; Ibrahim Abdi, 2008). Through analysing the 'complex emergency' in Ituri from a systems perspective, I will attempt to show how such an analysis renders the complexity of the Ituri conflict comprehensible without reducing it to simple narratives.

Similarly, in Ituri the usual explanations for the conflict such as Ugandan intervention, historical inter-group conflict over land, and competition over natural resources are all important elements of the conflict but should not be seen as efficient causes in themselves; rather they, and a number of other factors should be analysed as interrelated elements of a complex, dynamic system. That the nature of the violence in Ituri is the product of the interaction of a number of different variables is a fairly uncontroversial claim, however this insight has not yet been developed into a broader framework of which such non-linear causal interaction is a key element in the context of Ituri.

Modelling

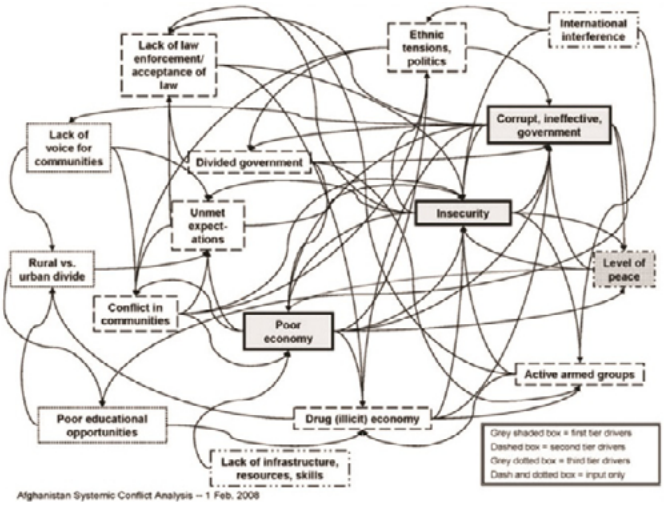
Systems dynamics, writes Stroh (2011: 170), 'are often pictured as maps of dynamic interdependencies'; indeed, this is the way complex conflict systems are most commonly modelled. In order to map a particular conflict, first the boundaries of the system under examination need to be defined (Gallo, 2012). Whilst it is a central tenet of systems theory that systems are intimately connected with their environments, in order to address a particular problem it is important to isolate only the most important variables for inclusion in the model (Forrester, 1987). Multiple

maps can also be used to highlight different sides of the problem (Stroh, 2011). These factors should, where possible, be drawn in an 'adequate diagram' or simulated in a computer model (Ropers, 2008: 16). A typical example of a conflict map can be seen above in Figure 1.

According to Ropers (2008: 15) one advantage of mapping is that it 'offers a practical tool for understanding and explaining non-linear developments and complex social and political change'. Stroh (2011: 169) writes that '[s]ystems maps evoke a more complete picture of a very complex Problem'. They also 'incorporate and illuminate interdependencies across a range of explanatory factors over time' and can be designed to 'catalyse new thinking and conversations' (Stroh, 2011: 170).

Ropers (2008: 13) writes that 'all analytical models are a reduction of the complex reality (and are necessarily perspective-dependent) and are, therefore, only ever a tool and not 'the reality" (ibid: 13). Models can be a very helpful heuristic tool, however they will never capture the full complexity of the conflict being modelled; the researcher must determine what questions they are attempting to answer and construct the model accordingly. The results of a model will always be determined by the 'variables used, the model structure and the causal assumptions' (ibid: 15). Conflict maps allow us to achieve the balance between a balance 'depicting a system in all its complexity and contradictions, and the need to reduce this complexity to something manageable and amenable to intervention' (Bernshausen & Bonacker, 2011).

