

WAR AND RECONCILIATION

PETER BRECKE and WILLIAM J. LONG

*The Sam Nunn School of International Affairs
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA 30332-0610, USA*

(In final form March 2, 1998)

Many scholarly disciplines as well as popular opinion recognize reconciliation as a powerful force in restoring social order following conflict. Reconciliation between countries following a war or a series of wars has attracted little attention from international relations scholars, however. This paper uses four international events datasets developed by others and a reconciliation events dataset assembled by the authors to determine whether reconciliation events lead to a discernable decrease in the level of conflict between former belligerents. The results suggest that reconciliation events signal a change towards more cooperative and less conflictual bilateral relations in a number of cases. The impact of reconciliation is hardly uniformly positive, however, and limitations of the data constrain what can be asserted. The paper concludes with thoughts on continuing this inquiry to determine the forces that give rise to reconciliation and the factors that might explain the variance in the dependent variable—post-reconciliation relations between former belligerents.

KEY WORDS: reconciliation, conflict settlement, events data

INTRODUCTION

Since the writings of Hobbes and Locke, a fundamental political question has been why individuals enter into, and how they maintain, civil society despite competition and conflict among individual actors. A variety of formal and informal work acknowledges the tension between aggressive behavior and societal harmony and points to the importance of *reconciliation*—returning

to peace, harmony, or amicable relations after a conflict—as integral to mitigating future violence and maintaining societal stability.

Consider three recordings of the role of reconciliation in very disparate “societies.” The first incident is described by ethologist Frans de Waal (de Waal, 1989, p. 5). He recalls witnessing a fight in the chimpanzee colony of the Arnhem Zoo:

It was the winter of 1975 and the colony was kept indoors. In the course of a charging display, the dominant male attacked a female, which caused screaming chaos as other chimpanzees came to her defense. When the group finally calmed down, an unusual silence followed, with nobody moving, as if the apes were waiting for something. Suddenly the entire colony burst out hooting, while one male worked the large metal drums in the corner of the hall. In the midst of the pandemonium I saw two chimpanzees kiss and embrace... the embracing individuals had been the same male and female of the initial fight.

A second observation comes from the seventeenth century letters of American author Samuel Sewall (Hendrickson, 1987, p. 90). He captured the following ceremony of native Americans of the northeast colonies in 1680:

Meeting with the Sachem they came to an agreement and buried two axes in the ground... which ceremony to them is more significant and binding than all the Articles of Peace, the hatchet being a principle weapon.

Three centuries later, contemporary historian Hendrick Smith described the signing of a peace treaty and the public joining of hands between President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel, and President Jimmy Carter of the United States (Smith, 1979, A1):

The elusive, unprecedented peace treaty that Egypt and Israel signed today has enormous symbolic importance and the potential for fundamentally transforming the map and history of the entire region... the best diplomatic estimate here is that the treaty has markedly reduced the risk of a major war in the Middle East for a considerable time...

Notably, each description contains the implicit or explicit hypothesis that future violence is less likely to occur, and “societal” order more likely to be restored, if the parties to a conflict engage in a formal, public process of reconciliation.

The impact of reconciliation is portrayed in a very different manner in Fig. 1. Figure 1 depicts a summary of the actions or messages by or from the Soviet Union towards West Germany for the period January 1948 to October 1978. Each dark vertical bar portrays a measure of the behavior of the Soviet Union towards West Germany for one month during that period. A tall bar indicates a conflictual month. A short bar indicates a month with relatively less conflict. A bar that extends below zero indicates a month in which the cooperative acts outweigh the conflictual acts. A horizontal gap between vertical bars (except for an extremely narrow gap) indicates a month or months in which there was no recorded act by the Soviet Union towards West Germany (or the quite unlikely possibility that the conflictual acts were precisely counterbalanced by the cooperative acts).¹

The long, lighter vertical bar towards the right demarcates the time of a "reconciliation event," more specifically, August 12, 1970, when the Soviet Union and West Germany signed a treaty acknowledging the permanence of the (then) current borders.² This achievement of Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* was hoped and expected to lead to improved relations between the two countries. According to Fig. 1, those expectations were to a significant extent realized. The vertical bars after August 1970 are on average noticeably shorter than those before that month. Moreover, there are four times as many months in which the measure is in the cooperative

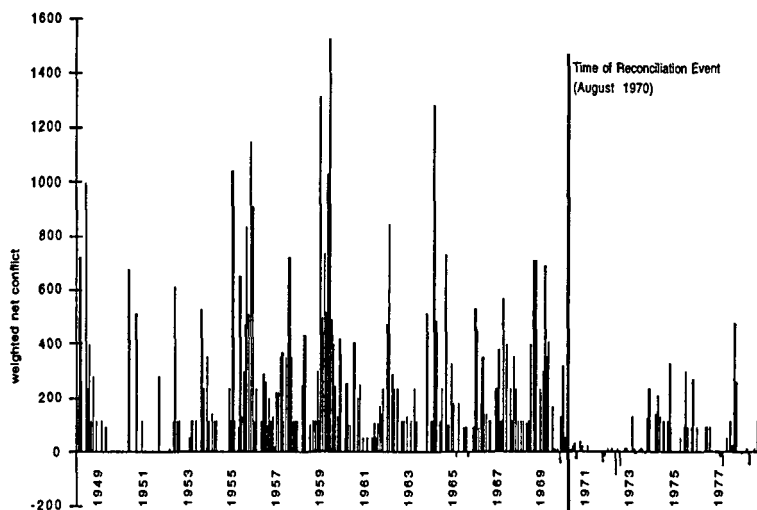


Figure 1. Relationship of USSR towards West Germany

range (negative) after the reconciliation event compared to before the event (16 versus 4) even though the time from August 1970 to October 1978 is just slightly more than one-fourth of the entire period of time depicted in the figure. In sum, the behavior of the Soviet Union towards West Germany appears less conflictual and more cooperative after the reconciliation event.

