Towards a micro–macro understanding of cascades

This chapter makes a starting case for the first five of the 10 cascades of violence propositions. It also moves in sequence from the micro, which is emphasised in the first part of the chapter, to the macro of cascade dynamics. As in Chapter 2, here we lean not so much on our South Asian cases to explore the usefulness of these propositions. Rather, this chapter and Chapter 4 motivate the propositions as potentially useful for explaining cascades of violence in South Asia by reflecting on the other great cascades of the past century and the most salient contemporary conflicts in Libya, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and the Great Lakes region of Africa, which were introduced in Chapter 2. The research completed in other parts of the globe for Peacebuilding Compared helped supply propositions that are a starting framework for exploring cascades of violence in South Asia in Part II. After much adjustment during the earlier phases of our South Asian fieldwork, the set of propositions in this chapter and the next were initially settled in 2014 in ways that were also influenced by the early South Asian data collection. Then, after consideration of all the data up to and including May 2017, and a micro–macro analysis of those data in Part II, the propositions were revised again in Part III.

The objective in this chapter and the next is to motivate our propositions. It is not to marshal all the evidence to show that these propositions are right or wrong. Rather, we use the Peacebuilding Compared dataset and the literature on the above geopolitically major cascades since 1911 to establish some inductive plausibility for them. Then South Asian
experience since 1945 is explored in Parts II and III systematically to assess whether that experience adds to the plausibility of the propositions or reduces their plausibility, and in what ways.¹

The first five propositions this chapter introduces are:

**Proposition 1:** As coercion escalates, both deterrence and defiance increase. The deterrence effect exceeds the defiance effect only at high levels of coercion. During the large range of values of coercion when defiance effects are steeper than deterrence, violence cascades.

**Proposition 2:** Violence cascades when violent imaginaries are modelled; nonviolent resistance cascades when diffusion of nonviolence grasps the imagination of the public. Both are most likely to occur when architectures of extreme coercion begin to crack or cleavages in a society begin to open.

**Proposition 3:** Violence cascades through alliance structures when a cleavage motivates mobilisation of alliances or unsettling of power balances.

**Proposition 4:** Disintegration of the capacity of a single legitimate armed force to pacify a space through its domination over all competing armed groups enables the cascading of violence across that territory.

**Proposition 5:** Once cleavages put alliance cascades on the march, security dilemmas can further accelerate the cascade.

**Building on micro foundations**

Our cascades of violence propositions contest rational choice as a micro foundation in a particular kind of way that does not entirely reject rational choice. Human beings do rationally fear violence. They pursue preservation of their lives. Yet, violence also triggers ‘reactant’ (Brehm and Brehm 1981) values such as revenge, resistance and courage. While an earlier Peacebuilding Compared volume focused on why realism in international relations (IR) theory can be a facile foundation for international affairs (Braithwaite et al. 2012), one cannot dismiss the pursuit of interests or flight from fears as unimportant in explaining war.

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¹ This is an approach to social science that is developmentally inductive. It rejects the hypothetico-deductive in favour of growing understanding from iterated inductive reflection and eliminative induction, as scholars delve more deeply into new sites of relevant data.
We make no claim for our micro foundations having universal explanatory power. Our hope is only that they salvage rational choice as an explanatory driver in a way that is less false and more nuanced than existing rational choice models. The micro foundations of this book are not modelled in any quantitative manner. Preserving the contextual nuance with which we seek to modulate rational choice explanation inclines us to forswear premature quantification of cascade diagnosis, at least at this stage of inductive theory development.

Defiant values that modulate rational action demand more prominence in our micro foundation when the suicide bomber is such a central actor in the narratives of this book. Suicide bombing proves to be a form of violence that cascades from South Asia globally, so we would prefer a micro foundation that makes sense of it. More generally, our Peacebuilding Compared interviews with hundreds of fighters find a dazzling diversity and particularity of motivation—from fear to hatred, greed, honour, identity, love of country, justice, sacrifice for comrades, excitement, revenge and many more. Hence, a theory is needed that encourages an empirically grounded search for an understanding of motivation at a particular hotspot.