The map pictured in Figure 4 is an attempt to demonstrate this in the context of Ituri. It is not intended to present an exhaustive picture of all the variables which were involved in the emergence of violence in Ituri, as with any systems map it is 'limited in terms of the causal relationships that can be represented in one diagram' (Ricigliano, 2011: 187). However, it is an attempt to identify the most important factors which are continually emphasised in the literature and discern how these elements are linked to one another. The map privileges 'dynamic complexity' over 'detail complexity'; if a map is high in the former then it places emphasis on identifying all the causal links which exist between the factors which have been identified (ibid: 187). If it is high



in the latter, then it places a greater emphasis on identifying 'distinct subsytems which exist within the overall system' than on identifying all discernable causal links (ibid: 187). An example of a map which is high in detail complexity is given in Figure 2. Ricigliano (2011) claims that dynamic complexity is better used when attempting to understand a distinct element of the system; in this case, we are attempting to understand the emergence of inter-group violence and therefore such a model is more appropriate.

Elaborating the model

The model charts some developments in Hema-Lendu relations from the pre-colonial period up to 1999, citing factors which are thought to have caused a deterioration in these relations and which have often resulted in violence. Whilst it would be possible to chart the development of the war along different lines, I am primarily trying to understand the dynamics which led to the eruption of inter-ethnic mass violence in Ituri in 1999 and therefore will chart these dynamics in terms of relations between the two groups under analysis. It is clearly important to note that Hema and Lendu are not distinct, coherent and essential categories of identity in Ituri; there is considerable variation within these two groups and also in patterns of relations between them (Pottier, 2009). However, the importance of the categories should not be understated as social constructions which came to have real power over the determination of identity in Ituri and which translated into distinct patterns of social organisation; Hema and Lendu had their own political parties, militias and leaderships capable of expressing but also augmenting the concerns of the group they sought to represent (Pottier, 2009; HRW, 2005; interview 3).

The diagram develops in a roughly chronological way; at the top, some of the dynamics which have caused a domination of Hema over Lendu in the political, economic, administrative and educational spheres from the pre-colonial period to the 1990s are identified and links between them established. The dynamics which reinforced or detracted from such a pattern are incredibly complex; the diagram cites only the major factors which are identified by most of the main authors in the field. These dynamics include the pastoralist/agriculturalist divide present in the pre-colonial period, the pro-Hema policies of the Belgian colonists (based on the Belgian theory of the Hema as a superior race, leading to increased Hema access to education, which in turn bolstered the Belgian superior race thesis), Mobutu's Bakajika land laws (which, again, the Hema were better placed to take advantage of due to their increased access to education), Mobutu's policies of Zaireanisation and 'divide and rule', the Hema-UPDF alliance and imported discourses with Rwanda which led to identification of Hema with Tutsi and Lendu with Hutu (Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; Vircoulon, 2010; Pottier, 2009; 2008; Anten, 2010; van Woudenberg, 2001; van Puijenbroek, 2008).

Another key dynamic present after 1996 was the presence of Ugandan troops in Ituri. A number of the interviewees cited foreign intervention in the DRC by neighbours as a primary cause of both the national and Ituri conflicts (interview 3; interview 2; interview 6; interview 7). This precipitated the development of the Hema-UPDF alliance mentioned and this, combined with the Bakajika land laws, the already established domination of Hema over Lendu in all the aforementioned spheres and competition between Hema and Nande over land in Ituri led to the forced evictions – some legal, some not – of Lendu by Hema supported by the UPDF (HRW, 2005; ISS, 2005; Pottier, 2003; 2008; Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; interview 1; interview 5). The Ugandans also engaged in a significant amount of ethnic entrepreneurship, deliberately manipulating tensions between the two groups in order to justify their presence (Reyntjens, 2009; Pottier, 2008; HRW, 2005; Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; AI, 2003). Mobutu's policy of divide and rule which facilitated the emergence of hundreds of opposition groups, leading to local politicians manipulating parochial interests, including ethnic identities, to achieve power and all the economic advantages associated with it, fed into the Ugandan ethnic entrepreneurship (Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; Wrong, 2000; Stearns, 2011; interview 2). Many of the interviewees emphasised the role of politicians in exacerbating tensions between groups, or actively supporting armed groups for the sake of personal profit (interview 2; interview 4; interview 6; interview 7). This policy of divide-and-rule was partly caused by Mobutu's reaction to a democratization which arose in part both from internal and external pressure for reform (Dunn, 2003; Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002; Wrong, 2000; interview 2).