"Time-series" plots such as Fig. 1 are useful because they enable us to easily visualize the basic dynamics of the behavior of one country towards another over a significant period of time. Moreover, the information in Fig. 1 complements the examples presented earlier because it visually expresses in a scientifically replicable form the explicit or implicit hypothesis found in those examples that reconciliation reduces future conflict. A noticeable "drop" in the vertical bars at the time of a reconciliation would indicate that the reconciliation had an impact. Because of this feature, these plots, by depicting the presence or absence of reconciliation-related changes, will help us address what role or impact, if any, reconciliation has at the level of "international society."³ If reconciliation appears to lead to less conflictual relations, then further investigation into the circumstances that prompt reconciliation attempts and the factors that contribute to, or detract from, a reconciliation's ability to reduce bilateral conflict merit further investigation.⁴

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Despite pervasive references to reconciliation in popular discussions of intra and international conflicts,⁵ the notion that reconciliation is an important determinant of subsequent relations between states is a powerful assumption, yet one wholly unexamined in international relations theory. Generally, international relations theory has ignored reconciliation between states as a phenomenon affecting interstate conflict. Those working at the "third image" or *structural* level do not, by definition, recognize reconciliation events—symbolic and purposeful acts by *agents* representing states—as important to understanding interstate conflict.

Even those who look for the *origins* of conflict in individuals, and from this point of departure draw inferences to the behavior of groups (such as states), have not directly considered the role of reconciliation in international relations. This group, which includes social psychologists, biologists, and game and decision-making theorists, does provide tools, however, for extrapolating hypotheses on how reconciliation might reduce the subsequent level of conflict between former belligerents and lead to an

improvement in bilateral relations. Specifically, two different explanations for why reconciliation might have this effect on international relations emerge from these theoretical traditions.

The first hypothesis derives from rational choice and game theoretic approaches to explaining cooperative outcomes. Game theorists specify possible outcomes from the interaction of rational actors seeking to “win,” i.e., achieve desired strategies and goals. This approach stresses that the best strategy for breaking a pattern of hostile interactions is through the sending of signals that provide a measure of commitment to the pursuit of improved relations (Armstrong, 1993; Komorita, 1973; Swinth, 1967). Reconciliation events or gestures are particularly effective forms of this type of signal because reconciliation is costly to the participants, and *costly* signals are more reliable determinants of a state’s true intentions than low-cost or cost-free signals.

Reconciliation events impose costs because of their “audience effect” (Fearon, 1990). Leaders do not conduct foreign policy in isolation, but before domestic and international audiences. Concern with adverse domestic political reaction to a reconciliation event with a former adversary or with domestic political humiliation should a leader decide to subsequently back down from an agreement are important domestic audience costs associated with a reconciliation attempt. Likewise, risking opprobrium from third states that may disapprove of the reconciliation or facing the loss of international reputation should the party to a reconciliation event retreat from the agreement also imposes significant international audience costs associated with a reconciliation attempt.

In sum, a reconciliation event is a costly (or potentially costly) signal that the other party is more likely to interpret as a genuine offer to improve relations and thus may break a deadlocked conflictual situation. Because of the associated costs of backing away from the reconciliation, it may also buttress initial attempts of the parties at cooperative interaction.⁶ Social science, since the work of J. David Singer, has argued that for one state to perceive another as a threat it must see the latter as having both the capability and the intent to block the attainment of one’s desired strategies and goals (Singer, 1969). Thus, by making costly (and therefore trustworthy) signals indicating a less hostile intent, reconciliation reduces threat perception between states (other things being equal) and permits an improvement in relations.

Philosophical and psychological treatments of reconciliation offer an alternative hypothesis. These approaches argue that important social practices are direct outgrowths—in institutional form—of deep human passions or emotions (Murphy and Hampton, 1988) not merely rational calculations.

Reconciliation events, therefore, are evidence of "forgiveness"—the process of overcoming certain psychological attitudes (mainly the overcoming of various forms of anger or resentment). They represent a change of heart towards a formerly perceived wrongdoer that opens the possibility of new, beneficial relations. Forgiveness is not the condoning of the former belligerent's action; it is a revision in judgment of the former belligerent itself. The parties to a reconciliation come to understand themselves as something other than those incidents or traits which they do not approve.

According to this hypothesis, although cognitive judgments and strategy may be involved in the process of reconciliation, the process also represents the overcoming of collective emotions. Reconciliation requires: (1) regaining one's confidence in one's own worth despite the actions (aggression) that may have challenged it; and, (2) the repudiation of emotions of resentment toward the other and the willingness to see the other as someone other than "the one that hurt me" (Murphy and Hampton, 1988, p. 34).

However intriguing hypothesizing about reconciliation might be, further research about war and reconciliation must await an empirical investigation of the question: do reconciliation events *have* a discernible, positive impact on bilateral relations between former belligerents? The method for exploring that question is the subject we turn to next.⁷

PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS AND DATA SOURCES USED

The analytical approach of this paper consists of the following five steps:

1. Identify the interstate wars that would have created belligerents that might subsequently reconcile;
2. Identify the pairs of countries who opposed each other in those wars to determine the specific dyads that might reconcile;
3. Generate plots like Fig. 1 for each of those dyads;
4. Find any reconciliation events that had occurred between the members of the dyads;
5. Demarcate the time of the reconciliation events on the appropriate plots.⁸

The result of executing these five steps is a before and after "picture" of bilateral relations between former belligerents that experienced a reconciliation event.

To accomplish those steps, we combined three sets of information. The first is a catalogue of interstate wars from 1888 to 1991. This file contains

the interstate wars that were fought in the time period potentially relevant to our events datasets, whose data span the period 1948 to 1992, and the participants of those wars. We obtained our list of wars and major participants—and thus dyads—from the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDS) dataset (version 2.10) that is available on the Internet at: [http://www.polsci.binghamton.edu/peace\(s\)/mid_data.htm](http://www.polsci.binghamton.edu/peace(s)/mid_data.htm) and whose nature is described in Gochman and Moaz (1984) and Gochman and Leng (1988). From that dataset we extracted a list consisting of 53 interstate wars. That list and the other lists generated for this paper are available from the authors or can be retrieved from the Internet at <http://www.inta.gatech.edu/peter/reconcile.html>. From that list we identified 114 country dyads for whom a reconciliation was—at least in principle—feasible. Dyad members had to have fought against each other in at least one war. In many instances dyad members had fought multiple wars in the time frame of the study.