A kind of micro research from Western psychology that is relevant to our project is the way Brehm and Brehm (1981) summarised the results of more than 50 experiments on what they called ‘psychological reactance’. Contemporary theorists of criminology, notably Lawrence Sherman (1993), and regulation, notably Valerie Braithwaite (2009), substitute the more elegant concept of ‘defiance’ for ‘reactance’. Braithwaite (2018) updates the considerable more recent evidence for the Brehm and Brehm framework.

When an army directs military violence against an enemy, we repeatedly see two opposing kinds of responses. One is surrender and submission in accord with rational actor accounts of deterrence. The second is defiance. Figure 3.1 summarises, in a simplified way, the results of the dozens of psychological experiments on which defiance theory relies. It represents the research finding that escalating coercion increases both defiance and deterrence. The psychological research suggests that, at low levels of coercion, defiance usually exceeds deterrence. Figure 3.1 expresses this as the resistance effect exceeding the capitulation effect at lower levels of coercion. The dotted line is the net compliance effect. Net compliance is represented as a sum of the resistance score and the capitulation score.
Only when punishment bites very deeply, resulting in many actors giving up on resistance, does the deterrence effect exceed the defiance effect. Military commanders have a systematic tendency to underestimate defiance effects in comparison with the store they place in deterrence effects. In World War II, Hitler believed the indiscriminate bombing of the Blitz would undermine British will to stay the course. He was as wrong as the British Bomber Command. It induced ‘more defiance than defeatism’ (Ferguson 2006: 565) in the German people by firebombing civilians. The folly of prewar strategy was evident in Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Hugh Trenchard’s pseudo-quantification that ‘the morale effect of bombing was twenty times greater than the material effect’ (Ferguson 2006: 565). Vietnam war data show that where bombing most targeted civilians the insurgency of the Viet Cong was most strengthened (Kocher et al. 2011).

Chapter 8 reveals how the Sri Lankan military’s struggle against the Tamil Tigers was tentative and defeatist for decades. Most generals and diplomats believed that escalated military pressure would only result in more pushback from the Tigers; that more would join the 20,000 deserters from the Sri Lankan army during the first decade of the war (Gunaratna 2001: 368). This changed with new military leaders assuming
the self-belief that they could keep increasing the military pressure until all Tamil Tiger resistance collapsed and holdouts surrendered. That is indeed what eventually happened. Proposition 10 (Chapter 4) contends, however, that this often does not happen because the costs of such military determination can prove too high for political leaders. Tyranny ultimately does work, but at great cost, because the required coercion can be extreme or must be sustained for many years. Democratic publics often come to see the extremes of coercion required to shut down violence in a faraway land as morally unacceptable, a burden that their young soldiers should not have to suffer and a cost they spurn as taxpayers. They see this more clearly today than in early modern history because war is covered blow-by-blow on television and social media. Proposition 10 is therefore about how negative public opinion and the political economy of contemporary warfare make it increasingly impossible for democratic states to stick with violent projects until the point is reached where coercion is sufficiently maintained to secure deterrence effects that exceed defiance effects for long enough to consolidate peace.

Northern Ireland is a particularly well-researched example, including in the Peacebuilding Compared interviews. Surges in repression by the British military were consistently followed by increases in terrorism, though there is debate about whether Operation Motorman was an exception (LaFree et al. 2009; Loyle et al. 2014). Operation Motorman was the massive escalation of British troop mobilisation in which 30,000 troops removed barricades with minimal force to return no-go areas, particularly ‘Free Derry’, to state control (Sanders 2013). In the end, the British electorate was unwilling to support either sustained oppression or the losses of British troops. They preferred to embrace powersharing with the terrorists.

At the micro level, Brehm and Brehm’s (1981) laboratory experiments give a good account of why the empirical literature of criminology on the effectiveness of deterrence is so contradictory—failing to find the consistent effects of strong deterre nts in increasing compliance with the law that rational choice theory predicts (Braithwaite 2018). Likewise, the political science literature on the effectiveness of government coercion

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2 Charles T. Call is one empirical researcher who recognised this in his data. His first summary point about patterns of recurrence of civil war is: ‘Among cases of nonrecurrence, two alternative paths stand out: inclusionary behavior, especially with regard to politics and the security forces; and exclusionary behavior accompanied by the rigid repression of regime critics and opponents’ (Call 2012: 207).
in reducing dissent, terrorism and insurgency is contradictory: it shows state repression to have every possible effect on challenges to it—positive, negative, no effect or shifting challenges to alternative modalities of resistance (Davenport and Inman 2012: 624). Perhaps the only consistent result is that indiscriminate counterinsurgency that hits the wrong targets is particularly counterproductive (Davenport and Inman 2012: 629; Kalyvas 2003, 2006: Ch. 6). Moreover, the evidence is clear that it is extremely difficult to hit many intended targets without also hitting a lot of unintended ones.

