
Money Talks, War Walks

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Introduction

Conflict has long been debated and as territorial, religious, ideological, political or cultural but the core driving force and principle values to which a conflict starts remains fundamentally unanswered and broadly debated both empirically and theoretically.

To understand the motivations and momentums of conflict can help guide us to predicting, defusing and resolving conflict.

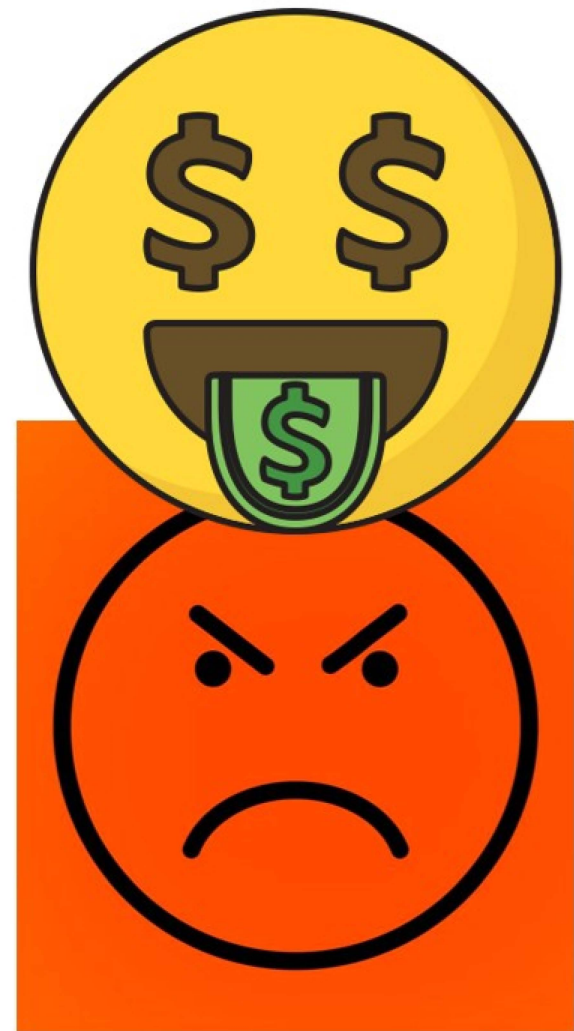
In this presentation I will be drawing on empirical findings from 2000–2006 which supports the argument that economic opportunity is often the main driver of conflict, while grievance is such as ethnic, political, or social injustices – play a secondary role, helping motivate, sustain and prolong conflict



Agenda

I will base my discussion on the works listed below and also highlight key factors that are not yet addressed but should be considered for debate.

- Collier & Hoeffler (World Bank May 2000)
- Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War (Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner August, 7th 2006)
- Understanding Civil War (Paul Collier Nicholas Sambanis 2005)





"For the love of money
is a root of all kinds of
evil. "

- (1 TIMOTHY 6:10).

Greed & Grievance



- Conflict is most often instigated by greed as primary factor and grievance sustains and motivates it as secondary factor
- Conflict is less likely in places of high social fractalization (low rebel support/high costs)
- Most societies have historical grievances but not all reach the point of conflict
- Rebellion is more likely to occur where there is greed motivation, oil rich, mineral rich, low GDP growth & high population growth
- The number of secondary educated males is a factor in low rebellion/conflict

Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War

- Countries with mountain terrain present as high risk for conflict
- The larger the general population size decreases the risk of war
- Grievance & vengeance from previous civil war heightens the risk of further conflicts
- Feasibility of conflict is a strong factor that supports the ability to engage in conflict
- Large numbers of males in 19-29 age range heighten risk of conflict/rebellion



Understanding Civil War



- Wide empirical findings from research in Burundi/D.R.C/Nigeria/Kenya/Sudan/Algeria/Mozambique// Senegal/Mali
- Greed is a predictor to civil wars and its severity/duration over grievance factors like ideology, ethnicity & land acquisitions
- Ethnic dominance, natural resources, low income & mountain terrain lead to increased risk of conflict that is longer in duration and likely to reoccur
- Kenya is unique in that its violence supports grievance/identity explanations more than CH's greed model
- Kenya more on land disputes and identity challenges due to its fractalization