The time period 1888 to 1991 for the list of wars is not obvious and merits explanation. We used that period to address time lags. The end year was chosen because a war has to have concluded before a reconciliation event, and since the events data we had in all but a few cases ended in 1992, 1991 was the last practicable year. The start year was determined by first selecting an *upper* limit in the time delay for what can be considered a reconciliation. To make that selection, the question is how far back in the past can a war have taken place for a reconciliation to still be meaningful? That the participants in the war need to still be alive is one possible criterion. A gap of 60 years is a reasonable upper limit for participants in a war to still be in positions to make a reconciliation for their countries (18 years old as soldiers and 78 years old as statesmen). In that light, 60 years is a plausible upper limit.⁹ Because our events datasets that record bilateral relations begin at 1948; a 60-year delay puts us back to wars beginning as early as 1888.

The second set of information is reconciliation events. We assembled a dataset of reconciliation events between the countries in the dyads identified from the MIDS dataset. These data have been collected by the authors from historiographic study of each of the countries and their relationships with their dyadic “partners” subsequent to the wars between them. We then coded each dyad for reconciliation or its absence.

The third set of information is the status or condition over time of the relationship between the countries in the dyads. This status is measured in terms of the behavior of each country towards its dyad partner. We obtained measures of these relationships from four sources. The first two are the COPDAB and WEIS datasets (Azar, 1980a; Azar, 1980b; Davies and McDaniel, 1994; Tomlinson, 1993; Tomlinson, 1996). Both of these

datasets are well known and have been used for a number of studies. They store in chronological sequence the history of reported cooperative and hostile acts directed from individual countries to other individual countries. COPDAB covers the period 1948–1978, and WEIS covers the period 1966–1992. While the datasets differ in many significant ways, they are broadly similar in how they track the behavior of countries towards each other (Reuveny and Kang, 1996). With the advent of the Goldstein scale (1992) for the WEIS coding scheme, both datasets now have numeric values for each event that are a measure of the degree of “cooperativeness” or “hostility” of the event. Thanks to the numeric scales, it is a straightforward matter to generate comparable time series plots for the relationships.

We accessed two additional, similar datasets to obtain data more recent than 1992. The Levant dataset (available at <http://www.ukans.edu/~keds/>) contains a chronology of dyadic, interstate events in the Middle East from April 1979 to February 1997 (at the time of this writing) condensed to their WEIS code values (Schrodt and Gerner, 1997). An ancillary datafile has those events summed for each month and converted to Goldstein scale values. We used the ancillary dataset. In addition, we received data from the PANDA dataset pertaining to a number of dyads for the period 1984 to 1995 (Bond and Bond, 1995). These data for all but a small subset of events had been coded to the Goldstein scale. One of the authors converted that subset manually; the decisions made regarding the coding of those events are available from the authors.

From these datasets we selected the flows pertaining to the conflict dyads that we identified from the MIDS dataset. In combination with the reconciliation events data, the time-series of these flows provide the information with which we can generate plots such as Fig. 1 and determine whether a reconciliation event corresponded with a change in the relations between countries. The task of combining different kinds of data reduced the sample size significantly. Table I identifies which dyads are addressed by any of the four chronological events datasets *and* the reconciliation events dataset. Table I presents when warfare among the dyad participants last occurred, when the reconciliation event took place, and the events dataset(s) used for our analysis.

To address our research question—does a reconciliation event appreciably change the level of conflict between former belligerents, our primary goal in this first study was simple visual analysis. To obtain a “picture” of the impact of reconciliation, our procedure was as follows:

1. plot the dyadic relationships over time;
2. for those cases that had reconciliations, demarcate the time of the reconciliation on the plot;

TABLE I
Set of Reconciliation Events

Dyad	End of Conflict	Reconciliation Event	Dataset Used*
(1) USSR–W. Germany	5/45	8/70	C, W
(2) W. Germany–Poland	5/45	12/70	C, W
(3) USA–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(4) Japan–UK	8/45	4/52	C
(5) China–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(6) India–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(7) France–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(8) Australia–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(9) Greece–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(10) New Zealand–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(11) South Africa–Japan	8/45	4/52	C
(12) India–China	11/62	12/88	W, P
(13) Honduras–El Salvador	7/69	10/80	W
(14) USA–Vietnam	1/73	7/95	P
(15) Israel–Jordan	10/73	10/94	L
(16) Egypt–Israel	10/73	9/78	W
(17) Ethiopia–Somalia	3/78	4/88	W
(18) Cambodia–Vietnam	1/79	10/91	P
(19) Uganda–Tanzania	4/79	2/81	W
(20) Vietnam–China	3/79	10/91	P
(21) UK–Argentina	6/82	3/90	P

* C stands for COPDAB, L for Levant, P for PANDA, and W for WEIS.

3. visually inspect the plots to determine if the plots indicate a change corresponding to the reconciliation.

Our reasoning was that if we (or anyone else) could not see a change, it would be hard to convince anyone that a change had occurred because of a reconciliation, and further investigation into whether and why reconciliation has an impact in bilateral relations would be difficult to justify.

METHOD FOR GENERATING VISUAL ANALYSIS PLOTS

One of the authors wrote FORTRAN programs to extract the appropriate data from three of the events datasets to generate time-series plots. (The fourth dataset, the datafile ancillary to the Levant dataset already had the

data in the form needed for analysis.) The programs accomplished effectively two tasks. The first program extracted from the datasets those events that were directed from one selected country to another, (for the WEIS dataset converted those events to numerical values using the Goldstein scale¹⁰), separately summed the numerical values for the cooperative and conflictual events for each month, and then calculated a monthly weighted net conflict (conflict minus cooperation) measure. The result of running this program would be a datafile containing the monthly cooperation, conflict, and net conflict “flows” from one country to another for those months for which there were any events from one of the countries to the other.

The second program “padded” the datafiles with zeros for those months for which there were no reported events so that the plots would be linear from the first month of recorded events within the datafile to the last month of recorded events.¹¹ The padded datafiles were then imported into Excel on a Macintosh, and the time series were plotted. For those dyads for which we found a reconciliation event, a line was drawn on the plots demarcating the time of the event.

The resulting plots contain “spikes” or vertical bars that portray the level or intensity of cooperative, conflictual, and net conflictual interaction for each month for which interaction was reported. All figures used in this paper present plots of only the net conflict measure. For the purpose of our study, the scale of the vertical axis of the figures is not as important as is any change in the nature of the spikes around the time of the reconciliation event.

