

Julius Hess

Leviathan Staggering

A Quantitative Analysis of the State's
Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence



Berliner
Wissenschafts-Verlag

Leviathan Staggering

Sozialwissenschaftliche Studien des Zentrums für Militärgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften der Bundeswehr

Herausgegeben vom
Zentrum für Militärgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften
der Bundeswehr

Band 21

Julius Hess

Leviathan Staggering

A Quantitative Analysis of the State's
Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence



Berliner
Wissenschafts-Verlag

Studies in Social Science by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences
Edited by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences

Dissertation, Universität Erfurt (University of Erfurt), 2019

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über
<http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the German National Library
The German National Library lists this publication in the German National Bibliography;
detailed bibliographic information is available on the Internet at
<http://dnb.d-nb.de>

Dieses Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt.
Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtes ist unzulässig
und strafbar.

*This work including all its parts is protected by copyright. Any use outside the narrow
limits of the Copyright Act is not permissible and liable to prosecution.*

© 2020 BWV | BERLINER WISSENSCHAFTS-VERLAG GmbH,
Behaimstraße 25, 10585 Berlin,
E-Mail: bwv@bwv-verlag.de, Internet: <http://www.bwv-verlag.de>

Redaktion / *Editorial Office*: ZMSBw, Potsdam, Fachbereich Publikationen (0827-01)
Projektkoordination / *Project coordination*: Christian Adam, Annabel Franceschini
Lektorat / *Copyediting*: Mirko Wittwar (Morsbach)

Satz / *Typesetting*: Carola Klinke
Grafiken / *Illustrations*: Julius Hess,
für den Druck bearbeitet von / *prepared for printing by* Carola Klinke

Umschlagabbildung / *Cover illustration*:
Somalische Soldaten bei einem zerstörten Panzer der Mission der Afrikanischen Union in
Somalia (AMISOM), Mogadischu, September 2011. (picture alliance/dpa/Dai Kurokawa)
*Somali soldiers gather around a destroyed tank of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM),
Mogadishu, September 2011. (picture alliance/dpa/Dai Kurokawa)*

Druck / *Print*: Memminger MedienCentrum, Memmingen
Gedruckt auf holzfreiem, chlor- und säurefreiem, alterungsbeständigem Papier.
Printed on wood-free, chlorine- and acid-free, age-resistant paper.
Printed in Germany.

ISBN Print 978-3-8305-5063-1
ISBN E-Book 978-3-8305-4228-5

Contents

List of Tables.....	9
List of Maps and Figures.....	12
List of Frequent Abbreviations	15
Acknowledgments	17
Foreword	19
1 Introduction	21
2 Theoretical and Empirical Approaches	40
2.1 The Hobbesian Approach to Intrastate Violence	40
2.1.1 The Rationalist Approach	41
2.1.2 Predation	45
2.1.3 Security Dilemmas, Retaliation, and Preemptive Violence	52
2.1.4 The Sociological Approach.....	63
2.1.5 Summary.....	71
2.2 The Great Decline: Violence in History.....	72
2.2.1 The Distant Past	72
2.2.2 Historical Evidence on Violence in Empires and Early States...	79
2.2.3 Homicidal Violence in Emerging Modern States	81
2.2.4 Hobbesian and Non-Hobbesian Interpretations.....	84
2.2.5 Summary.....	87
2.3 The Great Surge: Coercive Capacity in History	87
2.3.1 Military Competition and State-Building in Early Modern Europe	88
2.3.2 The Surge: Money, Men, Materiel, and the Military	90
2.3.3 Monopolizing Violence.....	92
2.3.4 Non-European State-Building.....	97
2.3.5 The World Today: Strong Leviathans, Weak Leviathans	101
2.3.6 Summary	105

2.4 Quantitative Research on Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence.....	106
2.4.1 Homicidal Violence.....	108
2.4.2 Civil War.....	112
2.4.3 Comprehensive Approaches to Intrastate Violence.....	115
2.4.4 Summary.....	116
2.5 The Research Gap.....	117
3 Theoretical Framework	119
3.1 Intrastate Violence.....	119
3.1.1 Lethal Physical Violence	119
3.1.2 Delimitations: Territoriality, Legality, and Legitimacy.....	122
3.1.3 Violence Across Space and Time: Fatality Rates	125
3.2 The State and Coercive Capacity	126
3.2.1 The State as a Unit of Analysis	126
3.2.2 Coercive Capacity.....	132
3.2.3 Summary.....	140
3.3 The State's Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence: Hypotheses....	141
3.3.1 The Continuum of Violence	142
3.3.2 Sub-Dimensions of Intrastate Violence	144
3.3.3 Hypotheses	149
4 Research Design	152
4.1 Population of Cases, Data Structure, and Guidelines.....	153
4.2 Measuring Intrastate Violence (Dependent Variables).....	157
4.2.1 Political Violence	158
4.2.2 Non-Political, Homicidal Violence	162
4.2.3 Total Intrastate Violence.....	168
4.2.4 Overview and Discussion of Data.....	168
4.3 Measuring Coercive Capacity (Independent Variables)	182
4.3.1 Financial, Human, and Material Resources of the Military	182
4.3.2 The Coercive Capacity Index: Construction and Discussion	186
4.3.3 Centralization, Police, Paramilitary, and Conventional Proxies.....	194

4.4 Control Variables.....	202
4.4.1 Economic Development and Inequality.....	203
4.4.2 Non-Coercive State Capacity: Legitimacy, Bureaucracy, Taxation	206
4.4.3 Democracy and the Political System	209
4.4.4 Population Structure and Social Disorganization	214
4.5 Methods.....	218
4.5.1 Time-Series Cross-Section Data and Lagged Dependent Variables.....	219
4.5.2 Non-Stationarity, Heteroscedasticity, and Between Effects	226
4.5.3 Reverse Causality and the Structural Approach	230
4.5.4 The Fundamental Model of Intrastate Violence	233
5 Results	234
5.1 Bivariate Analyses	234
5.1.1 Coercive Capacity and Total Fatality Rates	234
5.1.2 Facets of Coercive Capacity and Dimensions of Intrastate Violence.....	239
5.1.3 Coercive Capacity and State-Based Armed Conflict.....	243
5.1.4 Causal Pathways: Coercive Capacity, Violence, and the Mobilization of Sub-State Groups.....	246
5.2 Assessing the Fundamental Model of Intrastate Violence.....	249
5.3 Robustness Checks and Extensions.....	257
5.3.1 Temporal Dynamics and Causality	258
5.3.2 Omitted Variable Bias and Additional Controls	265
5.3.3 Missing Values, Regional Bias, and Outliers.....	271
5.3.4 Temporal Within-Variation on the State-Level.....	280
5.3.5 Properties of the Dependent Variable.....	282
5.3.6 Interactions: Democracy, Economy, and Coercive Capacity.....	284
5.3.7 Military Intervention, Peacekeeping, and Intrastate Violence...	296
5.4 Sub-Dimensions of Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence.....	300
5.4.1 Sub-Dimensions of the Coercive Capacity Index	300
5.4.2 Centralization, Police, and Paramilitary	302
5.4.3 Conventional Proxies for Coercive Capacity	304
5.5 Coercive Capacity and Sub-Dimensions of Intrastate Violence.....	308
5.5.1 Homicide	308
5.5.2 State-Based Armed Conflict and One-Sided Violence.....	310