All of these factors, and a number of others, contributed to increasing inter-ethnic tensions which had become apparent by 1998 (Anten, 2010; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004; Reyntjens, 2009) . Such tensions become reinforcing on the affective side when violent attacks lead to fear or anger n the part of members of each group which can lead to further violent attacks (Azar, 1990; interview 5). The process by which this occurs in protracted social conflicts such as that in Ituri is described by Azar; the different fears, experiences and beliefs systems of the groups generate 'reciprocal negative images which perpetuate communal antagonisms and solidify the protracted social conflict' (Azar, 1990: 15). The Ugandan presence in the area, coupled with the broader war taking place nationally and the collapse of the national state which had been underway from the 1970s all combined to create a proliferation in small and light weaponry (SALW), intensifying the climate of fear and aiding the proliferation of armed groups (Wairagu 2011; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004; Bouta, 2005).

The national war and the collapse of the state also contributed to increasing the opportunities for illegal resource exploitation on the part of the groups involved in the violence in Ituri; this primarily took the form of different groups vying for control over gold mines (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002; Clark, 2002; HRW, 2005; Vlassenroot and Raymaekers, 2004; interview 2). Many of the interviewees also made the claim that the war in their country was primarily driven by both national and foreign actors who wanted to exploit Congo's resources; several also claimed that what had begun as a tribal war was now becoming a political and economic one (interview 3, interview 6, interview 2, interview 7). The gold would either go back to Uganda if controlled by the UPDF, thus entrenching Uganda's interest in Ituri, or it would accrue to armed militias, consolidating their power and allowing them

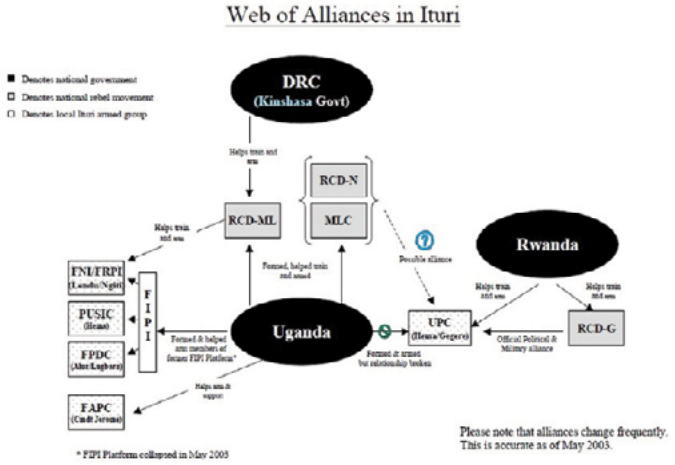
to buy more weapons, increasing the proliferation in SALW (Githaiga, 2011; Pottier, 2003; interview 3; interview 7). The state collapse, caused in part by the national war, also led to the collapse of local dispute solving mechanisms which increased incentives to solve disputes violently (Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004). This process was intensified by the increase in the number and intensity of disputes occurring as a result of the aforementioned forced evictions taking place (Pottier, 2008). All of these variables, coupled with splits in the RCD itself, led to the proliferation of armed groups in Ituri (Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; Anten, 2012; Reyntjens, 2009). This, in turn, led to a privatisation of state violence which reinforced state collapse, and also increased opportunities for illegal resource exploitation (Reyntjens, 2009; Vlassenroot & Raymaekers, 2004; Githaiga, 2011). The broader context of the national war also made Ituri a stake in a larger game, or a 'war within a war'; competition by the various national groups for control over Ituri has intensified the conflict being waged by local groups (Sematumba, 2003).