RESULTS OF THE VISUAL ANALYSIS

Unfortunately, only a limited number of cases offered clear visual evidence of the impact of reconciliation. The temporal span or “window” of the relationship data (primarily 1948–1992 with a few instances up to 1995 or 1997) was, in many instances, “in the wrong place” to allow for accurate comparisons between pre- and post-conflict relations. Of the 21 reconciliation events in the period 1948–1995, nine occurred in 1951–52 (cases 3–11 in Table I), and two occurred in 1994–95 (cases 14 and 15 in Table I); periods effectively at the end of the time series plots. In these cases we found it impossible to adequately determine whether there was a change in behavior between pre- and post-conflict periods because there were insufficient observations between 1948 and 1952 or after 1994 to provide a sound reference point for comparison. See Fig. 2 (Japan–United Kingdom) for illustration. Furthermore, of the ten remaining cases, two

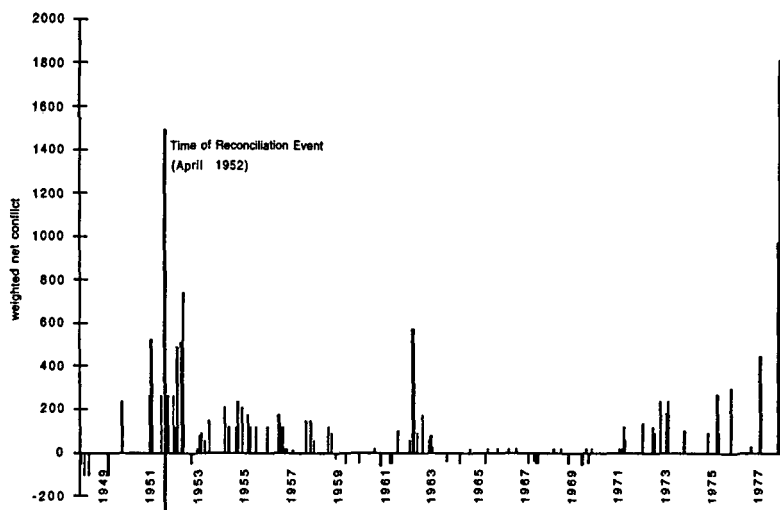


Figure 2. Relationship of Japan towards the United Kingdom

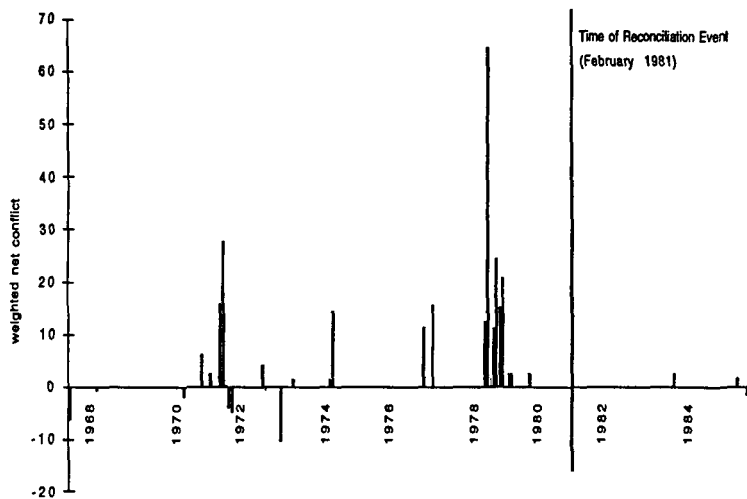


Figure 3. Relationship of Uganda towards Tanzania

(cases 17 and 19 in Table I) had insufficient data to create a meaningful graphic representation of the relationship.¹² See Fig. 3 (Uganda-Tanzania) for illustration.

We found through visual inspection of the eight workable reconciliation cases, four dyads where a reconciliation event signaled a subsequent improvement in bilateral relations (cases 1, 12, 16, and 20 in Table I). See Figs. 1 (USSR-West Germany) and 4-6 (India-China, Egypt-Israel, and China-Vietnam) for illustrations. Figure 1 was described earlier. Figure 4, while not a strong case because of sparse data, does display a shift in the ratio of "conflictual" as opposed to "cooperative" months when the reconciliation event is used as a divider. Figure 5 provides strong evidence that the reconciliation between Egypt and Israel led to an improvement in relations. The peaks of hostile relations between the countries before the reconciliation far exceed those for the months of hostile relations after that time. Figure 6 demonstrates that the relationship between reconciliation and dyadic relations may be more complicated than a simple before-after step down in net conflict. While net conflict is indeed lower after the reconciliation, initial observation suggests that the improvement in relations really began considerably (perhaps 30 months) earlier. This outcome may indicate that in some instances a reconciliation event is only one step in a process of improving relations, rather than a turning point or breakthrough.

Three dyads (cases 13, 18, and 21 in Table I) did not provide visual evidence that a reconciliation subsequently leads to reduced conflict between former belligerents. Figures 7-9 (United Kingdom-Argentina,