6 Conclusion	319
6.1 Summary of Results.....	319
6.2 Contributions to the Understanding of Intrastate Violence	322
6.2.1 A Hobbesian World.....	322
6.2.2 Bridging the Gap Between Political Science and Sociology	323
6.2.3 Progress in Measuring Coercive Capacity.....	324
6.2.4 Reconsiderations and Corrections.....	324
6.3 Limitations of the Approach.....	329
6.3.1 Units of Analysis, Theoretical Concepts, and Proxies.....	329
6.3.2 Methods	332
6.4 Practical Implications: Military Aid and Intervention	333
6.4.1 Non-Political Violence and Domestic Security	333
6.4.2 Aiding the Military.....	334
6.4.3 Perfect Storms.....	336
6.4.4 Dilemmas of State-Building.....	337
6.4.5 Aid or Intervention?	340
6.4.6 A Better World	341
References.....	343
Appendix	385

List of Tables

Table 2.1:	Increase in Military Manpower, 1470–1710	91
Table 2.2:	Signs and Significance of Coefficients of Military Indicators in Cross-National Regressions on Homicide Rates	111
Table 4.1:	States Featured in Empirical Analyses	155
Table 4.2:	Ancillary Variables, 1988–2013	157
Table 4.3:	Original Dependent Variables, Fatality Rates, 1989–2014	169
Table 4.4:	Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate, Mean Values, 1989–2014	174
Table 4.5:	Dependent Variables, Fatality Rates, 1988–2013	180
Table 4.6:	Pearson's r for Bivariate Correlations between Principal Indicators of Coercive Capacity, 1988–2013.....	186
Table 4.7:	Original Independent Variables, 1988–2013.....	187
Table 4.8:	Independent Variables and the Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013	188
Table 4.9:	Coercive Capacity Index, Mean Values, 1988–2013.....	192
Table 4.10:	Original Additional Metric Independent Variables on Police, Paramilitary, and Coercive Capacity, 1988–2013	199
Table 4.11:	Additional Independent Variables on Centralization, Police, Paramilitary, and Coercive Capacity, 1988–2013	200
Table 4.12:	T-Test of Coercive Capacity Index over Presence of Informal Pro-Government Militias, 1988–2013	201
Table 4.13:	Bivariate Correlations between Coercive Capacity Index and Additional Indicators of Coercive Capacity, Pearson's r , 1988–2013	201
Table 4.14:	Control Variables: Economic Development and Inequality, 1988–2013	206
Table 4.15:	Control Variables: Non-Coercive State Capacity, 1988–2013	209
Table 4.16:	Control Variables: Political System Traits, 1988–2013	214
Table 4.17:	Control Variables: Population Structure and Social Disorganization, 1988–2013.....	217
Table 5.1:	Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index and Total Fatality Rates, Cross-Tabulation of Cases, 1988–2013.....	235

Table 5.2:	Pairwise Bivariate Correlations of Dimensions of Coercive Capacity and Dimensions of Intrastate Violence, Pearson's r , 1988–2013	240
Table 5.3:	Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index and State-Based Armed Conflict, Cross-Tabulation of Cases, 1988–2013	244
Table 5.4:	Means of State-Based Armed Conflict Fatality Rate and Total Fatality Rate per Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013	244
Table 5.5:	Quartiles of Police Officers per km ² and State-Based Armed Conflict, Cross-Tabulation of Cases, 1988–2013	245
Table 5.6:	Quartiles of Paramilitary Personnel per km ² and State-Based Armed Conflict, Cross-Tabulation of Cases, 1988–2013.....	245
Table 5.7:	Number of Sub-State Groups per Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index, Mean Values	248
Table 5.8:	Pairwise Bivariate Correlations of Total Fatality Rate and Number of Sub-State Groups, 1988–2013	249
Table 5.9:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	250
Table 5.10:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	259
Table 5.11:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate and Combined Homicide/State-Based Armed Conflict Fatality Rate.....	261
Table 5.12:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	267
Table 5.13:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 2006–2013	271
Table 5.14:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	273
Table 5.15:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	275
Table 5.16:	Regression Analysis of Total Fatality Rate, Logit Regression of High Total Intrastate Violence, Poisson Regression and Negative Binomial Regression of Absolute Number of Intrastate Violence Fatalities, 1988–2013	283

Table 5.17:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	291
Table 5.18:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	295
Table 5.19:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1989–2005 and 2000–2014.....	298
Table 5.20:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	301
Table 5.21:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	303
Table 5.22:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate, 1988–2013	305
Table 5.23:	Comparison of Coefficients of Proxies for Coercive Capacity in the Fundamental Model.....	307
Table 5.24:	Regression Analyses of Total Fatality Rate and Homicide Rate, 1988–2013.....	309
Table 5.25:	Regression Analyses of State-Based Armed Conflict Fatality Rate and State-Based One-Sided Violence Fatality Rate 1988–2013	311
Table 5.26:	Logit Regressions of Civil War Onset following Fearon and Laitin’s “Model 3”	314
Table 5.27:	Logit Regressions of Civil War Onset following Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner’s “Model 4”	315
Table A.1:	Additional Information on Variables.....	385

List of Maps and Figures

Map 1.1:	Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate, Mean Values, 1989–2014	23
Map 1.2:	Military Coercive Capacity, Mean Values of Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013	33
Figure 1.1:	Magnitudes of Fatality Rates per Sub-Dimension of Intrastate Violence; Area of Rectangles Represents Size of Mean Values, 1989–2014	29
Figure 1.2:	Concepts and Indicators in the Empirical Research on Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence	31
Figure 2.1:	Payoffs in a Prisoner's Dilemma	58
Figure 2.2:	Payoffs in a Prisoner's Dilemma with Penalties	61
Figure 2.3:	Annual Rates of Deaths per 100,000 Population from Warfare, Genocide, and Homicide.....	77
Figure 2.4:	World Averages of Annual Rates of Violent Deaths per 100,000 Population	80
Figure 2.5:	Average Annual Rates of Deaths per 100,000 Population from Homicides in Europe	83
Figure 2.6:	Average Annual Rates of Deaths per 100,000 Population from Homicides in Europe and Mean Values of Military Manpower of Major European Powers	104
Figure 3.1:	Legality and Legitimacy of Lethal State Violence outside Times of War, Legitimacy based on Imbusch	124
Figure 4.1:	Homicide Rates during Armed Conflict and Episodes of One-Sided Violence, 1989–2014.....	172
Figure 4.2:	Fatality Rates by Sub-Dimensions of Intrastate Violence and Region, Mean Values, 1989–2014.....	176
Figure 4.3:	Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate per Region and Time Period, Mean Values.....	178
Figure 4.4:	Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate per Year, Global Mean.....	179
Figure 4.5:	Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate, 1989 and 2013.....	181
Figure 4.6:	Coercive Capacity Index, 1988 and 2013	189
Figure 4.7:	Coercive Capacity Index per Year, Global Mean.....	190
Figure 4.8:	Coercive Capacity Index per Region and Time Period, Mean Values	194