Based loosely on the experiments summarised by Brehm and Brehm (1981), Figure 3.1 illustrates that rational choice accounts of deterrence have little chance of explaining violence. For the most part, it is simply false that there is a monotonically increasing relationship between punishment and compliance. Likewise, we cannot take seriously a form of realist (or neorealist) international relations theory that aggregates large numbers of individual rational choosers into states that make rational choices. States are far too factionalised and organisationally diverse to be construed as simple agents of collective rationality.

Even realist and neorealist international relations theorists rarely deny the frequently observed phenomenon that coercion by a major power can induce collective defiance from weaker players that can be so strong as to thwart the designs of great powers. There is evidence aplenty that threats can induce defiance as well as compliance. Few neorealists assume that, even though the United States has a bigger deterrent arsenal than the rest of the world combined, it works for the United States to say to another country: ‘Do what we say or else!’ This is even accepted by conservative writers such as Michael Rubin who are opposed to dialogue with ‘rogue states’. Rubin (2014: 4) nevertheless conceives of Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Iraq and Libya as ‘backlash states’ that are ‘defiant’. Former US defence secretary William Cohen tweaked this definition of rogue states to construe them as regimes ‘immune to traditional deterrence’ (Rubin 2014: 4). While demands for compliance backed by passive deterrence work poorly in international affairs, when the United States dynamically escalates its deterrent power around a weaker country such as Cuba, it can achieve a deterrent result. This means patient dialogue first, but ultimately

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3 Neorealism (or structural realism) departs from classical realism’s analyses of international politics based on human nature and power relations to the structure of the system and security (see Brown 2009; Waltz 1979).
escalating to resolve by scrambling aircraft towards Cuba’s skies and submarines around its seas—as it did during the Cuban missile crisis—to get the deterrent result (dismantled Cuban missiles) (Braithwaite 2018).

Of course, dynamic escalation of deterrence in international affairs is a dangerous game because ‘little’ Cuba can mobilise powerful friends to dynamic escalation of their deterrent capabilities in response. Small-power Serbia also did this in triggering the escalation to World War I after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand (Chapter 2). The challenge of building theories for the control of cascades of violence that are sufficiently dynamic to respond to the complexity of the phenomenon is tackled in Chapter 12.

In the context of the 2011 Libyan revolution, Braithwaite and Rashed (2014) have used their Peacebuilding Compared fieldwork in Libya to make the case that where deterrence is most needed, it is most dangerous; where reconciliation is most difficult, it holds out the greatest hope for the transformation of violence. Because dynamic deterrence is a dangerous game, we should use it reluctantly, with minimal sufficiency. With collective action, as with individual action, deterrence can be so extreme that it overwhelms resistance. Powerful states obviously have superior military and diplomatic capacity to coerce such submission. Because deterrence matters, if only in extremis, the military capacity of powerful states often shapes history. Because defiance matters, powerful states do not get their way with weaker international players a large proportion of the time.

If deterrence worked like realist clockwork, our cascades of violence approach would have no explanatory power. As soon as any cascade of violence spread to the point where it became a concern to a great power, the rational great power would crush it. Quite the reverse is obviously the story told in Chapter 2. The Vietnam War cascaded out of control to the point where no amount of American blood or treasure, nor that of other formidable allies, seemed capable of crushing the Viet Cong. Then, after the great power gave up on the project of defeating this cascade of violence in Vietnam, it cascaded to an even deadlier genocide in Cambodia, to regime change in Laos and to the 1979 war between Vietnam and China.