It did not take a lot for this melting pot of multifarious and mutually reinforcing tensions to erupt into mass violence; the catalyst being the appointment by the UPDF of a Hema as governor of Ituri and Haut-Uele (Reyntjens, 2009; ISS, 2005; Pottier, 2008; Fahey, 2011). This, accompanied by an intensification in the forced evictions and land seizures being conducted by Hema with the help of Uganda was all it took to push Ituri over the edge and cause all out inter-ethnic war in 1999 (Pottier, 2003).

After this point a number of dynamics caused the escalation of violence and its settling into a destructive but stable pattern. Firstly, the violence created or exacerbated a great deal of fear and anger on the part of those affected; anger caused by violence having been committed against oneself or one's family led to an increase in reprisals and in recruitment by armed groups, this then fed back into the violence itself (ICG, 2008; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004; interview 5). Fear of being attacked and the destruction of homes caused a great deal of displacement leading to a great many refugees both within the DRC and in surrounding countries (Pottier, 2008; interview 5). The increase in refugees and the negative emotional experiences of those involved in the conflict contributed to a growing environment of insecurity, which in turn fed back into the violence. In this climate of uncertainty and insecurity, extremist political views found fertile ground, and it became increasingly difficult to see a way out of the violence (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004). This process of the institutionalisation of violence is described by Azar who writes:

> *'As the protracted social conflict becomes part of the culture of the ravaged nation, it builds a sense of paralysis which afflicts the collective consciousness of the population. An environment of hopelessness permeates all strata of society, and a siege mentality develops which inhibits constructive negotiation for any resolution of society' (Azar, 1990: 16)*

What's more, new ethnic communities became involved in the violence, allying with either Hema or Lendu, leading to a geographical spread of the violence and an increase in its severity (HRW, 2005; van Woudenberg, 2001; interview 7). Furthermore, in this climate of uncertainty in which the stakes were very high – both politically and economically – shifts in alliances became commonplace, as did splits within armed groups which only exacerbated inter-group tensions (HRW, 2005; Sematumba, 2003: Autesserre, 2010). The chart created by Human Rights Watch in its report Covered in Blood (see figure 3) aptly depicts the complex web of alliances which emerged in Ituri between various armed groups and national governments. Eventually the UPC was created and, with Ugandan help, began to exert total dominance over large parts of Ituri; this fed into the dynamic of Hema domination which was the first catalyst to a breakdown in Hema-Lendu relations (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004). The Rwandan courting of the UPC later in the period only increased this dominance (Reyntjens, 2009; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004).



The chaos which was playing out in Ituri was the perfect climate for illegal resource exploitation, and this eventually became a driving force behind the violence (Sematumba, 2003; HRW, 2005; Githaiga, 2011; Reyntjens, 2009; interview 2, interview 7). Uganda was legitimising its presence based on the violence which it had helped to create in order to extract gold in Ituri which was used to enrich a select group of elite Ugandan army officers, who were decreasingly subject to the control of President Museveni (Sematumba, 2003; United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 2001; Prunier, 2009). It is not hard to see how this mix of foreign occupation, resource exploitation and personal enrichment was self-reinforcing and, as we are still seeing to this day, difficult to break. Finally, the breakdown of social relations, the economy and the political and administrative structure in Ituri, as well as the collapse of the state's monopoly on violence, further contributed to the collapse of the state which had been the major permissive factor in enabling the outbreak of violence to begin with (interview 6; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004; Prunier, 2009; Reyntjens, 2009). What's more, decreasing economic opportunities led to many more people becoming engaged in the war economy, either directly as rebels or indirectly as miners under the control of one of the various armed groups in the area (Attah-Asamoah, 2011; Pottier, 2009). The privatisation of state violence was also a consequence of the collapse of state control (Reyntjens, 2009). The coloured nodes in the second diagram map onto the nodes of the same colour in the first map, demonstrating how a system of conflict was created which became completely entrenched in every aspect of social, economic and political relations. Such a dynamic fits well with Azar's (1990) description of protracted social conflict.