Figure 5.1:	Boxplot of Total Fatality Rate per Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index	236
Figure 5.2:	Scatterplot of Coercive Capacity Index and Total Fatality Rate with Linear, Quadratic, and Fractional-Polynomial Predictions.....	237
Figure 5.3:	Scatterplot of Coercive Capacity Index and Total Fatality Rate with Regional Labels, Mean Values, 1988–2013	238
Figure 5.4:	Scatterplot of Coercive Capacity Index and Total Fatality Rate with Country Labels, Mean Values, 1988–2013.....	239
Figure 5.5:	Boxplot of Total Fatality Rate per Quartiles of Police Officers per km ²	242
Figure 5.6:	Boxplot of Total Fatality Rate per Quartiles of Paramilitary Personnel per km ²	243
Figure 5.7:	Coefficients of Model 2 with Standardized Independent Variables	252
Figure 5.8:	Absolute Values of Coefficient of LDV and Coercive Capacity Index in Model 3 and Number of Observations per Years of Lag of LDV.....	253
Figure 5.9:	Coefficients of Model 3 with Standardized Independent Variables.....	254
Figure 5.10:	Coefficients of Model 7 with Standardized Independent Variables.....	262
Figure 5.11:	Boxplot of Total Fatality Rate per Quartiles of Coercive Capacity Index and Region, 1988–2013.....	278
Figure 5.12:	Scatterplot Coercive Capacity Index and Coercive Capacity Index per Population, 1988–2013.....	279
Figure 5.13:	Total Fatality Rate and Coercive Capacity Index, Selected States 1988–2013.....	281
Figure 5.14:	Total Fatality Rates per Political System Traits and Tertiles of Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013.....	287
Figure 5.15:	Total Fatality Rates per Values on the Polity 2-Scale, 1988–2013	289
Figure 5.16:	Total Fatality Rates per Tertiles of Economic Development and Tertiles of Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013	294
Figure 5.17:	Quadratic Prediction of Total Fatality Rate per Coercive Capacity Index and per Military Expenditure per Population	308

List of Frequent Abbreviations

2SLS	Two-stage least squares
ACDA	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
AMAR	All Minorities At Risk
AR	Autoregressive scheme
BE	Between effect
BICC	Bonn International Center for Conversion
BTI	Bertelsmann Transformation Index
CCI	Coercive Capacity Index
COW	Correlates of War
COW NMC	Correlates of War National Material Capabilities
EPR	Ethnic Power Relations
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FD	First difference
FE	Fixed effect
FEVD	Fixed effect vector decomposition
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IR	International Relations
LDV	Lagged dependent variable
OLS	Ordinary least squares
PCSE	Panel-corrected standard errors
PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
RC	Rational choice
RCT	Rational choice theory
RE	Random effect
SE	Standard error
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TSCS	Time-series cross-section
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USD	US Dollar
WHO	World Health Organization
WMEAT	World Military Expenditure and Arms Transfers

Acknowledgments

Some ideas that led to this study sprang from conversations with Lisa Scholz and were entrenched during a road trip through Egypt's Sinai Peninsula in 2013. In those days, the Sinai was marked by recurrent acts of terrorism, widespread insecurity, and a heavy presence of security forces. We tried to capture these experiences in a short piece titled "Tanks in the Desert."

Conversations with Anja Seiffert, Cornelia Grosse, Martin Rink, and other researchers of the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences (ZMSBw) greatly enhanced and sharpened my arguments. Furthermore, I have to thank the Centre for granting me a research stay at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 2015.

Several colleagues in the research community generously shared their knowledge, insights, and data. This includes Sam Perlo-Freeman, Timo Smit, Marc von Boemcken, and Jan Grebe.

A great number of dedicated individuals at the ZMSBw enabled this project: Jörg Hillmann, Commander of the ZMSBw, and his predecessor Hans-Hubertus Mack; Michael Epkenhans, Director of Research; Christian Hartmann, Director of the Operations Survey and Support Division, and his predecessor Dieter Krüger; Christian Adam, Bernd Nogli, and the editorial staff, to name but a few.

I especially thank my supervisors, Guido Mehlkop (Erfurt) and Rolf von Lüde (Hamburg), for guidance, encouragement, and for providing me with the sense that I am on the right track. I would like to extend my thanks to Margit Bussmann (Greifswald), whose comments on the draft of this book significantly improved its clarity.

My way leading up to starting this project would not have been possible without the trust and confidence I received from my parents.

Above all, I am indebted to my wife and son for years of patience and support.

Foreword

At the end of the 20th century, as the Communist system faltered and collapsed, hopes for a peaceful future began to spur. Observers asked for what purposes modern nations needed large and powerful armed forces at all. However, the violent break-up of Yugoslavia amply proved that the demand for military readiness would not disappear any time soon. Western nations felt pressured to once again seriously consider – and eventually apply – military force.

Yet, in the post-Cold War era confrontations between nation-states proved to be the exception rather than the norm. Instead, keeping peace and providing security on foreign soil have become common activities for the militaries of Western nations. In recent missions to Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, or Mali international forces found themselves unable to pull out of theatre after the main adversaries had been overcome, lest the respective country slips back into turmoil. “Victory” in a symmetrical confrontation was followed by attempts at stabilization.

Many of these endeavors aim at aiding struggling governments incapable of resolving internal conflict and controlling civil strife. Tasks regularly comprise of military cooperation, aid, and training directed at dysfunctional local armed forces. Often forces operate within a comprehensive political framework, with other agencies simultaneously pursuing goals such as development and democratization. However, while there is no shortage of proclamations about the intended effects of externally assisted stabilization, we know little about how successful it actually is.

Julius Hess’ study poses a most vital question surrounding all these attempts: Which outcomes can we expect from the various approaches to assist struggling nations in controlling internal violence? Are they likely to work? The study seeks answers at a fundamental level: Why do many states of today’s world suffer from widespread internal violence – while other countries experience security on a level unheard of throughout most of human history? How did some societies manage to control the heretofore ever-present violence amongst their midst? Why did others fail to do so? What are the root causes of nations’ internal stability? And what do the findings tell us about the likelihood that our current attempts at aiding weak states will succeed?

Since the 1990s the Bundeswehr has been participating in missions aimed at stabilization and related purposes. As of yet, in 2020, German soldiers are deployed to twelve multinational missions. Since 2013 the Operations Survey and Support Division of the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social

Sciences (ZMSBw) has been conducting research on the foreign deployments of the German Armed Forces. Historians and social scientists shed light on how the Bundeswehr has engaged new tasks after the end of the Cold War – and how the involvement in multinational missions itself has shaped the organizational structure, the culture, and the identity of the German Armed Forces. Julius Hess' study adds a further, valuable perspective to our interdisciplinary portfolio: It shifts the focus from intervening military forces to the situation in the recipient countries, and it turns to quantitative evidence and statistical modeling on a grand, cross-national scale. The conclusions, however, are by no means abstract. On the contrary, they directly relate to public discourses concerning whether – and how – the international community and the Bundeswehr should intervene in internal conflicts and assist struggling nations.

The Bundeswehr are parliamentary armed forces. Democratically elected members of the Bundestag bear the burden to send servicemen and -women into military operations and missions abroad. The legitimacy of these endeavors crucially depends upon a broad, open debate about goals, means, and the probability of success. The study contributes to these debates by asking – and answering – fundamental questions about how external intervention in the domestic matters of struggling states can be made to work well as intended.

I would like to thank the author for taking on this thorny question and enriching our understanding of an issue of crucial importance. I wish to extend my thanks to the staff of the ZMSBw for smoothly bringing to fruition this outstanding project: Christian Adam and the editorial office; Christian Hartmann, Director of the Operations Survey and Support Division; Anja Seiffert, Head of the Operations Survey and Documentation Branch; and, last but not least, Michael Epkenhans, Director of Research and Deputy Commander of the ZMSBw.

Dr. Jörg Hillmann
Captain (Navy) and Commander
of the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences

1 Introduction

On January 7, 2015, two armed men stormed the premises of the French magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris and killed twelve persons, thus making the incident the deadliest act of terrorism in France since 1961 when 28 were killed in a train bombing. Two days later, after a massive manhunt involving tens of thousands of police, gendarmes, and military troops, the attackers were tracked down and killed in a brief firefight (Le Figaro 2015). Video footage of the operation shows heavily armed special gendarmerie and police forces leading the attack, helicopters circling and descending upon the hideout, as well as armored cars, personnel carriers, and dozens upon dozens of vehicles transporting troops and cordoning off the location.