The ambition of cascades of violence is to give an account of these phenomena because realist international relations theory explains them so poorly. Our argument in this section has been that getting micro foundations that are more realistic than realist international relations
theory is one step towards an understanding of cascades of violence that might fill this explanatory void. The psychology experiments on defiance summarised in Figure 3.1 provide a micro foundation that we posit for the purpose after also reflecting on the support we see for this same pattern in our Peacebuilding Compared data to date. Summarised qualitatively, we therefore have our first cascades of violence proposition:

**Proposition 1:** As coercion escalates, both deterrence and defiance increase. The deterrence effect exceeds the defiance effect only at high levels of coercion. During the large range of values of coercion when defiance effects are steeper than deterrence, violence cascades.

We saw in Chapter 1 that cascade explanations tend to be nonlinear, characterised by tipping points, and we will see in Chapter 12 that this is one characteristic that turns our work towards complexity theory. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 help steer us towards a tipping point understanding of when deterrence cascades to defiance—for example, when throwing Christians to the lions or martyring Muslims accelerates rather than deters the spread of these religions. It also helps us to see that, further along in Figure 3.1, there is another tipping point from defiance back to deterrence.

![Figure 3.2 The interactive effects of force and importance of freedom.](source: Brehm and Brehm (1981: 60).)
Contextual variation in defiance

Rational choice, deterrence and defiance cannot be read off from foundational universals such as how the human mind works. There is no deadly simple societal mechanics of defiance from which cascades of violence are inexorable. The defiance experiments summarised by Brehm and Brehm (1981) show that defiance effects are most likely to exceed deterrence when coercion is directed at freedoms its targets care about deeply. It follows that a pure rational choice model of deterrence of the kind that helped Gary Becker (1992) win a Nobel Prize might offer a good explanation of the high efficacy of library fines or parking fines in reducing freedoms that citizens do not care too deeply about. Deterrence aimed at getting a person to change their religion or betray their country, however, has much steeper defiance effects in comparison with deterrence effects (see Figure 3.2), which means that even the most horrific forms of torture are not necessarily effective in extracting intelligence from terrorists. In these contexts of religious faith and nationalist fervour, there is emotional commitment to defiance. With regulatory compliance, Makkai and Braithwaite (1994) showed that, when emotionality is high among business chief executive officers (CEOs), as state deterrence rises, compliance falls; when emotionality is low (when CEOs are cool and calculating), as state deterrence rises, compliance rises. Because war so recurrently puts in contest freedoms and identities—national, religious, ethnic—to which individuals have profound attachments, warfare more often cascades violence than suppresses it.

Some cultural contexts show stronger defiance because defiance scripts are institutionalised in those cultures. Pashtun culture—the largest ethnic identity of Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan—is an honour culture that requires blood feuds in many circumstances. This is compounded by the institutionalising of gun-carrying in Pashtun culture, as in other tribal cultures of Pakistan encountered in this book—notably, the Baloch of Balochistan. In these rural tribal cultures, boys learn from their fathers to become a crack shot. Habits of gun-carrying start early, as does learning of male obligations to avenge blood. In the context of such institutionalisation, blood feuds multiply killings with a local efficiency that can quickly become a threat to regional peace. John Braithwaite spoke at the Quetta police academy in Balochistan, which was the site in 2016 of an Islamic State attack that killed 61 young police officers and wounded 123 others. He spoke about the importance of recruiting
female police officers, recounting how in the Australian military young women frequently top shooting courses. He personalised this by saying that his son was not a great shot in the Australian Army Reserve, but he was helped to improve by a female recruit who topped the shooting course. Afterwards, tribal men in the audience kindly let John know how sorry they felt for him for having such a son. When John responded that he himself was a terrible shot, sympathy for coming from such a multi-problem family became even more palpable!

As one sees in many parts of the globe, warlike cultures such as in Balochistan that put a strong emphasis on avenging honour can also be cultures gifted at peacemaking—providing institutionalised channels for peace. Westerners can learn much from them about how to interrupt cascades of violence. Bacha Khan is the most famous Pashtun peacemaker, leading a pre-Gandhian nonviolent struggle against British colonialism from 1910 that helped inspire Gandhi. His philosophy was to see both violent and nonviolent strands in his culture, as in all cultures, and then strengthen the nonviolent ones:

Is not the Pashtun amenable to love and reason? He will go with you to hell if you can win his heart, but you cannot force him even to go to heaven. Such is the power of love over the Pashtun. (Bacha Khan, quoted in Gohar 2012: 141)

Bacha Khan developed principles to which his followers swore allegiance, including:

I promise to refrain from violence and from taking revenge.
I promise to forgive those who oppress me or treat me with cruelty. 
I promise to refrain from taking part in feuds and quarrels and from creating enmity.
I promise to devote at least two hours a day to social work [volunteerism that makes jirgas work]. (Gohar 2012: 142)

So, while we perceive great cultural variation in adoption of revenge scripts and other kinds of defiance scripts, we do not see them as essential to any culture. Rather, scripts are institutionalised in cultural patterns that can steer away from cascades of violence by the institutionalisation of architectures of nonviolence by leaders adept in the culture, like Bacha Khan.
Revenge is honourable and mandated in Pashtun culture. This is communicated in ancient proverbs:

- A Pashtun never forsakes revenge.
- A stone of Pashtun (enmity) does not rot in water.
- If a Pashtun takes his revenge after a hundred years, it is still too soon.

Pashtun culture (e.g. Naz et al. 2012; Taj 2011) provides insights into how various cultural practices such as *Pashtunwali* (the code of life) and *badal* (revenge) have been misinterpreted. Pashtuns believe that shame persists for victims of crime until honour is equalised through revenge (Gohar 2012: 106–7). The shame of one victim in a society brings dishonour on the whole tribe. *Badal* is viewed as a way of achieving justice: *badal* ‘is not a privilege but a right and duty of a Pashtun’ (Yousufzai and Gohar 2012: 36). Culturally approved alternatives to revenge that are honourable are therefore important. The most important of these is the *jirga*, a traditional justice mechanism where elders meet in a circle to reconcile disputes.

Plate 3.1 Ali Gohar (left) participates in a *jirga* with Pashtun leaders near the Swat Valley, north-west Pakistan, 2012.
Source: Fieldwork photograph by John Braithwaite.

Since 2003, John Braithwaite has engaged with Pashtun leaders about adapting *jirga* structures to learnings from evidence-based restorative justice, including learnings about the great contributions women can be
empowered to make in a restorative circle (Braithwaite and Gohar 2014). It is worthwhile to revisit some of this research, particularly with Ali Gohar, to give the reader a glimpse of the qualitative texture of our data that inform the micro foundations of cascades theory. Ali Gohar is one of the key advocates of the restorative jirga.

The French Revolution was more than a conflict ‘where there was no frontier between private vengeance and collective vengeance’ (Cobb 1972: 56). Yet this was critical to understanding why it was so bloody. The point of our micro examples is not to suggest that civil wars are no more than ‘feuds writ large’ (Kalyvas 2003; Loizos 1988: 648), but to illustrate that micro unravelling is partially an intentional project of powerful militias such as the Taliban and partially a pursuit of local private interests and grievances. Micro–macro impetus to civil war arises when these dual dynamics create vacuums of social order that a force such as the Taliban can fill. Here are just two Peacebuilding Compared fieldwork snippets from our research notes of traditional jirgas ending cycles of revenge or reducing the risk of future renewed cycles:

John Braithwaite and Ali Gohar attended a jirga at Sher Garh, Mardan District, just south of the Swat Valley. Jirga members told us how in 2006 they had to deal with enmity between two villages in which 13 people were killed, seven in one village, six in the other. The villages were deserted. The jirga appealed to them for peace and asked each to provide money on the table in the jirga. Normally more blood money would be paid in from the side that had lost only six. But the side that lost seven suggested equal amounts as a sign of respect for the elders. If one side resumed violence, the money would be forfeited … Because murder allegations were before the courts, they asked the judge for permission to reconcile the feud. The judge granted permission and the feud was brought to an end. This jirga had dealt with 80 murder cases in the memory of those present, all reconciled with the murderer being released from prison or without the murderer being sent to prison.

