

# Ethnic Conflict in Comparative Perspective

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## **Summary of Content:**

The module introduces students to the main theories of ethnic conflict and conflict resolution. Theories of ethnic conflict to be discussed will include: rational choice models focusing on the security dilemma and economic explanations of ethnic conflict, social identity theories and the theory of symbolic choice. Regarding theories of conflict resolution, the module will engage with models of integration, power sharing and power dividing, as well as the more recent theory of complex power sharing.

The module then allows students to apply this knowledge of the main theories of ethnic conflict resolution to relevant case studies across three continents. Cases to be discussed in greater depth in seminars include the Basque Country, Northern Ireland, Nagorno-Karabakh Territory, Transnistria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, and Georgia.

## **Educational Aims:**

The main aim of this course is to understand the complex dynamics of intra-state and regional ethnic conflict and the various forms, dimensions and implications of interventions designed to deal with such conflicts. The course addresses these issues by examining different theoretical approaches to ethnic conflict and its management, settlement and prevention, and by studying specific instances of interventions in conflicts within states and across different parts of the world.

**A further aim is to develop skills in comparative political analysis, in preparing briefing papers on case studies, and in conducting seminars.**

## **Learning Outcomes:**

The key skills the unit will hone and further develop are:

Skills of self-direction, self-evaluation and time management.

- i) Knowledge and understanding:
  - a clear grasp of the key issues relevant to conflict and conflict management, settlement and prevention;
  - an understanding of different manifestations of conflict between and within states and their policy-relevant implications for conflict management, settlement and prevention;
  - familiarity with theoretical approaches to the study of conflict and conflict management, settlement and prevention.
- ii) Intellectual skills:
  - skills to evaluate the usefulness of these approaches in relation to specific types of conflicts;
  - skills of conceptual, original and independent thinking, critical analysis, synthesis and reasoned argument;
  - skills of assessment and judgement in relation to the soundness of competing arguments and scenarios, including the reporting and assessing of qualitative and quantitative data.
- iii) Professional/Practical skills:
  - research skills in identifying, locating and exploiting a wide range of descriptive, evaluative and theoretical literature.
- iv) Transferable & Key skills:
  - skills related to comparative political analysis, as well as preparing for guided seminar discussions.
- v) IT skills:
  - skills related to word processing and online and library research.

## Module Evaluation:

Evaluation and feedback are crucial to the success of any module. Modules are formally evaluated on a biennial basis, so please use this opportunity to have your say. If you have any other comments or queries regarding this module, please contact the Module Convenor.

## Lecture Titles:

24 September: The Comparative Study of Ethnic Conflict and Conflict Resolution  
1 October: Theories of Ethnic Conflict (1): Rational Choice Approaches  
15 October: Theories of Ethnic Conflict (2): Social Psychological Approaches  
22 October: Theories of Ethnic Conflict (3): Motive—Means—Opportunity  
29 October: Theories of Ethnic Conflict Resolution (1): International Conflict Management  
5 November: Theories of Ethnic Conflict Resolution (2): Power Sharing  
26 November: Theories of Ethnic Conflict Resolution (3): Centripetalism and Power Dividing  
3 December: Theories of Ethnic Conflict Resolution (4): Territorial Approaches  
10 December: Theories of Ethnic Conflict Resolution (5): Complex Power Sharing

## Seminar Cases:

Basque Country  
Northern Ireland  
Nagorno-Karabakh Territory  
Transnistria  
Democratic Republic of Congo  
Iraq  
Kosovo  
Georgia

## Method and Frequency of Class:

Activity	Number of Sessions	Duration of a Session
Lecture	9	50 minutes
Seminar	9	50 minutes

## Method of Assessment:

This 20 credit module will be assessed on the following basis:

Assessment Type	Weight	Requirements
Coursework	50%	1 x Briefing Paper
Exam	50%	1 x two-hour exam

The assessed coursework (Briefing Paper) should be submitted electronically to every student in the class and the Module Convenor by Monday 4pm of the week in which your seminar takes place.

## Reading Information:

### Course Texts

Wolff, S. 2007. *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Cordell, C. and Wolff, S. 2009. *Ethnic Conflict: Causes—Consequences—Responses*. Cambridge: Polity.

### Lecture Readings

These readings are intended as supplementary to the lectures and preparatory for the exams.

Collier, P. 2000. *The Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.  
Horowitz, D. L. 2000. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Ch.s 4, 5.  
Lake, D. A. and Rothchild, D. eds. 1998. *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1.  
Kaufman, S. J. 2001. *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Ch. 2.  
Ross, M. H. 2001. Psychocultural Interpretations and Dramas: Identity Dynamics in Ethnic Conflict, *Political Psychology*, vol. 22, no. 1, 157-178.

### Seminar Readings

These readings are indicative and meant to give you a head start in identifying relevant resources. I expect substantial additional research to be reflected in your briefing papers and their bibliographies.