On the same day of the Charlie Hebdo attacks, in northeastern Nigeria the killing of several hundred civilians by armed group Boko Haram culminated. The attacks had begun on January 3 with Boko Haram capturing the town of Baga from withdrawing Nigerian troops. Baga had been the last major town of the Borno province under the control of Nigerian forces. Reports on fatalities of the ensuing massacres vary widely, ranging from around 150 to more than 2000. This is to be added to the alleged 10,000 killed by Boko Haram before 2015. Satellite imagery shows Baga and surrounding towns torched and devastated (Amnesty International 2015). 35,000 are reported to have been displaced by the attacks. There are no reports of immediate countermeasures (AFP 2015; BBC 2015).

The Problem

Violence is inherent to us. It has been from the beginning. Regardless of whether it happens in broad daylight or is driven to the fringes of society, even the most pacified nations experience the occasional outbreak of lethal violence. Not even powerful, highly centralized France can forestall acts of mass murder, to say nothing of poor, dysfunctional Nigeria. The mere presence of lethal violence among human beings is no enigma. There is never a shortage of people seeking to pursue their goals by violent means.

What begs an explanation, however, is the crass difference in the *intensity* of violence across societies. The incidents on January 7, 2015, expose the diverging ways in which violence unfolds in highly developed nations like France, on the one hand, and in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria on the other. Twelve persons died in France on January 7 due to an isolated event of lethal violence whose

perpetrators were quickly put down. On the same day, hundreds died in Nigeria. Moreover, January 7 is just one snapshot of the collective violence that sub-state groups such as Boko Haram inflict upon Nigeria on a fairly constant basis. In the 25 years preceding the days of the Baga massacre, an average of 5600 persons were killed in Nigeria *each year*. This figure results from summing up the victims of civil war, terrorism, massacres, lethal state violence, gang warfare, criminal violence, and individualized murder. In contrast, regarding the same period and measure, a yearly average of around 800 persons were killed in France.

Consider now that Nigeria and France are not even the most extreme examples of violent and peaceful nations, respectively. To truly compare the intensity of intrastate violence one must put the absolute numbers of victims of violence in relation to the population size of states, thus generating a common yardstick to judge the extent to which societies are affected by lethal internal violence. Measured in this way, countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras, South Africa, Jamaica, or Swaziland reach the highest levels of violence. In all these nations up to or more than 40 people out of 100,000 population were killed each year on average from 1989 to 2014. Compare this with the most peaceful nations – Spain, Norway, Austria, Bahrain, Singapore, or Japan – where less than one person out of 100,000 population was killed each year on average over the same period. Hence, even after normalizing by population size and averaging over the course of 26 years the number of people getting killed in the most violent nations is more than 40 times that of the most peaceful societies. The global variation of internal violence as measured in this way is depicted in map 1.1.¹ Light and dark coloring indicates low and high fatality rates, respectively.

Why did only twelve persons die in France on January 7, 2015? Why did hundreds die in Nigeria? In a more general sense: What determines the global variation of internal violence? Why is lethal intrastate violence widespread in many places of the world, whereas in others it is virtually absent? That is the question this study is supposed to answer.

¹ The method of calculation is discussed in detail in Section 4.2.

Map 1.1: Total Intrastate Violence Fatality Rate (Fatalities per 100,000 Population), Mean Values, 1989–2014 (see Section 4.2)²



Solutions

What might account for the highly divergent levels of internal violence we observe in the world today? Let us stay with Nigeria and France for a little longer to illustrate different routes of explaining intrastate violence. No one would deny that France and Nigeria differ in many aspects that are plausibly connected to levels of internal violence. For instance, France is wealthy, with an average income of around 27,000 US Dollars (USD) in constant 2005 terms in the past 25 years.³ Nigerians are poor, with an average income of only 1,900 USD. To worsen matters, economic inequality is high in Nigeria, whereas it is exceptionally low in France. France has highly efficient, non-corrupt, and well-funded bureaucratic state institutions. In a ranking of the quality of government, France ranks 21st among 143 states. Nigeria is a highly corrupt state with a mostly defunct public sector. It ranks 132nd of 143 states. France is a fully matured democracy, whereas Nigeria strikes an uneasy balance between autocratic and democratic elements, neither of which

² Values are missing for territories such as Greenland, Svalbard, and Western Sahara.

³ All data cited in this section is discussed in Chapter 4.

amounts to a coherent political system. Consequently, Nigeria shows recurrent crises of political instability, whereas France does not. The territory of Nigeria is home to a multitude of ethnic communities. Although quite diversified, France is much more homogeneous. Lastly, add to this the legacy of a history of violence in Nigeria, of protracted conflict, and recurring outbreaks of large-scale lethal violence that fuel the conflicts of today and inspire a persistent culture of violence. All these factors might contribute to levels of internal violence being much higher in Nigeria than they are in France. Generally speaking, it is plausible that these economic, political, and social determinants go a long way in explaining the global, cross-national variation of fatality rates from intrastate violence.

However, there is another essential difference between France and Nigeria, one that might be less obvious but whose consequences are potentially enormous: Nigeria barely has any armed forces to speak of. Without the means to control its territory, to coercively enforce decisions, and to punish and deter rebels, violent entrepreneurs, criminal organizations, or ethnic communities in conflict, the Nigerian state is quite helpless in the face of serious challenges to its authority. As far as military, paramilitary, and police forces are concerned, Nigeria is a very weak state.

Again, the numbers are telling. Nigeria has roughly twice the population of France; the territory is more than 1.5 times as large. Still, on average, since the end of the Cold War the Nigerian armed forces consist of only around 85,000 men, whereas France, on average, has more than 380,000 active, full-time soldiers under pay. Nigeria has only around 800 operational armored fighting vehicles as opposed to France that maintains more than 5000 armored fighting vehicles. Thus, France disposes of roughly five times as many soldiers and mobile, land-based weapon systems as Nigeria, although it is much smaller. Most tellingly, however, France spends 54 times as much money each year on its military than Nigeria does. This budget allows the French armed forces to be much better equipped and trained and thus to be much more effective than the Nigerian armed forces. One can assume that also the soldiers' morale is therefore higher in France. In sum, France is militarily strong. Nigeria is militarily weak (and Nigeria is something like a military giant if compared to its neighbors). Additionally, the strength of the Nigerian police and paramilitary forces is far below the worldwide average as well.

These enormous differences are not without consequences. Even if they wish to, states like Nigeria do not dispose of the means to keep in check, punish, or fight down predatory sub-state groups such as criminal organizations, gangs, violent entrepreneurs, insurgents, and rebels. Hence, weak states like Nigeria tend to be plagued by high levels of violence by predatory sub-state groups. Moreover, the presence of predatory groups sets in motion the defensive mobilization of security-seeking, initially benign sub-state groups such as ethnic, community, kin, and

clan groups, villages, or townships. When a disinterested third party that is able to enforce rules, punish perpetrators and protect the population is missing, people are left to their own devices to provide for their security. In such a setting of domestic anarchy people typically seek the relative security of groups. Think of extreme cases of state weakness such as Somalia and Afghanistan, where group identities loom large and whole swathes of the national territory are controlled by sub-state entities such as kin groups, warlords, local strongmen, rebel groups, and criminal organizations rather than by the national government. Depending on country and region, types of sub-state groups vary widely, from drug cartels, narco-insurgents, gangs, and vigilante groups in Latin America, Islamic fundamentalists and terrorist groups in Central Asia and the Middle East, to rebels-cum-criminal entrepreneurs and ethnic militias in Sub-Saharan Africa, to name a few. Where state power ends, someone else's power begins. Sub-state groups take up the slack.