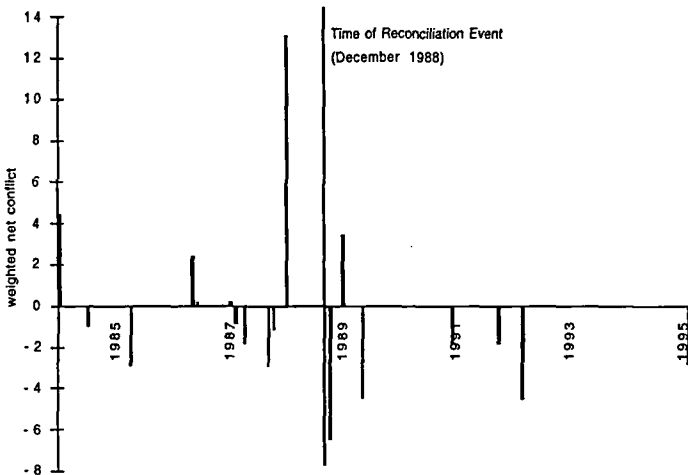


Figure 4. Relationship of India towards China

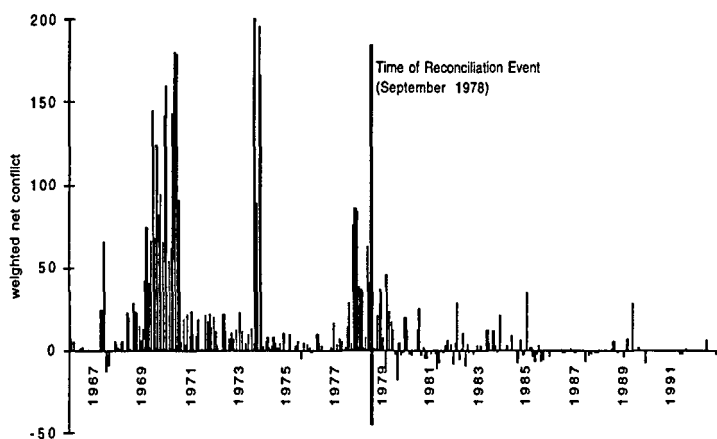


Figure 5. Relationship of Egypt towards Israel

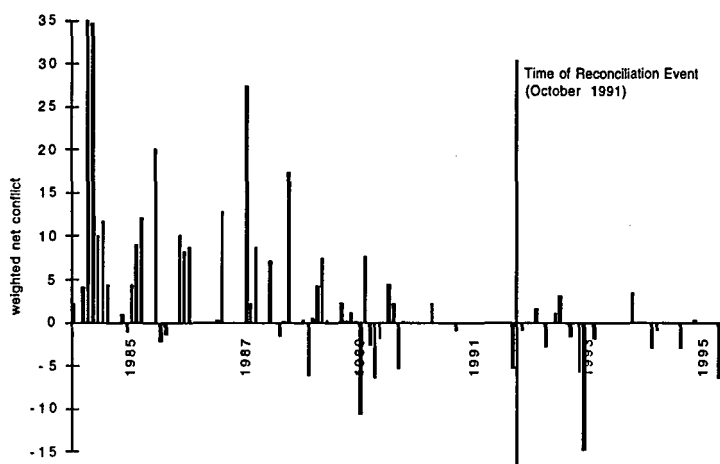


Figure 6. Relationship of China towards Vietnam

Cambodia–Vietnam, Honduras–El Salvador) give little or no indication that relations improved or deteriorated following the reconciliation event.

Also of interest are Figs. 10 and 11 that portray the relationship of Poland towards West Germany from the perspective of two different events datasets, COPDAB and WEIS, respectively. Figure 10 indicates that relations improved approximately four years after the reconciliation, which stretches any definition of the reconciliation having a proximate impact. In

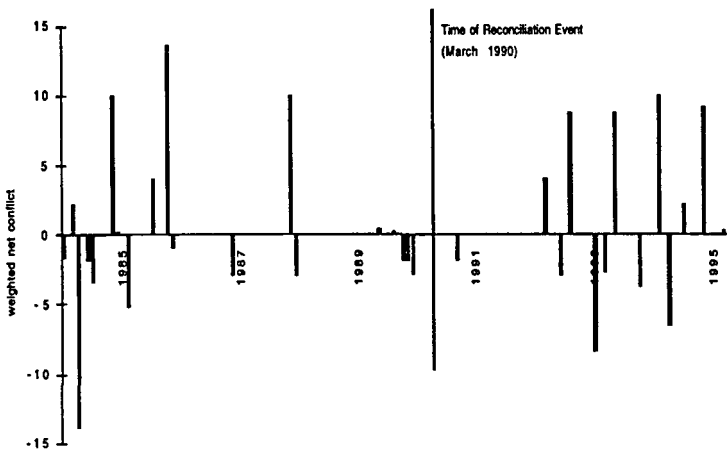


Figure 7. Relationship of the United Kingdom towards Argentina

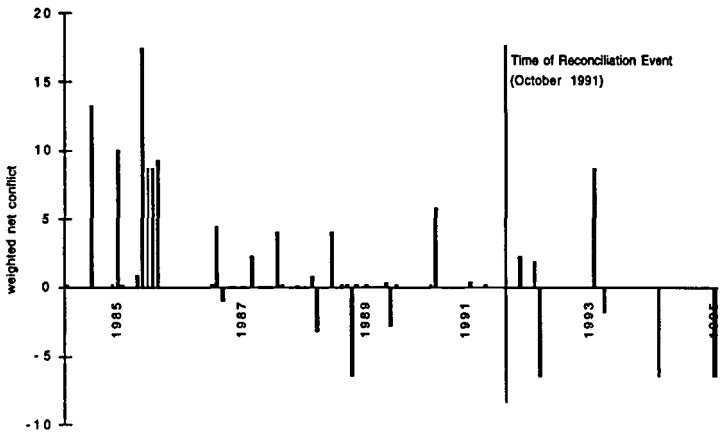


Figure 8. Relationship of Cambodia towards Vietnam

contrast, Fig. 11 depicts an improvement in relations corresponding with the reconciliation followed by a deterioration of relations such that by seven years later cooperative relations had vanished. This outcome is of interest because it illustrates another possible facet of the relationship between reconciliation and dyadic relations. A reconciliation event may mark a breakthrough or turning point in relations, but the positive effect of