### Basque Country

- Mees, L. 2003. *Nationalism, Violence and Democracy: The Basque Clash of Identities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, available online at [https://auth.athensams.net/?ath\\_dspid=EBRARY&ath\\_returl=http%3A%2F%2Fsite.ebRARY.com%2FAthens%3Fid%3D10076842%26rp%3DDoc](https://auth.athensams.net/?ath_dspid=EBRARY&ath_returl=http%3A%2F%2Fsite.ebRARY.com%2FAthens%3Fid%3D10076842%26rp%3DDoc).
- Idoiaga, G. E. 2006. *The Basque Conflict: New Ideas and Prospects for Peace*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, available online at <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr161.pdf>
- Woodworth, P. 2001. "Why Do They Kill? The Basque Conflict in Spain." *World Policy Journal*, vol. 18, no. 1 (Spring 2001), pp. 1-12. (Access via SXF)
- Mees, L. 2001. "Between Votes and Bullets. Conflicting Ethnic Identities in the Basque Country", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 24, no. 5 (September 2001), pp. 798-827. (Access via SXF)

### Northern Ireland

- Gilligan, C. and Tonge, J. 2003. eds. 'Northern Ireland', *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol. 3, no. 1, available online at [http://www.ethnopolitics.org/ethnopolitics/archive/volume\\_III/issue\\_1/issue\\_1\\_toc.html](http://www.ethnopolitics.org/ethnopolitics/archive/volume_III/issue_1/issue_1_toc.html).
- McGarry, J. and O'Leary B., 2004. *The Northern Ireland Conflict: Consociational Engagements*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (esp. ch.s 3, 9, 11) <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/public/content/politicalscience/0199266573/toc.html>.
- Conflict Archive on the Internet: <http://www.cain.ulster.ac.uk>.

### Nagorno-Karabakh

- Nagorno-Karabakh: Risking War, Europe Report N°187, 14 November 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5157&l=1>)

- Nagorno-Karabakh: A Plan for Peace, Europe Report N°167, 11 October 2005 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3740&l=1>)
- Nagorno-Karabakh: Viewing the Conflict from the Ground, Europe Report N°166, 14 September 2005 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3652&l=1>)
- Atkinson, D. 2004. The Conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh Region Dealt with by the OSCE *Minsk Conference* (Report to the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe). Strasbourg: Council of Europe (<http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc04/EDOC10364.htm>)

#### Transnistria

- Jaerve, P. 2001. *Communists of Moldova and the Future of the Country's Ethnopolitical Conflicts*. Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, available online at [http://www.ecmi.de/download/brief\\_3.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/brief_3.pdf)
- Jaerve, P. 1997. *From Ethnopolitical Conflict to Inter-Ethnic Accord in Moldova*. Flensburg: Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, available online at [http://www.ecmi.de/download/report\\_1.pdf](http://www.ecmi.de/download/report_1.pdf)
- Aklaev, A. R. 1996. "Dynamics of the Moldova Trans-Dniester Ethnic Conflict", in *Ethnicity and Power in the Contemporary World*, eds. K. Rupesinghe and V. A. Tishkov. New York: United Nations University Press, available online at [http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu12ee/uu12ee0a.htm#5.%20dynamics%20of%20the%20moldova%20trans%20dniester%20ethnic%20conflict%20\(late%201990s%20to%20early%201](http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu12ee/uu12ee0a.htm#5.%20dynamics%20of%20the%20moldova%20trans%20dniester%20ethnic%20conflict%20(late%201990s%20to%20early%201)

#### Democratic Republic of Congo

- Congo: Four Priorities for Sustainable Peace in Ituri, Africa Report N°140, 13 May 2008 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5425&l=1>)
- Congo: Bringing Peace to North Kivu, Africa Report N°133, 31 October 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5134&l=1>)
- Congo: Consolidating the Peace, Africa Report N°128, 5 July 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4933&l=1>)
- Escaping the Conflict Trap: Promoting Good Governance in the Congo, Africa Report N°114, 20 July 2006 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4276&l=1>)

#### Iraq

- Turkey and Iraqi Kurds: Conflict or Cooperation?, Middle East Report N°81, 13 November 2008 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5777&l=1>)
- Oil for Soil: Toward a Grand Bargain on Iraq and the Kurds, Middle East Report N°80, 28 October 2008 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5750&l=1>)
- Iraq and the Kurds: Resolving the Kirkuk Crisis, Middle East Report N°64, 19 April 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4782&l=1>)
- Iraq and the Kurds: The Brewing Battle over Kirkuk, Middle East Report N°56, 18 July 2006 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4267&l=1>)

#### Kosovo

- Kosovo's Fragile Transition, Europe Report N°196, 25 September 2008 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5695&l=1>)
- Breaking the Kosovo Stalemate: Europe's Responsibility, Europe Report N°185, 21 August 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5018&l=1>)
- Kosovo: No Good Alternatives to the Ahtisaari Plan, Europe Report N°182, 14 May 2007 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4830&l=1>)
- Kosovo: Toward Final Status, Europe Report N°161, 24 January 2005 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3226&l=1>)
- A Kosovo Roadmap (I): Addressing Final Status, Europe Report N° 124, 1 March 2002 (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1640&l=1>)

- A Kosovo Roadmap (II): Internal Benchmarks, Europe Report N°125, 1 March 2002  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1687&l=1>)

#### Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia)

- Georgia: The Risks of Winter, Europe Briefing N°51, 26 November 2008  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5787&l=1>)
- Russia vs. Georgia: The Fallout, Europe Report N°195, 22 August 2008  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5636&l=1>)
- Georgia and Russia: Clashing over Abkhazia, Europe Report N°193, 5 June 2008  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5469&l=1>)
- Georgia's South Ossetia Conflict: Make Haste Slowly, Europe Report N°183, 7 June 2007  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4887&l=1>)
- Abkhazia: Ways Forward, Europe Report N°179, 18 January 2007  
(<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4619&l=1>)