Evaluating the Model

It is important to note that each of the factors identified in the model could themselves each be the subject of individual models. The process of democratization which is included in the diagram is itself a complex system, caused by the non-linear interaction of a plethora of local, national and international causes none of which it is possible for me to elaborate in the small space of the model; the same could be said for most of the other dynamics identified. This is a necessary consequence of the way in which I have framed my question and determined its boundaries; it is never possible to illustrate complexity perfectly in a model, nor was this my intention. The model is intended to demonstrate the extent of the complexity of the conflict in Ituri by highlighting a number of important factors and establishing links between them.

This is important in order to identify positive feedback loops which can make a conflict particularly intractable and which are very rarely captured by other models (Coleman, 2011; Forrester, 1987). Clearly it was the interaction between variables which made the conflict in Ituri so intractable; frequently cited factors like Ugandan intervention or resource exploitation are only parts of the broader picture. These variables were not sufficient to cause violence in themselves, but only as part of a system of interacting and mutually reinforcing dynamics; Gray and Roos (2012: 3-4) note the same pattern in South Sudan when they write:

> *'Through the systemic lens, conflict arises in fragile states not because of linear cause and effect relationships like 'cattle raiding causes violence' or 'resource competition and guns cause violence', but is rather seen as an emergent property of a complex system that evolves according to the dynamic interaction of these factors (and more) over time.'*

Feedback loops are identified by red arrows in the diagram; other, longer-term feedback loops can be

identified by mapping the coloured nodes found in figure 5 onto the nodes of the same colour in figure 4. The diagram demonstrates how the dynamics which emerged in the conflict became self-reinforcing and created a cycle of ongoing and increasingly severe violence.

This approach is also important in order to link ideas which arise from different perspectives; this model was able to take most of the major ideas on the causes of the war in Ituri and show that they are not mutually incompatible, but are instead fundamentally linked. This should not just be seen as an academic exercise; in fact, quite the opposite. If the intention is to understand a conflict in order to stage an appropriate intervention, then systems theory provides a novel and highly useful means of identifying potential avenues for intervention (Körppen & Ropers, 2011; Hendrick, 2009). Systems theory allows us to take a review of the literature and systematise the major findings of all the authors working in a particular field, establishing how their analyses are linked; incorporating all of these perspectives can lead to 'frame-breaking' insights (Coleman, 2006: 325).

The ability of systems theory to 'make us conscious of the far-reaching interconnections and complexity' of social phenomena, as well as 'establishing connections between hitherto unrelated phenomena' should be seen as one of its key strengths (Skyttner, 2005: v). It allows the researcher to step outside their individual framework for viewing a conflict and gain a systemic and comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved (Coleman, 2006). However, it can also be seen as a weakness because ultimately it will never be possible to gain a 'perspective from everywhere'as no analysis, no matter how detailed, will be utterly exhaustive (Ropers, 2008; Ricigliano, 2011). As such, modelling a system should be seen as an important exercise for expanding the researcher's or the practitioner's understanding of a conflict, but should not be seen as an objective representation of the conflict itself.

What's more, at some point or another it will be necessary to step away from one's analysis and act. The process by which systemic analysis can feed into action is outlined by Burns (2007; 2011) in his publications on systemic action research. Action research is, according to Burns, based on a series of continuous cycles made up of four key elements – reflection and sense making, planning, action, and observation and assessment. This type of research is based on the belief that 'we learn most effectively through action and experience, and that insight can be most effectively generated through the combined expertise of those who have a stake in the issues' (Burns, 2011: 99). A key part of systemic action research is the creation of conflict maps by stakeholders which reveals primary patterns and societal norms, complex inter-stakeholder relationships of power, the non-linear impact of numerous linear interactions, and the diverging effects which occur at different levels of the system (Burns, 2011). In turn, such maps point to opportunities for intervention, and allow us to learn through action; such action, in turn informs deeper analysis which, in turn generates new action (Burns, 2011).