What these groups have in common is that they simultaneously provide a rough type of security to members and subordinates while often engaging in violent predation and intergroup clashes. To provide for security, groups resort to deterrence by the threat of retaliation as a crude mode of controlling violence. These attempts to establish order harbor a self-perpetuating dynamic that is marked by violence-condoning codes of honor, suspicion, preemptive aggression, revenge, and feuding. From criminal organizations to stateless territories – where there is no disinterested third party to appeal to, honor, reputation, and even notoriety are valued goods. As individuals rely on groups for the provision of security, defending the group's honor, status, or power becomes a rational strategy to deter future attacks and infringements.

It does not come as a surprise, then, that the most severe type of intrastate violence in the contemporary world is collective group violence – perpetrated either by politically motivated rebel groups openly vying for territorial control, by economically motivated criminal organizations and warlords, by gangs whose members are both profit- and security-seeking, or by community, ethnic, and kin groups, as well as villages and townships engaging in vigilante justice, retaliation, and aggressive self-defense against predators. This is the type of violence that besets the most violent nations in the world today. In contrast, lethal violence in low-violence societies such as Japan, Norway, or Singapore is predominantly composed of individualized acts of violence carried out for personal motives. Group violence does not play a large part here. A global analysis of intrastate violence thus amounts to a comparison of countries that are plagued by collective violence by sub-state groups to countries that are mostly free of collective violence by sub-state groups.

A state like Nigeria lacks the means to rein in predatory groups and protect security-seeking groups. Group identities and allegiances to sub-state groups are

highly salient; life is marked by a steadily high level of day-to-day violence interspersed by outbreaks of extreme violence. States like France overcame these conditions centuries ago by way of subjugating, disarming, and eliminating internal rivals. Today, strong states are able to repeat the process any time a rival to state rule dares rearing its head. As a result, internally, French society has remained largely pacified ever since its initial pacification. Nigeria, however, has never achieved this level of centralization and internal pacification and is up to this day unable to put down internal rivals.

To illustrate the point, think of January 7, 2015, again. In France the Charlie Hebdo attacks were carried out by only two individuals that were forced to prepare the deed clandestinely. As violence broke out, an army of persecutors was set in motion within a day's notice. In Nigeria, conversely, a group such as Boko Haram was able to openly defy state rule, freely communicate its existence and its goals, and control parts of the national territory for years. When they attacked Baga, it was the army who fled the rebels, leaving them a province to seize and hundreds of civilians to slaughter. What differs so strikingly between France and Nigeria is the opportunity of armed sub-state groups to organize, the impunity with which they are allowed to act, and consequently the number of people getting killed. There is never a shortage of people seeking to pursue their goals by way of violent means. The French state heavily constrains such ambitions; the Nigerian state does not.

The Hypothesis

To put it in more general terms, strong states constrain the actions of potential perpetrators of violence; weak states do not, because they cannot. It follows that the level of lethal intrastate violence systematically varies in accordance with state strength or, more precisely, with the state's coercive capacity, i.e. the resources the state disposes of to control violence on its territory. Intrastate violence refers to fatalities from internal violence of any kind – criminal violence, war, terrorism, repression, or genocide – per 100,000 population. This is assumed to be a monotonic negative relation: *The higher the state's coercive capacity, the lower its level of internal violence.* In other words, at the core of excessively high levels of internal violence that beset numerous nations in the contemporary world lies the weakness of states in terms of military, paramilitary, and police capabilities, i.e. deficient coercive capacity.

This negative relation between coercive capacity and internal violence is assumed to be independent of other determinants of internal violence such as norms, institutions, and culture, economic development, the population structure, traits

of the political system, or the quality of non-coercive state institutions. None of these determinants shall offset the violence-reducing effect of high coercive capacity.

The Literature

The mental figure that a powerful common authority reduces internal strife appears in both the contemporary political science and sociological research literature on violence. It features in classical sociological texts such as Norbert Elias' *The Civilizing Process* as well as seminal rationalist models of criminal behavior. It is emphasized by the neorealist strand of International Relations (IR) scholarship, it is a mainstay of the literature on state failure, and it has lately been underscored by anthropologists and archeologists investigating violence in pre-state societies. In the past decade it was furthermore brought forward by writers such as Steven Pinker and Ian Morris in popular science books on the decline of violence over the course of history. Ultimately, it goes all the way back to Thomas Hobbes' justification of secular state rule.

This entrenchment of the Hobbesian hypothesis in the scholarship on violence amongst human beings makes it all the more surprising that no thorough, comprehensive empirical investigation of the asserted relation between coercive state power and intrastate violence has been made to date. That said, two disciplines have produced sizable bodies of quantitative research on intrastate violence: sociology and sociological criminology primarily tackle non-political, homicidal violence while political science near-exclusively investigates political violence such as civil war. It is, now, highly problematic that both disciplines do not communicate with each other and seem rather content with sticking to their own, quite narrowly defined range of explananda, methods, and theoretical approaches. As a consequence, scholars from both disciplines have concluded that the effect of deterrent coercive capacity on intrastate violence is rather negligible if there is one at all. In this study it will be argued that this premature conclusion is an artifact of inadequate conceptualization, flawed operationalizations, and disciplinary myopia in general. If investigated comprehensively and thoroughly, there is indeed a strong and robust effect of coercive capacity on levels of intrastate violence.

This study approaches both the dependent variable – intrastate violence – and the independent variable – coercive capacity – in a way that markedly deviates from standard formulas of the political science and sociology literature. The next two sub-sections briefly review the two most important aspects that set this study apart from the extant scholarship.

Intrastate Violence: A Comprehensive Concept

To begin with, this is a study about violence, not a study about conflict or crime. Neither is political conflict nor are crime and deviant behavior the explananda of the study. Political science tends to perceive violent political conflict primarily as a sub-type of political conflict; sociology tends to perceive criminal violence primarily as a sub-type of criminal behavior. This study, in a way, inverts the spotlights: The explanandum is direct, physical violence, pure and simple. Politically motivated violence and non-political violence are considered sub-types of violence in general. Non-violent political conflict and non-violent crime, however, are of no immediate interest.

That said, the division between politically motivated and non-political violence does play a part in the following analyses, but only secondarily. The principal focus is on the constraints powerful states impose upon actors seeking to pursue their goals by way of violent means – whatever constitutes these goals. This approach is congruent with seminal theorems by thinkers such as Hobbes, Elias, Durkheim as well as significant parts of the more recent IR, anthropological, and Rational Choice (RC) scholarship on internal violence. Following these approaches, constraints amply dominate actor's motivations as an explanans of violence. Motivations to engage in violence are perceived to be rather ubiquitous and indeterminate; it is opportunities and constraints that decide whether actors act upon motivations.