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Story of a Hindu doctor from Batagram (from Ali Gohar fieldnotes):

When Taliban in Swat were very active, I received a phone call from Taliban asking for pre-kidnapping ransom. First I took it as a joke and avoided the caller but then I started receiving calls more frequently and the caller started demanding Rs 7 million. Later my relatives and friends also started receiving calls from the same caller so as to convince me that they meant business … I informed the elders of the jirga about
the issue. The *jirga* of the areas was called, in which all influential people from different tribes participated. A decision was taken that if something happened to me, the *jirga* would act on my behalf not only to protect me but also to take revenge as per the prevailing custom and traditions of the Pashtun code. They also announced a warning to Taliban that if the caller was from their side, they were ready for any sort of encounter, as the *jirga* would not allow Taliban influence in Batagram area in any form and by any means. The *jirga* also sent a message to the government agency to protect me and my family and provide me immediate security. Media was invited by the *jirga* to highlight the issue and the decision of the *jirga* was announced and publicised in the media. Along with the security agencies, local *jirga* also took upon themselves to share the burden of guarding my home, business office and other movable and immovable property. This gave a strong message to the people who were threatening me on the phone. The phone calls stopped immediately and I am feeling safe now. (Just Peace International 2012: 58–9)

*Jirgas* also have some negative features. They are traditionally male dominated and provide either restricted or no access to women. Additionally, young people are often excluded. Young Afghans and Pakistanis with Western education tend to overlook the critical role *jirgas* play in community justice (D’Costa 2016). We revisit some of this discussion in Chapter 6. The pathway to an effective and inclusive *jirga* model would include a much deeper understanding of reconciliation practices at times of extreme violence.

Gohar and Braithwaite considered case studies from their fieldnotes of hybrid *Muslahathi* (‘reconciliation’ in Arabic) committees stopping spirals of violence (for more cases, see Braithwaite and Gohar 2014). These were cases where hybrid *jirga*-restorative justice processes with a rights focus were held inside the fortified walls of police stations after the Taliban had assassinated many *maliks* (‘traditional elders’) who had convened *jirgas*. The Taliban wanted locals instead to submit to the justice of Taliban courts:

The Havelian Muslahathi Committee (in Abbottabad, where Osama bin Laden was killed) dealt with a case that they believed involved great risk of escalation because men were being taunted for being so weak to allow the other party to take their land without fighting for it. The land was extremely valuable (more than one billion rupees) and the disputes surrounding it had been before the courts for 60 years. On three occasions, the parties had been to the Supreme Court over the land. In four meetings spread over one month, the Muslahathi Committee settled this as a priority dispute because they believed it could lead to serious
violence. One of the parties got more of the land than the other. But both parties were pleased to have it settled without losing the lives of family members. (Braithwaite fieldnotes)

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The cycle of violence that was being settled on the day we visited the Havelian Muslahathi Committee in 2013 involved a dispute over money. In order to recover what a family believed had been misappropriated from them, they stole a truck belonging to the other family. This was avenged by an attack in which the person who stole the truck was murdered. The murderer had been in prison awaiting trial for five months. For two and a half years the village jirga had been attempting unsuccessfully to settle this dispute. They had found it too hot to handle. So the parties agreed to try the Muslahathi Committee. The committee negotiated with them on possible lines of a restorative settlement for many meetings over four months. Finally … agreement was in place; so much so, that the media were in attendance to take photographs and interview the parties about the terms of an agreement that would end a feud the community was concerned could spin out of control. The Committee members were confident that because of the risk of violence the case posed, the murderer awaiting trial would be released on the order of the court with charges dropped. This was common. In fact, that day we also met the parties to another case involving a cycle of violence in which two had been killed and one seriously injured over rights to collect money at a bus stand. A payment from one family of Rs 22,000 had already been agreed in this case. Again there was a recommendation, which had been accepted by the court, that a man who had already served two years prison for murder would be released. They visited each other’s homes after they reconciled and broke bread. (Braithwaite fieldnotes)

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A recent case described to us by the Mirpur Muslahathi Committee in 2013 follows:

There were two tribes who had a claim over land that was being used by a famous public school. There was a fight over who were the true owners. Ten to 15 people were injured in the battle with six suffering bullet wounds. This was a great danger to public health and safety. After an incident between tribes like this, any member of a tribe is justified and honour-bound in the eyes of the community to kill a suitable person from the other tribe. The Committee successfully resolved the conflict. The violence between the two tribes has ended and the school had certainty in its planning. (Braithwaite fieldnotes)
Cases like these, which are common as one moves from locale to locale, constitute a credible qualitative argument that reconciliation committees of both kinds reduce violence capable of snatching away many lives. Other cases described elsewhere (e.g. in Braithwaite and Gohar 2014) that saw large-scale fighting and the burning of houses show how dangerous cycles of violence were ended through the wisdom of *Muslahathi* committee members. These examples also illustrate Proposition 2: that diffusion of nonviolence occurs in complex ways.