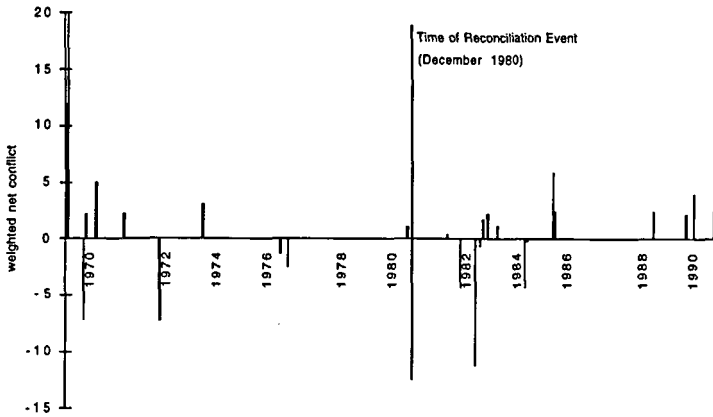


Figure 9. Relationship of Honduras towards El Salvador

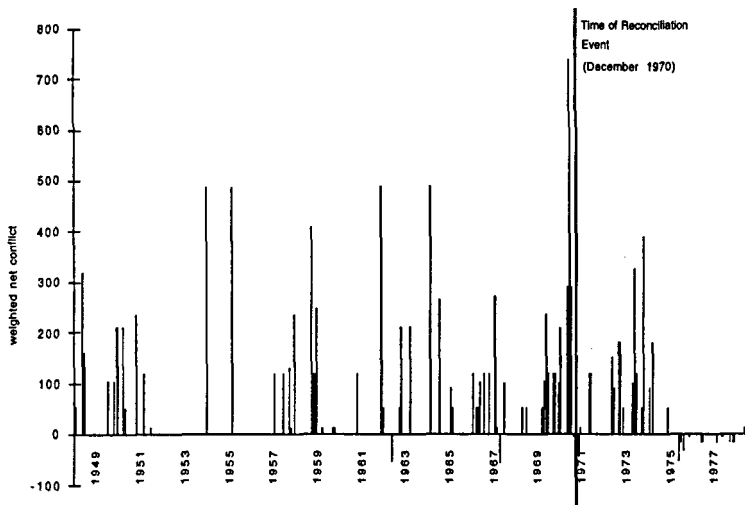


Figure 10. Relationship of Poland towards West Germany

that event is not long-lasting. Even Fig. 1, while it depicts a real improvement in relations after the reconciliation, indicates that the impact of a reconciliation can erode over time.

That the two datasets portray the relationship between Poland and West Germany so differently is a cause of some concern. The difference is

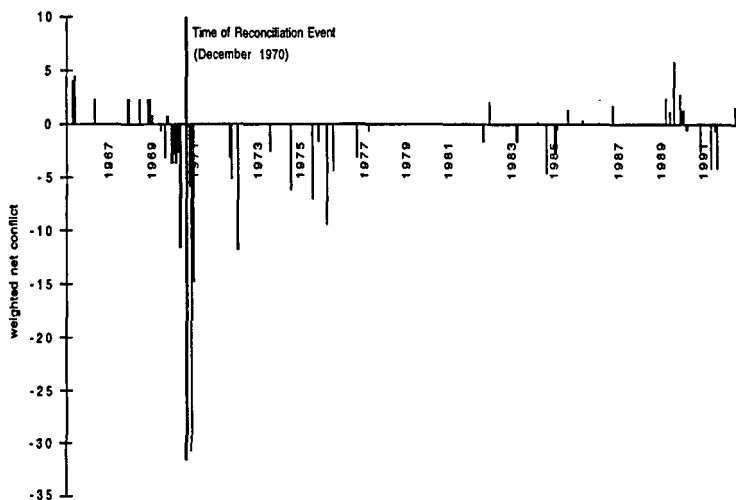


Figure 11. Relationship of Poland towards West Germany

probably an artifact of the different data sources used to construct the two datasets, and its existence should temper efforts to combine the two datasets for long-term analysis of dyadic relations (Reuveny and Kang, 1996). Certainly when examining individual dyads, researchers should inspect the overlap of the two datasets with great circumspection.

THOUGHTS ON FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The results of our attempted “large n” study have accomplished two things: (1) provided enticing but inconclusive support for the suggestion that reconciliation may lead to an improvement in relations between former national belligerents; and, (2) given us a set of cases with some apparent variance on the dependent variable: subsequent bilateral relations between the former belligerents as listed in Table II. We propose a comparative case study of reconciled conflicts to explore the following question: what factors contribute to a reconciliation event improving subsequent bilateral relations and what factors impede such a development. Second, using the eight reconciled conflicts in Table II and an equal number of non-reconciled conflicts, we would also examine the factors that are likely to give rise to a reconciliation event.

TABLE II
Summary of Visual Analysis

Visual Evidence of Reconciliation with Subsequent Improvement in Bilateral Relations	Reconciliation without Visual Evidence of Subsequent Improvement in Bilateral Relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USSR–West Germany • India–China • Egypt–Israel • China–Vietnam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK–Argentina • Cambodia–Vietnam • Honduras–El Salvador • Poland–West Germany

An in-depth study of a small number of cases would provide certain opportunities to explore these questions and present certain methodological challenges. The major challenge, of course, is the problem of complex, multiple determinants of social phenomenon and spurious or invalid inferences drawn from a few cases where multiple causal factors may be at play—in short, the problem of “over-determinancy.” To control for this problem, the case study investigation will be narrowed by the systematic use of theory and a within-case process tracing procedure. General hypotheses used to explain the factors that give rise to reconciliation and the reasons for reconciliation’s beneficial impact on subsequent bilateral relations will be drawn from relevant literature in the social sciences and become the bases for structured comparisons between cases. Having used theory to establish the relevant independent variables, within-case process tracing will attempt to identify the intervening steps or cause-and-effect links between the independent variables and the outcome of the dependent variable (George, 1982). The controlled comparative method has certain distinct advantages as well: the problem of reliability and validity may be smaller than in large N studies because the analyst has a small number of cases to thoroughly consider and is less dependent on data s/he cannot properly evaluate (Lijphart, 1975).

An investigation of the factors that contribute to, or detract from, a successful reconciliation event would be guided by the rational choice and psychological explanations presented earlier. For example, those factors that increase costs to the parties—domestically and internationally—of participating in a reconciliation event would presumably enhance the chances for a subsequent improvement in bilateral relations from a reconciliation attempt while those that reduced costs would also reduce the likelihood of reconciliation having a positive impact on dyadic relations. A reconciliation attempt made despite domestic opposition would send a

stronger signal to a former adversary than one with little domestic consequence and hence should be more likely to change the adversary's threat perception, for instance. Likewise, evidence of a change in self-perception or "identity" from one who was wronged to one of autonomy and equivalence in the bilateral relationship (however difficult to measure), or, evidence of a change in perception of the other that differentiates the actor from its prior actions and provides the foundation for forgiveness, should contribute to a successful reconciliation attempt.

In examining the second question—what factors invite a reconciliation event—the literature on negotiated ends to civil conflict offers hypotheses that might be applied in an international context. A phenomenon quite similar to reconciliation between countries is reconciliation *within* countries following a civil war. For example, terms such as 'government of national reconciliation' or 'government of national unity' have been used by political leaders to describe their efforts (at least ostensibly) to bring in all major political groups in order to heal the wounds of war. Recent examples of these governments include South Africa, Nicaragua, Tajikistan, and Angola.