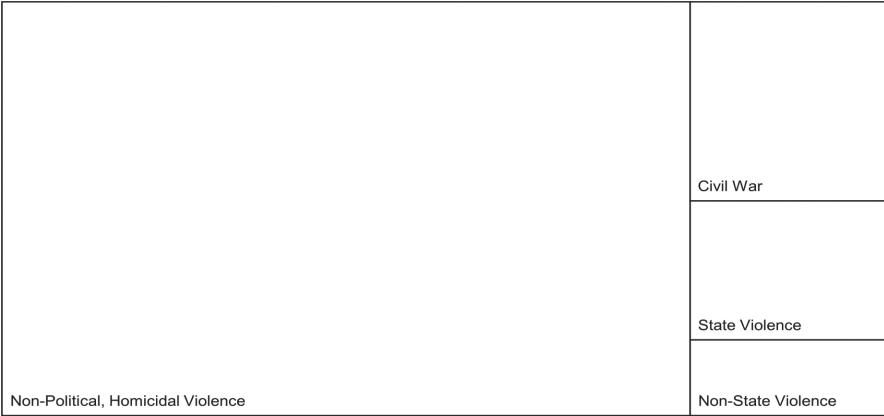
Hence, this study primarily aims at explaining *overall* levels of intrastate violence. Correspondingly, the main hypothesis outlined above posits a meaningful relation between coercive capacity and intrastate violence *in general*, i.e. the totality of phenomena of intrastate violence. By a second step, whether this general relation is also valid if one focuses the analysis on particular types of internal violence, such as civil war, terrorism, genocide, or homicide, will be scrutinized in the course of additional tests. Coercive capacity is allowed to affect political violence differently than it affects non-political violence. It is quite conceivable that the general relation between coercion and violence requires further qualification.

However, there is an unambiguous order of relevance among sub-dimensions of intrastate violence. In the contemporary world non-political, homicidal violence by far causes the most casualties of all types of intrastate violence. Figure 1.1 depicts the relative magnitudes. The area of rectangles is equivalent to the mean values of fatality rates from the respective sub-dimensions of intrastate violence in all sovereign states from 1989 to 2014.⁴ Counted as fatalities per 100,000 population,

⁴ In the subsequent sections the method of calculation, the definition of sub-types of intrastate violence as well as the exact figures will be discussed in detail.

non-political violence causes more than seven times as many fatalities as civil war, the second most severe type of intrastate violence. It causes more than ten times as many fatalities as violent state repression and genocide (state violence in Figure 1.1) and nearly 20 times as many fatalities as acts of violence by politically motivated non-state actors such as rebel groups, terrorists, and insurgents (non-state violence in Figure 1.1). These latter phenomena – civil war, state repression, genocide, violence by politically motivated non-state actors – qualify as political violence. Actors are formally organized, openly state the existence of their organization and publicly declare political goals of their actions.

Figure 1.1: Magnitudes of Fatality Rates (Fatalities per 100,000 Population) per Sub-Dimension of Intrastate Violence; Area of Rectangles Represents Size of Mean Values, 1989–2014



What does non-political, homicidal violence exactly mean? In the literature homicide is often equated with individualized murder, committed out of personal motives and thus falling within the area of the responsibility of lightly armed or unarmed police forces and the judicial system. To make it clear from the get-go, this conception of homicide is utterly flawed. It is only valid for already pacified societies. If applied to a global analysis, it leads to faulty conclusions. Homicide in France and homicide in places like Nigeria, El Salvador, Afghanistan, Brazil, South Africa, or Iraq are very different things. From a global perspective, non-political, homicidal violence primarily refers to collective violence of epidemic proportions, carried out by robustly armed strongmen and violent entrepreneurs, gangs and criminal organizations, drug cartels and mafias, or ethnic militias, clan, kin and

community groups engaging in feuds, retaliatory violence, or rough, informal vigilante justice. In stark contrast to pacified nations, lightly armed police forces of weak states are often no match for these groups. It is rather military forces that demarcate where state power ends and the power of sub-state formations begins (see below). In sum, non-political, homicidal violence typically refers to collective, large-scale violence. It qualifies as non-political because the perpetrators do not justify their actions with political goals or publicly claim responsibility for their deeds. This is the type of violence that causes most fatalities in the contemporary world. Only a small minority of sub-state groups openly declare political goals of their violent actions and organize in a formal way.

It is time to reiterate: A thorough investigation of the nexus between coercive capacity and intrastate violence has to start primarily at the most general level. The focus rests upon overall levels of internal violence. This is the level the theories of Hobbes and Elias and the many to follow operate on. An analysis that takes into account the totality of the phenomena of intrastate violence – regardless of motivation and politicization – is primarily an analysis of the determinants of non-political, homicidal violence, because total fatality rates from intrastate violence are primarily composed of the fatality rates of this sub-dimension of violence. It follows that an analysis of the relation between coercive capacity and intrastate violence in toto primarily provides insights into the relation between coercive capacity and non-political, homicidal violence. Therefore, by a second, additional step, further analyses will investigate whether the relation between coercive capacity and sub-types of intrastate violence deviates from the relation between coercive capacity and internal violence in general. This entails an investigation of whether coercive capacity is related to political violence in a different way than it is related to non-political violence.

The acknowledgment of the relevance of non-political violence sets this study apart from extant political science approaches to the investigation of intrastate violence. It aligns the study with recent pushes towards a comprehensive view on internal violence and threats to human security as, for instance, embodied in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations, like other non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental agencies, demand the reduction of "all forms of violence and related deaths everywhere," (UN 2016) no matter who the perpetrator is and in the name of which agenda people are killed.

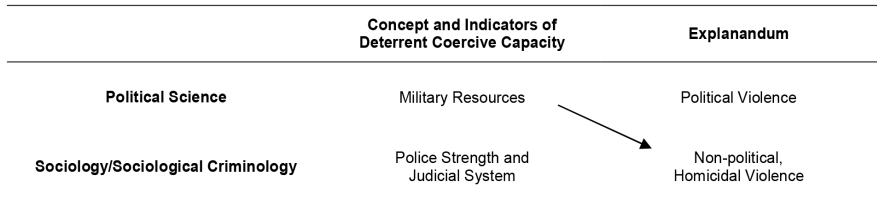
Coercive Capacity: Overcoming Disciplinary Myopia

Coercive capacity refers to the means the state disposes of to effect compliant behavior by force or threat of force. It is operationalized by the resources devoted to

the state’s security sector. In this study the focus is upon the military branch of the security sector. Police and paramilitary forces play a secondary role. As overall intrastate violence is predominantly composed of non-political, homicidal violence and military capacity is the most important sub-dimension of coercive capacity, the central hypothesis introduced above primarily relates *military* coercive capacity to *non-political, homicidal* intrastate violence.

This approach sharply contrasts the mainstream in both the political science and sociological literature on intrastate violence. Classically, political science applies military indicators as proxies for the state’s deterrent coercive capacity. These proxies are set in relation to indicators of political violence such as civil war onset. Save for a handful of exceptions, police and paramilitary forces are ignored. Conversely, the sociological and criminological quantitative literature near exclusively employs indicators on the police and judicial system to test the effect of the state’s deterrent capacity on violent crime. Military forces are all but ignored. When coupled with the fact that the political science literature largely blanks out non-political violence and sociological criminology largely ignores political violence, one gets a schema similar to that depicted in Figure 1.2. By and large, the two disciplines stick to exploring a very specific set of concepts, proxies, and range of phenomena. This study overcomes the disciplinary schism in two ways. First, it offers comprehensive views on both internal violence – encompassing political as well as non-political violence – and coercive capacity – taking into account military and non-military forces. Second, it truly bridges the gap between the political science and sociological research traditions by relating the explanatory apparatus of one discipline to the explanandum of the other. This is what the arrow in Figure 1.2 indicates. The study breaks new ground in relating the concept and indicators of *military* coercive capacity to the most severe phenomenon of violence in the world today: *non-political*, collective violence of epidemic proportions.