Whilst systems theory undoubtedly has limitations, it has proven particularly useful for analysing the violent and intractable conflict which took place in Ituri. My study has identified a number of important dynamics, such as feedback loops and causal interactions which have not been analysed explicitly up until now. The use of systems theory not only gives us a better understanding of the conflict in Ituri, it also helps to identify potential avenues for intervention which, had they been available to practitioners at the time might have facilitated the interventions which did take place.

Conclusion

Previous attempts to explain the conflict in the DRC have yielded a number of important insights; however, each has been limited by the explicit or implicit frames the author has brought to analysis. The epistemological lens used by each author to diagnose the causes of the conflict in the DRC illuminates certain dynamics at the expense of others, and often leaves the reader with an incomplete or in some way distorted picture of the

war (Coleman, 2006). As we have seen, Sematumba's (2003) or Eichstaedt's (2011) economic approach to the conflict yields very different insights than does Nzongola-Ntalaja's (2002) Marxist approach, or Pottier's (2009) sociological approach. This process is then augmented by NGOs and IFIs which pick up on certain explanations for the conflict which they find most persuasive, or which they feel will resonate best with donors. The privileging of certain explanations over others leads to the creation of certain discourses surrounding the war, such that any debate is framed in terms of these prevalent narratives (Autesserre, 2012). Once certain discourses become entrenched they start to shape understanding and therefore action in ways which are imperceptible to those involved in the process (Lakoff, 2006).

It is therefore not only important to shed light on these narratives, but also to attempt to provide an analysis which reduces their power in framing our understanding. Whilst it will never be possible to model the conflict in such a way as to include every perspective on the war, by combining a fairly exhaustive analysis of the literature with individual explanations from those on the ground it is possible to paint a picture of the conflict which is more exhaustive and less perspective-dependent. Conducting an analysis from the perspective of systems theory is one of the best means through which this can be achieved (Coleman, 2006). Incorporating insights from a number of different authors and individuals on the ground into a systems framework demonstrates the interconnectivity of dynamics hitherto thought to be mutually exclusive. What's more, it allows the analyst to identify patterns such as feedback loops and causal interdependence which have the capacity to make conflict particularly intractable (Coleman et al., 2007). By picturing all of these dynamics pictorially in a conflict map, one can arrive at a more holistic understanding of the way the conflict is played out, and identify attractors which can make conflict settle into a stable pattern of violence (Stroh, 2011). Perhaps the greatest advantage of illustrating a particular conflict in this way is that it allows the practitioner to identify the most effective points of intervention (Burns, 2011; Woodrow & Chigas, 2011). Strategically intervening to break feedback loops and decrease the value of attractors can break stable patterns of violence and start to create cycles of positive change (Coleman et al., 2007).

The model I have presented of the war in Ituri is not meant to be an exhaustive or objective representation of the conflict; however, it is supposed to challenge the dominance of particular narratives for explaining the emergence of violence in Ituri. The idea that a single issue such as illegal resource exploitation, ethnicity or foreign intervention caused the war is clearly deeply flawed. As demonstrated by my model, the violence which erupted so brutally in 1999 was not the result of any one factor; rather, it arose from the interaction of a number of different dynamics. Some were more significant than others, some were long-term patterns whilst others were short-term catalysts; however the particular nature of the conflict system which emerged in Ituri can only be explained by including every one of the factors identified and analysing the interactions between them.

Whilst such an approach is clearly just one of many possible useful ways of analysing a conflict, it is my opinion that systems theory has a lot to offer modern conflict studies; I hope that my model of the conflict in Ituri has demonstrated the theory's potential utility for analysing the war in the DRC and indeed for African conflict more broadly. Further research would be necessary to systematise my model and include dynamics which have not been represented. The application of systems theory to the social sciences, and especially to the study of conflict, is still in its infancy; further and more detailed research on the applicability of systems theory to the study of African conflict is clearly necessary.