At the same time, these data show how the Taliban can create a security vacuum by assassinating judges and *maliks*. Unless an alternative—such as the police station reconciliation committees—is put in place, in a revenge culture, violent feuds spin out of control in a way that delivers the opportunity to the Taliban courts to re-establish order (this is the anomie effect in Proposition 7; Chapter 4).

This kind of evidence is apiece with the historical evidence that the institutionalisation of courts in England made a large contribution to the massive drop in homicide rates from the eleventh century, and especially after the fifteenth century (Eisner 2003). The historical record from across Medieval Europe (Spierenburg 2008, 2013) is of a land where revenge killings were rife, blood feuds endemic and a road accident could spiral to interminable cycles of revenge. Tort law arrived in England to provide an alternative, honourable path in adjudication and compensation to revenge killing (Cooney 1997). Even nineteenth-century rural courts in England or in saloons in the wild west of the United States were participatory and male-dominated in ways more like Pakistan’s *Muslahathi* committees than Western jurists like to think!

Among the reasons an institution such as the *Muslahathi* committee can be effective in calming revenge is that it can draw on a variety of deeply institutionalised anti-revenge norms that are part of the *jirga* tradition. One is the *Kanrai or Teega*, a ceasefire/truce ritual (Gohar 2012: 67). This is about ‘parachute diplomacy’. Peacemaking *jirga* members with white flags go between the fighting parties, even under heavy fire, often accompanied by women. These women attend with heavy symbolism, either without veils or carrying the Holy Koran in their hands. The *Teega* is represented by the laying down of a stone to solidify truce. Another relevant ancient

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4 This section of the text on Pakistani *jirgas* is drawn heavily with adaptation from Braithwaite and Gohar (2014).
institution is of the Asthazai (diplomat). Diplomats are given safe passage during a conflict. They carry messages between communities in conflict, learning traditions of language use that defuse tension and prepare the soil for further communication. Western historians tell us that institutionalised diplomacy is a Renaissance invention that spread from Venice (Mattingly 1955).

Nanawaty is perhaps the most important of the ancient institutions for averting revenge. Nanawaty involves the combination of a repentance ritual and asylum. It means walking to the home of someone wronged with an attitude of humility, sorrow and apology, ‘giving space to the other person to respond with “grace”, so precious to Pukhto’ (Yousufzai and Gohar 2012: 32). If Nanawaty is granted, the perpetrator receives asylum from revenge by the whole community, at least temporarily, while mediation of restitution, public apology and restoration of honour for both sides proceed. Finally, Pashtun tradition provides for scaling up local jirgas to a loya jirga (grand jirga) when conflict wracks an entire region. For example, when all the tribal agencies of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan’s north-west get together to settle a big issue, it is called a ‘tribal loya jirga’. Shinwari (2017) has described efforts at the time of writing to form a cross-border jirga at the border of Afghanistan and FATA to defuse cross-border conflict and enable cross-border trade.

We see in Chapter 6 that tribal Balochistan suffers from both Taliban and Baloch nationalist insurgencies and from conflict between these insurgencies. One point that our Peacebuilding Compared interview informants made about Baloch independence fighters in the mountains was that a large proportion of them are there to avenge a relative killed or ‘disappeared’ by the state.

Responsiveness to Baloch culture therefore not only requires a top-down peace that addresses root causes such as expropriation of Baloch resources and discrimination against Baloch; it also requires local jirgas in which representatives of the state listen, pay ‘blood money’ and apologise for killing specific relatives, so that the individual fighter and their surviving relatives can honourably hand in their weapons and commit to peace. It also needs higher-level peacemaking jirgas province-wide that connect to national peacemaking and reconciliation processes. Following the Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML-N) Government’s reconciliation

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5 We also discuss this in Chapter 6.
3. TOWARDS A MICRO–MACRO UNDERSTANDING OF CASCADES

process in Balochistan, the government requested Mir Suleman Dawood, one of the self-exiled Baloch leaders, return to Pakistan. He had been given political asylum by the UK Government. Despite the political vacuum created by his exile and the Pakistani Government’s repeated requests, the ‘Khan of Kalat’, as Dawood is popularly known, refused its mandate and stressed the importance of the jirga. In his response to the Baloch Government delegation, Dawood noted, ‘only the Grand Baloch Jirga has the mandate to make an appeal to me about my return’ (Ali Shah 2015). The last grand Baloch jirga was held in September 2006, the first in 126 years, and was attended by 85 tribal chiefs and 300 elders. At that jirga, there were also discussions about taking the Baloch case to the International Court of Justice, which was not followed up. We revisit this process in Chapter 6.