Figure 1.2: Concepts and Indicators in the Empirical Research on Coercive Capacity and Intrastate Violence



Why is this a promising strategy? Is not the police force the natural agent that deals with criminal violence, whereas the military is exclusively tasked with fighting real wars against highly organized external or, as an exception, internal foes? Why should one not stick to relating police indicators to homicide rates and military indicators to civil war risk and other indicators of political violence? First, the strict delimitation of areas of responsibility among the security agencies – with police forces preoccupied with internal security and military forces mostly confined to the external sphere – is a distinctively modern phenomenon. It presupposes the rule of law and an already established state monopoly of violence. Only societies that are largely pacified in the first place can hope to keep internal order with the help of lightly armed police forces; only societies with a firmly established rule of law can count on military forces adhering to the principle of non-interference in internal matters. These conditions are met in the industrialized world that went through the state-building processes that are typified by early modern Europe; in contemporary weak states, however, these conditions are not met. In many weak states of the developing world the delineation between the police and the military – to say nothing of paramilitary forces, militias, palace guards, and the like – is blurrier than in the West. Ignoring the role of the military in internal matters thus tilts an analysis of internal violence towards a Western-centric perspective.

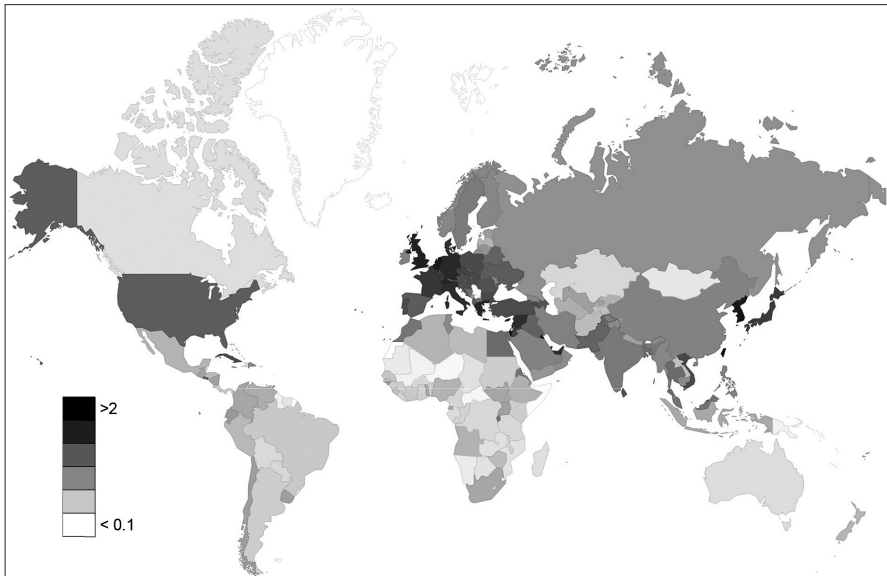
Second, on a global scale, non-political, homicidal violence is by no means the individualized, small-scale interpersonal violence that is typical of industrialized, largely pacified nations. As argued above, homicide rather refers to collective violence of epidemic proportions, perpetrated by sub-state groups that do not pursue political goals. It is utterly implausible, now, to relate military indicators to collective violence only if perpetrators proclaim political goals of their actions and to exclusively relate police indicators to collective violence carried out for non-political purposes. Politicization of acts of violence is no valid criterion for deciding which agent of the security sector is responsible for its deterrence and suppression. Rather, the size of the threat is a valid criterion for deciding which agent of the security sector is best suited for counteracting it. As argued above, many sub-state groups in the contemporary world outgun lightly armed police forces – from narco-insurgents to violent entrepreneurs, criminal organizations, rebels, and ethnic militias. If weak states lose territorial control to internal rivals, lightly armed police forces simply cannot do their job.

Lastly and most importantly, the military is the backbone of stateness, a state's last line of defense. It is not convincing to proxy coercive capacity using lightly armed forces that may be quickly replaced by better-armed troops once they are overwhelmed. In virtually all states the military is by far the largest and most heavily armed agent of the security sector. Military coercive capacity thus demarcates

the limits of statehood itself, the last resort of states that are existentially challenged by rivals. Military coercive capacity is utmost coercive capacity. It demarcates the line where the power of the state ends and the power of someone else begins. The police may be backed by the paramilitary. The paramilitary may be backed by the military. Beyond the military – a void.

The global variation of military coercive capacity is depicted in Map 1.2. Dark coloring indicates high military coercive capacity; light coloring represents militarily weak states. Values correspond to the coercive capacity index (CCI) that has been developed for this study (Section 4.3.2). The index combines figures of the financial, human, and material resources of the military and relates them to the territorial size of states. In many respects the resulting world map constitutes an inverted image to the global variation of internal violence illustrated in Map 1.1 above. From this first look at the empirical evidence a relation between the military coercive capacity of states and the respective rates of internal violence appears to be plausible.

Map 1.2: Military Coercive Capacity, Mean Values of Coercive Capacity Index, 1988–2013 (see Section 4.3.2)



Just as the acknowledgment of the relevance of non-political violence sets this study apart from the political science orthodoxy, the acknowledgment of the importance of the military in deterring non-political, homicidal violence is what sets it apart from extant sociological and criminological approaches to the study of intrastate violence.

What the Study Accomplishes

Hitherto, both political science and sociology have operated with too narrow a concept of both deterrent coercive capacity and intrastate violence. While empirical political science contributions have largely ignored non-political violence and agents of the security sector other than the military, sociology and sociological criminology have blanked out the role of the military as an agent of the security sector. As a consequence, there is yet no quantitative contribution that simultaneously defines intrastate violence comprehensively, explicitly includes deterrence as an explanatory concept, applies sound proxies for coercive state power, and employs adequate methods of cross-national statistical testing. The latter refers to a sufficiently large set of observations, the inclusion of control variables as proxies for rivaling explanation, as well as attention to temporal aspects of causality and reverse causality.

Disciplinary myopia and flawed conceptualization have led researchers of both camps to the faulty conclusion that the effect of deterrence on internal violence is negligible. The study illustrates that this alleged non-relation between deterrent state capacity and internal violence is a spurious finding. By comprehensively defining intrastate violence and applying an adequate concept of coercive capacity, it can be shown that deterrence by coercive capacity does in fact work. In this respect, the study breaks new ground for the investigation of the conditions that promote internal violence or – conversely – make societies more stable and peaceful.

A Short Overview of How the Study is Conducted

To achieve this goal the study investigates the statistical relation between coercive capacity and intrastate violence. Coercive capacity is basically defined by the number of military resources relative to the territorial size of states. Violence is measured by the number of human beings killed by direct, physical intrastate violence in relation to population size. The units of analysis are the sovereign states of the international system. The definition of statehood is thus not Weberian but empir-

ical; a fully realized monopoly of violence is not presupposed; rather, the extent of intrastate violence is the crucial dependent variable. The investigation focuses on the contemporary, post-Cold War world, covering the timeframe from 1988 to 2013. Data is analyzed via bivariate analyses and augmented Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models that take into account the time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) nature of the dataset. Rivaling explanations for the global variation of internal violence are covered by control variables which include traits and dynamics of political systems, poverty, inequality, population statistics, inertial effects of norms, institutions, and culture, and non-coercive state capacity such as bureaucratic quality, extractive capacity, and the legitimacy of rule. The principal hypothesis relates military coercive capacity to overall levels of total intrastate violence. A plethora of sub-analyses provides more fine-grained images of sub-dimensions of violence such as political violence and sub-dimensions of coercive capacity, such as police and paramilitary forces.

Further Contributions

First and foremost, this study answers a fundamental research question of both the political science and sociological study of intrastate violence: Does coercive state power reduce internal violence? While answering this most fundamental question, it also addresses a range of related issues: Are determinants of political and non-political intrastate violence identical? Which type of internal violence is coercive capacity most strongly related to? Is the police force or the military more effective with controlling intrastate violence? Which dimension of coercive capacity is most strongly connected to internal violence – financial resources, weapons and materiel, or sheer manpower?