William Zartman argues that negotiated endings to civil conflict occur when there is a symmetry of power between the combatants such that the conflict has evolved into a mutually hurting stalemate, that is, neither side perceives that it can achieve its original desired outcome. A second condition for negotiated solutions is that the stalemate is not a comfortable place for either side. Both sides fear continued violence, and thus a continuation of the violence is not acceptable. In the jargon of systems analysis, the stalemate is an unstable equilibrium because both sides do not want to remain there, and one way out is to negotiate a settlement (Zartman, 1995a). Finally, he maintains that a negotiated settlement is more likely if both participants possess sufficient power and legitimacy to satisfy the minimum demands of their supporters (Zartman, 1995b). If they lack this capacity, any agreement, even if reached, is unlikely to endure. Extrapolating from civil conflicts to international conflicts, this proposed study would consider whether these alleged preconditions for constructive rapprochement within nations also are those that accompany international reconciliations.

CONCLUSION

Reconciliation is a pervasive and possibly important factor in understanding international and national politics. It has been, for example, integral to the American experience. President Lincoln made it the basis for a strong federal state in his eloquent Second Inaugural Address in 1865 when he

declared a reconciliation with the Confederacy “with malice toward none, with charity for all.” President Truman, likewise made it a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy after World War II in America’s relations with Germany and Japan. Virtually every *society* can point to similar touchstones in its own history.

Reconciliation, however, has yet to assume a role in scholarly thinking about international politics. Perhaps because of the more traditional focus on generalizable circumstances associated with war, much less attention has been devoted to the motives and factors that establish a successful rapprochement between former belligerents such as reconciliation.

This article opens the door to thinking about reconciliation in world politics and offers a scientifically-replicable portrait of the impact of reconciliation that suggests it may be an important factor in improving relations between former belligerents. This finding recommends further investigation of the factors that give rise to reconciliation in international politics and a theoretically-informed search for the mechanism by which reconciliation leads to a subsequent improvement in bilateral relations. Finally, this study hopes to encourage other research that explores the ubiquitous, but seldom analyzed, political phenomenon of reconciliation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank Sara Glasgow and Sara Jones for their research and production assistance with this paper, Rodney Tomlinson for making available the WEIS dataset, Phil Schrodtr for making available his Levant dataset, Doug Bond for making available data from his PANDA project, and the anonymous reviewers who made several helpful comments. Of course, none of these individuals bears any responsibility for errors or omissions in the paper.

NOTES

1. This plot is derived from the COPDAB dataset. A description of the nature of the COPDAB dataset can be found in Azar (1980a). The weighted net conflict measure aggregated to monthly values used in this paper corresponds to the description found in Reuveny and Kang (1996).
2. We define a “reconciliation event” as one that typically includes the following elements:
 1. Direct physical contact or proximity between opponents, usually the senior representatives of the respective states;
 2. A public ceremony accompanied by substantial publicity or media attention that relays the event to the wider national societies; and,

3. Ritualistic or symbolic behavior that indicates the parties consider the quarrel resolved and that more amicable relations are expected to follow.

Often the signing of a treaty incorporates these three elements, and, in practice, is the embodiment of a reconciliation.

3. The notion of international society (or society of states) we take from Hedley Bull (1977, p.13). According to Bull, international society "exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the workings of common institutions."
4. It is worth noting that this question dovetails with recent work on rivalries and, in particular, rivalry termination (Goertz and Diehl, 1993; Thompson, 1995; Bennett, 1996; Bennett, 1997a; Bennett, 1997b; Bercovitch and Diehl, 1997; and Gibler, 1997) in that reconciliation is one form or pathway of rivalry termination.
5. For example, the term "reconciliation" often appears in the vocabulary of actors within states emerging from bouts of traumatic internal violence. Cases of that term being used following intrastate violence include instances of state collapse (Chad and Uganda in the 1980s), civil war (El Salvador and Cambodia in the 1980s and 1990s), severe repression by military regimes following their coming to power through coups (Chile and Argentina in the 1970s), and struggles that led to regime overthrows (Nicaragua in the 1970s and South Africa in the apartheid era).
6. The case of the India-China reconciliation considered later in the empirical findings, may illustrate some of these points. The decision by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to visit China in December 1988 risked his standing in domestic public opinion and created a vulnerability in his subsequent relations with the Chinese. Likewise, China's decision to receive the visit and conduct a public reconciliation with Gandhi proved costly to its entente with Pakistan and constrained China's subsequent freedom in negotiations with India over issues in the bilateral relationship (Garver, 1996).
7. This question can be refined into the following inquiries:
 1. Do relations between former combatants improve following the reconciliation event?
 2. Do relations between former combatants improve relative to their long-term relations before the conflict?
 3. When comparing across a number of post-conflict situations, do relations between former combatants that experience a reconciliation event subsequently exhibit less conflictual interactions than the subsequent (post-conflict) relations between former combatants that did not have a reconciliation event?
 4. Does the reconciliation event precede an improvement in relations or is it simply a stage in an already ongoing improvement?

In subsequent work we hope to address these more detailed and interesting questions.

8. When we first started this project, we intended to test the following hypotheses regarding the impact of reconciliation on international relations:
 1. The relations between former combatants improve following a reconciliation event.
 2. Relations between former combatants that have a reconciliation do *not* improve compared to their *long-term* relations before the conflict.
 3. Those former belligerents that experience a reconciliation event subsequently exhibit better relations than those former belligerents that did not have a reconciliation event.
 4. The reconciliation event is more than simply another step in improving relations. It is at minimum an inflection point at which the rate of change in the improvement of relations

increases. In other cases it is an inflection point at which the nature of the relations changes from declining or essentially unchanging to improving.

Unfortunately, the available data did not support a test of these hypotheses.