Complex, intractable conflict will be a feature of social relations in Africa and around the world for decades to come; these conflicts by their very nature often involve irreconcilable disputes between historically antagonistic parties. It is not possible, and perhaps not even desirable to prevent groups from forming disagreements with one another. However, if the international community wishes to avoid a repeat of the hecatombs witnessed in the recent war in the DRC, it should think seriously about new methods aimed at preventing inter-group conflict from escalating into stable patterns of violence. Systems theory could be one element of the peacebuilder's 'tool kit'; one which renders the complexity of modern conflict comprehensible.

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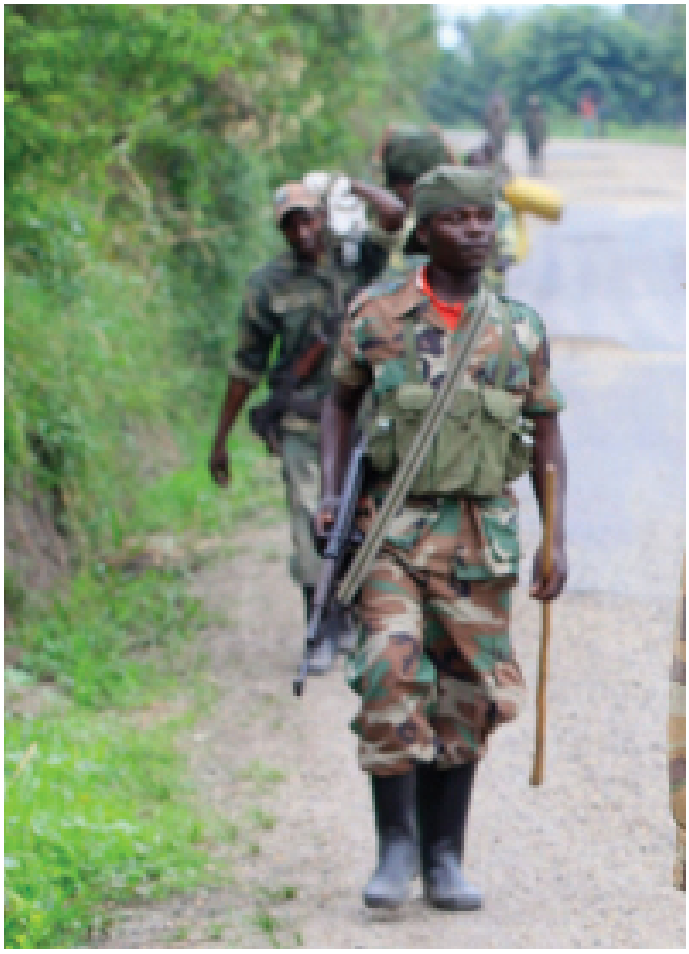
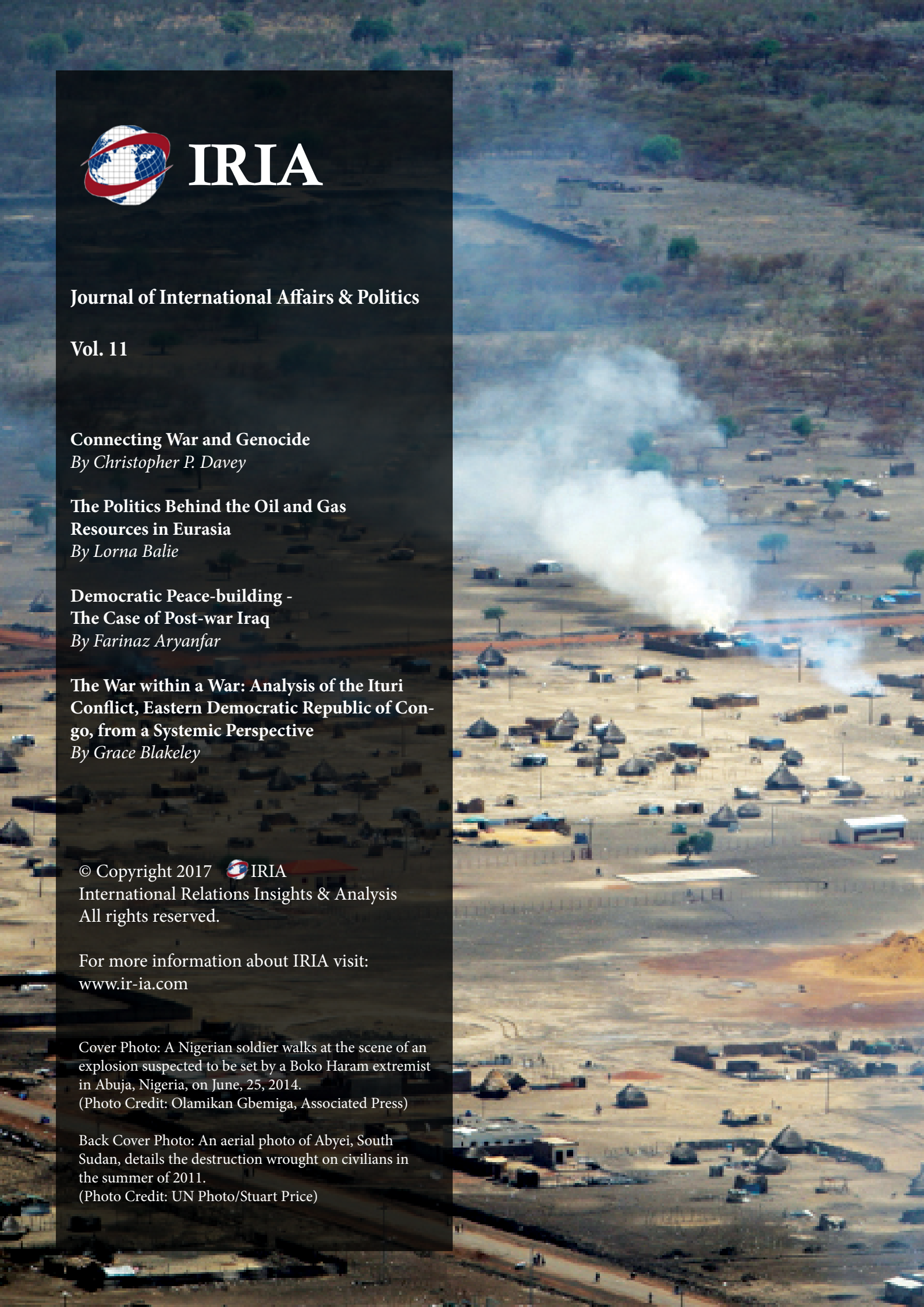


By Grace Blakeley

Grace Blakeley's research area is conflict in central Africa, particularly the nexus of conflict that has arisen around north eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic. She is currently pursuing an MSc degree in African Studies at Oxford University. In her thesis on the second Congo war, Ms. Blakeley analysed numerous sub-conflicts in DRC after personally visiting the Ituri region of the DRC for her research. She also interned at the European Parliament and spent some time volunteering as an administrator of a charity called The Child's Trust, and visited India and France.



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Cover Photo: A Nigerian soldier walks at the scene of an explosion suspected to be set by a Boko Haram extremist in Abuja, Nigeria, on June, 25, 2014.
(Photo Credit: Olamikan Gbemiga, Associated Press)

Back Cover Photo: An aerial photo of Abyei, South Sudan, details the destruction wrought on civilians in the summer of 2011.
(Photo Credit: UN Photo/Stuart Price)