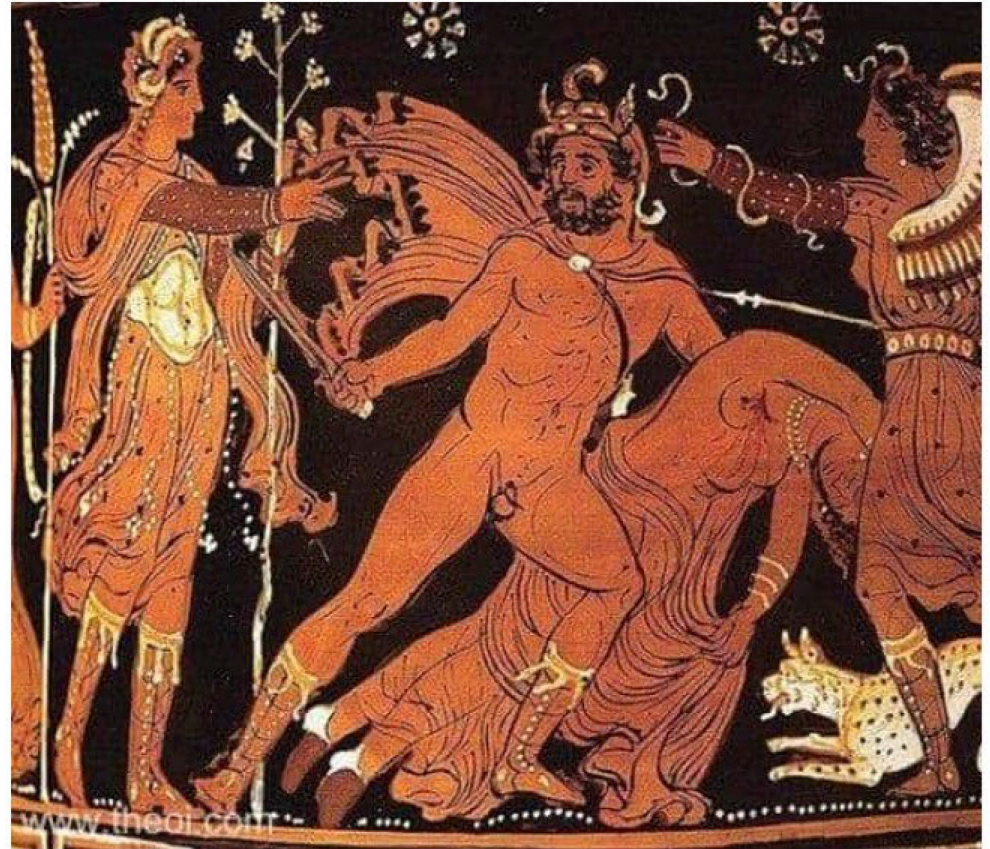
Critical Analysis:

- The consistency of the greed argument which is supported/motivated by grievance is clear across all three readings of which are primarily empirical rather than theoretical.
- The greed objective is often a means to facilitate conflict, thus the motivation for greed isn't always the motivation for conflict, in all of the readings it is shown that without greed you cannot fight for grievance, and with grievance alone you will not be successful in conflict.
- Risk of conflict is more likely when it is economically viable and profitable, thus greed will always be fundamental.
- There is a lack of acknowledgement for the personal motivations such as religion, identity & nationalism, and what drives individuals to engage in conflict, they look primarily at the generalized and structural government v rebel analysis.
- Wider geopolitical interferences, influences and engagements are not considered strongly enough, the connection to State on State conflicts wider East v West divisions are insufficiently explored.
- Contradictions can be found in exploring the conflict risk factors when analysing their findings regarding the number of fighting age males and fractalization.



Synthesis:

- Economic resource (greed) is required to create a conflict out of grievance.
- Fracturalization, ethical dominance, weak state capacity, natural resources, low income, resentment and previous recent conflict are high risk factors for escalation into conflict.
- Both the CH model and Understanding Civil War agree that recurring conflict is of high risk in regions affected by prior wars due to economic weakness, limited population capacity for organized defense, depletion of natural resources, unresolved greed, continued grievances & vengeance.



Themes

Although it is not explicitly the focus across the readings used in this presentation, the theme of identity is found throughout all points of discussion; greed provides the tools and means to fight in identity-driven conflicts; culture, freedom, religion, independence, rebellion, resentment, and resistance are all present in what war is waged for.

Greed acts as a means to fight for grievance, and grievance is almost always rooted in threats to identity.



References:

Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2000). Greed and grievance in civil war. World Bank.

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Collier, P., & Sambanis, N. (Eds.). (2005). Understanding civil war. World Bank.

Huntington, S. P. (1996). The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order.