9. We chose such a long lag because choosing anything less than 60 years between a war and a reconciliation was problematic. When one looks at reports such as that in the October 1, 1997 *New York Times* describing how the Roman Catholic Church in France has only now (and the French government only two years earlier) apologized to the Jewish community in France for what it did (or did not do) to the Jews during World War II, events as long ago as 57 years, 60 years is not an unreasonable number. Or similarly, events such as Helmut Kohl apologizing to the Czech people in January 1997 (January 22, 1997 *New York Times*) for actions begun in 1938 or German President Roman Herzog apologizing in April 1997 (April 27, 1997 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*) to the Spanish people for the role Germany played in the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) do not lead us to believe that 60 years is an unreasonable upper limit. It is true that none of our cases of reconciliation emerged from those earlier wars, but when we began this study, we did not know that. Our goal was to capture as many cases as possible.
10. The Goldstein scale contains numeric values for 61 WEIS events. The version of WEIS we received in the Fall of 1996 contains 63 events. The two additional events are 022 [COM2] Pessimistic comment on situation and 024 [COM4] Optimistic comment on situation. We gave event 022 a value of -0.5 and event 024 a value of 0.5 .
11. The source code for the FORTRAN programs can be found on the Web site for Brecke (<http://www.inta.gatech.edu/peter/reconcile.html>).
12. There are, in our estimation, two possible explanations for cases with insufficient data to generate a post-reconciliation graph. First, cooperative events are not reported as much in the media as are conflictual events, and thus they are relatively poorly represented in the datasets, particularly COPDAB and WEIS. Improvements in the relations between countries manifested in trade or other business agreements, for example, often do not pass the threshold of “newsworthiness” for a newspaper such as *The New York Times* and as a result are not reported. If these events are not reported, an improvement in relations will not appear in the time series plots. This is particularly problematic for WEIS because it is based almost exclusively on *The New York Times*, and international coverage, especially of events like trade deals in Africa, by *The New York Times* has been declining in recent years (Tomlinson, personal communication in 1996). Second, the datasets, especially COPDAB and WEIS, suffer from unevenness in their coverage of different parts of the world, which results in a lack of reported events for certain dyads even though there was almost certainly interaction. For a number of dyads that experienced a reconciliation in the 1948–1992 time frame such as Tanzania and Uganda in 1981, there simply were not enough reported events, hostile or cooperative, between the countries such that one could assert relations had changed.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, Tony (1993). *Breaking the Ice*, Washington, D.C. U.S. Institute of Peace, pp. 21–24.
- Azar, Edward E. (1980a). “The Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) Project,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 24, pp. 143–152.
- Azar, Edward E. (1980b). *The Codebook of the Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB)*, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

- Bennett, D. Scott (1996). "Security, Bargaining, and the End of Interstate Rivalry," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (June), pp. 157-184.
- Bennett, D. Scott (1997a). "Measuring Rivalry Termination, 1816-1992," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (April), pp. 227-254.
- Bennett, D. Scott (1997b). "Democracy, Regime Change, and Rivalry Termination," *International Interactions*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 369-397.
- Bercovitch, Jacob, and Paul F. Diehl (1997). "Conflict Management of Enduring Rivalries: The Frequency, Timing, and Short-term Impact of Mediation," *International Interactions*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 299-320.
- Bond, Joe, and Doug Bond (1995). *Panda Codebook*, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University.
- Bull, Hedley, (1977). *The Anarchical Society*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 13.
- Davies, John L. and Chad K. McDaniel (1994). "A New Generation of International Event-Data," *International Interactions*, Vol. 20, Nos. 1-2, pp. 55-78.
- de Waal, Frans (1989). *Peacemaking Among Primates*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Fearon, James D. (1990). "Deterrence and the Spiral Model: The Role of Costly Signals in Crisis Bargaining," paper presented at the 1990 Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, California, August 30-September 2.
- Garver, John (1996). "Sino-Indian Rapprochement and the Sino-Pakistan Entente," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 111, No. 2, pp. 323-347.
- George, Alexander (1982). "Case Study and Theory Development," paper presented to the Second Annual Symposium on Information Processing in Organizations, Carnegie Mellon University, October 15-16.
- Gibler, Douglas M. (1997). "Control the Issues, Control the Conflict: The Effects of Alliances that Settle Territorial Issues on Interstate Rivalries," *International Interactions*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 341-368.
- Gochman, Charles S. and Zeev Moaz (1984). " Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (December), pp. 585-615.
- Gochman, Charles S. and Russell J. Leng (1988). " Militarized Disputes, Incidents, and Crises: Identification and Classification," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 157-163.
- Goertz, Gary, and Paul F. Diehl (1993). "Enduring Rivalries: Theoretical Constructs and Empirical Patterns," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (June), pp. 147-171.
- Goldstein, Joshua S. (1992). "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS Events Data," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June), pp. 369-385.
- Hendrickson, Robert (1987). *Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins*, London: MacMillan Press, Ltd.
- Kennedy, Peter (1993). *A Guide to Econometrics*, Third Edition, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Komorita, S.S. (1973). "Concession-Making and Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 17, No. 4, (December), pp. 745-763.
- Lijphart, Arend (1975). "The Comparable-Case Strategy in Comparative Research," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 8, (July), pp. 157-177.
- McDowall, David, Richard McCleary, Errol E. Meidinger, and Richard A. Hay, Jr. (1980). *Interrupted Time Series Analysis*, Sage Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences Paper #21, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Murphy, Jeffrie G. and Jean Hampton (1988). *Forgiveness and Mercy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Reuveny, Rafael, and Heejoon Kang (1996). "International Conflict and Cooperation: Splicing COPDAB and WEIS Series," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (June), pp. 281–306.
- Schrodt, Philip A. and Deborah J. Germer (1997). "Empirical Indicators of Crisis Phase in the Middle East," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (August), pp. 529–552.
- Singer, J. David (1969). "Threat Perception and National Decision-Makers," in Dean G. Pruitt and Richard C. Snyder (Eds.), *Theory and Research on the Causes of War*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, pp. 39–42.
- Smith, Hendrick (1979). "Treaty Impact Still Unknown," *The New York Times*, March 17, 1979, p. A1.
- Swinth, Robert L. (1967). "The Establishment of the Trust Relationship," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 11, pp. 335–360.
- Thompson, William R. (1995). "Principal Rivalries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (June), pp. 195–223.
- Tomlinson, Rodney G. (1993). "Monitoring WEIS Event Data in Three Dimensions," in Merritt, Richard L., Robert G. Muncaster, and Dina A. Zinnes (Eds.), *International Event Data Developments: DDIR Phase II*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 55–85.
- Tomlinson, Rodney G. (1996). *World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS) User's Guide*, 8th Revision (Draft).
- Vasquez, John A. (1993). *The War Puzzle*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Zartman, I. William (1995a). "Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts," in I. William Zartman (Ed.), *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, pp. 3–29.
- Zartman, I. William (1995b). "Conclusions: The Last Mile," in I. William Zartman (Ed.), *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, pp. 332–346.

CONTRIBUTORS

William J. Long is a Professor in The Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology. His most recent book is *Economic Incentives and Bilateral Cooperation* (University of Michigan Press, 1996).

Peter Brecke is an Assistant Professor in The Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology. His primary research concerns conflict early warning and conflict management.