Which phenomena of intrastate violence are the most lethal ones – civil wars, genocides, or non-political homicides? What is worse in terms of lethality – dictatorship or anarchy? Once coercive capacity is controlled for, do democracies show higher or lower levels of internal violence than autocracies? Does poverty drive up rates of violence? Are the poorest nations of the world the most violent ones? Is brute coercive power really needed to keep the peace if state institutions are effective and non-corrupt, legal systems just, and authority perceived as being legitimate? Is the effect of coercive capacity on internal violence the same in prosperous societies than it is in very poor nations? Are there interaction effects between political system types and state power? Do democracies need to rely on coercion or does the provision of non-coercive ways of conflict resolution render coercion obsolete?

Is there a causal pathway leading from coercive capacity to internal violence at all? Is it not rather the other way around: Do not armament and militarization provoke rebellion? Does not the waste of precious resources on defensive purposes exacerbate poverty that in turn increases internal violence? Talking about causality and temporal dynamics, does not internal violence feed upon itself and run in vicious circles? Are not cultures of violence impervious to any intervention? Do levels of internal violence change at all? Due to its comprehensive approach and use of adequate concepts and innovative proxies, this study provides fresh insights into all these issues of contemporary quantitative research on intrastate violence.

Fixing Democracy, Fixing the Economy, or Fixing the Military? Practical Implications

The questions posed in the preceding paragraphs coalesce into one grand issue: How do societies pacify? Which path shall violence-ridden nations take to solve their problems of internal insecurity? For the international community the issue translates into the question of whether and how it is possible to fix nations that are seemingly broken beyond repair. Once societal order has collapsed – and levels of internal violence are excessively high – is it possible for external actors to contribute to domestic security and internal pacification? What challenges and opportunities arise for governments seeking to assist foreign nations that are devastated by internal strife?

This is a question of practical relevance. Military aid as well as military training and assistance missions aim at strengthening the security sector of foreign nations. Current examples include the efforts of the international community in places such as Mali, Somalia, or Afghanistan, among others. This study serves for assessing the likely outcomes of the different strategies of such interventions. It may be read as a commentary on the plausibility and coherence of current attempts at state-building.⁵ What are the effects on internal violence if the security sector of foreign nations is strengthened, augmented, financially supported, better equipped, and armed? Which type of intervention promises the largest violence-reducing effect: fostering democracy abroad, pushing economic aid and promoting economic growth, or assisting and strengthening the military? How do investments in the security sector

5 In this study the term state-building is used for both pristine state-building, i.e. the process that has led to the emergence of states without outside interference, as well as state-building that is induced by external actors and aims at strengthening state institutions in the recipient nation (see the introduction to Chapter 2).

pay off under differing economic, political, and social framework conditions? How does the build-up of coercive capacity interact with simultaneous pushes towards democratization? Which dilemmas do donor governments face domestically when caught between democratic accountability at home and the genuine will to fix the problems of foreign nations and alleviate the suffering of peoples abroad? In short, what approaches to reduce internal violence abroad promise to work best, and what problems are state-builders likely to run into?

The Research Plan

All questions raised in this section will be answered in the conclusion (Chapter 6). The line of reasoning that links this introduction with the conclusion is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theoretical and empirical approaches that are relevant for the fundamental research question regarding the relation between coercive state power and internal violence. Section 2.1 lays out the basic rationalist logic of internal violence. The causal pathway from coercive capacity to intrastate violence is modeled by game-theoretical and RC approaches to the subject matter. These are substantiated and illustrated by the criminological, anthropological, and IR scholarship on the dynamics of intergroup violence and an overview of their ultimate intellectual source material, Hobbes' *Leviathan*. Lastly, these rationalist concepts are confronted with classical sociological, norm-based approaches to deterrence and violence amongst human beings. At the end of Section 2.1 an explanatory model linking internal violence to coercive capacity is ready to be tested via empirical data analysis.

A first test of plausibility is provided in Section 2.2. The history of violence in human civilization is outlined by quantitative contributions by disciplines such as archeology, anthropology, history, and historical criminology. The waxing and waning of violence in history serves as a kind of natural experiment concerning the plausibility of Hobbesian thought. Section 2.3 complements the preceding section on the history of violence by providing a brief history of state-building. Analyses of state-building in Europe and elsewhere illustrate the massive surge of coercive capacity and the concomitant suppression of internal violence, the relevance of military resources in the process, and how diverging paths of state-building have led to stark differences between strong and weak states in the contemporary world. Thus, the section explores how strong states have become strong and why weak states have remained weak.

Up to this point, the nexus of coercive capacity and intrastate violence has been illustrated and substantiated from various angles and disciplines. However, none of

the approaches statistically tests the central hypothesis adequately: Data is confined to the past; what is more, proper statistical analyses must control for alternative explanations that enhance, substitute, or run counter to Hobbesian logic. Forced pacification by coercion is probably not the only mechanism that has contributed to the decrease of violence over the course of history. Section 2.4 thus discusses quantitative cross-national studies on the link between coercive capacity and intrastate violence. As it turns out, the field is compartmentalized with sociology and criminology covering non-political, homicidal violence and political science, conflict and peace studies covering political violence. In general, both disciplines do not communicate with each other. Attempts to bridge the gap and develop a comprehensive view on internal violence either lack statistical testing of hypotheses or omit deterrent logic as an explanatory concept. There is thus no firm empirical basis yet to decide whether Hobbesian logic contributes to the cross-national variation of internal violence in the contemporary world. Chapter 2 closes with the designation of this research gap (Section 2.5).

Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical fundamentals of an adequate quantitative test of Hobbesian logic. Section 3.1 defines which phenomena qualify as lethal intrastate violence and which do not. It furthermore discusses ways of expressing intensities of societal violence by metric indicators. Section 3.2 justifies the choice of states as units of analysis and juxtaposes concepts such as Weberian stateness, legitimacy, state capacity, and coercive capacity, followed by an in-depth discussion of sub-dimensions, properties, and proxies of coercive capacity. Section 3.3 presents a framework that integrates the concepts discussed heretofore. The framework defines actors carrying out intrastate violence and types of intrastate violence. The chapter closes with the formulation of the main hypothesis and additional hypotheses concerning sub-dimensions of intrastate violence and sub-dimensions of coercive capacity.

Chapter 4 explores technical and statistical aspects of the research design by discussing the dataset (Section 4.1), indicators of intrastate violence (Section 4.2), and proxies for coercive capacity (Section 4.3). After that, rivaling explanations for the cross-national variation of intrastate violence and suitable control variables are outlined (Section 4.4). The chapter closes with the development of an adequate statistical model (Section 4.5).

Chapter 5 presents the bivariate (Section 5.1) and multivariate (Section 5.2) results of statistical tests as well as a range of checks for robustness and interaction effects (Section 5.3). Further sections test the strength of the negative relation between coercive capacity and internal violence regarding different sub-dimensions of coercive capacity (Section 5.4) and sub-dimensions of internal violence (Section 5.5).

Chapter 6 summarizes these findings and explores how they contribute to our understanding of intrastate violence. As a matter of fact, results contradict conventional assumptions regarding the relation between coercion, violence, democracy, and economic development (Sections 6.1 and 6.2). After discussing the limitations of the approach and future routes for the research on internal violence (Section 6.3), Section 6.4 eventually considers practical implications and highlights dilemmas of contemporary efforts to assist foreign nations through military aid and assistance. As it turns out, democratic governments are particularly constrained when it comes to fostering military capacity building abroad.