Paths to peace are needed that are richly informed by contextual responsiveness to local society and to the micro foundation of one’s theory. Modelling is the first of these micro foundations that can scale up to global transformation. The next section explains how it grounds Proposition 2 of our framework.

**Modelling**

A widespread micro–macro foundation for cascades of violence is modelling. This we define as emulation that is not mere habitual mimicry, but emulation embedded in cognitions (Bandura 1986). These give modelling meaning as intended and valued emulation. Hence, when the Maoists in Nepal (Chapter 9) decided to call themselves Maoists, they followed a Chinese communist script of revolutionary struggle. This meant gradually building support among peasants in rural areas until the capital was surrounded by support for the revolution (as opposed to the Leninist strategy of directly seizing military control of the capital). In 2006, the Maoists moved cognitively to a more Gandhian model of nonviolent struggle when they decided to put down their weapons and join civil society in a massive people’s movement on the streets of Kathmandu and other cities. Maoists joined hands with civil society to demand abdication of the king in favour of a transition to republican democracy.
Our research challenge here is to understand how restorative justice or peacemaking through reconciliation (as in jirgas) might flip cascades of violence to the modelling of nonviolence. Just as we have seen that there is strong evidence of a propensity for violence to cascade from war in one country to war in neighbouring countries, there is evidence of a propensity for nonviolence to be modelled and to cascade. Braithwaite et al. (2015) showed that, on data for 1946 to 2006, nonviolent campaigns are contagious between autocratic societies. Latent opposition groups were especially encouraged to model foreign nonviolent campaigns when they had a weak history of domestic protest.

Braithwaite and Drahos (2000: 578–99) have argued that we can perceive deep structural reasons for the people-power movements that swept communist governments from power in Russia, across Eastern Europe and right across to Mongolia, although stalling in Tiananmen Square. The collapse of communist economies is the most common deep structural reason proffered. While Braithwaite and Drahos (2000) argue that structural explanation has power in understanding the crumbling of communism, it cannot explain the sheer simultaneity of so many people-power mass mobilisations in a matter of months in 1989 across communist economies, some of which were performing at a very high level in comparison with others. Braithwaite and Drahos suggest that the simultaneity was evidence of a modelling phenomenon. In the terms of this book, it was a cascade of nonviolence that transformed the world.

The year 1989 was also a moment in history when a longstanding suppression of peoples by deterrence that had exceeded defiance—which had been reinforced on the streets of Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968—was lifted by reform in Moscow led by Mikhail Gorbachev. Defiance would not become contagious beyond a tipping point (Gladwell 2000) without actors whom we call model mongers (described below). Model mongers were ready with transformative imaginaries that could spread the ignition of mass protest. Social scientists of cascades need tools for analysing the interactions between the modelling foundations and the deterrence and defiance foundations of our propositions. Model mongers keep competing models bubbling on their modelling backburners;

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6 It is an ancient Christian idea that, when the most terrible and unjust violence occurs, special opportunities arise to transform human society to paths of love and generosity. As Saint Paul put it: ‘Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound’ (Romans 5:20). While it is an old Christian idea, it has been beyond the imagination of contemporary Christian states.
they bring them to the front burner only when the level of coercion slips below the tipping point at which defiance effects begin to exceed deterrence effects.

**Proposition 2:** Violence cascades when violent imaginaries are modelled; nonviolent resistance cascades when diffusion of nonviolence grasps the imagination of the public. Both are most likely to occur when architectures of extreme coercion begin to crack or cleavages in a society begin to open.

Braithwaite and Drahos (2000: 581) define modelling as ‘actions that constitute a process of displaying, symbolically interpreting and copying conceptions of actions’. Braithwaite (1994) and Braithwaite and Drahos (2000) injected specificity into how modelling works by identifying different kinds of actors who promote modelling: model missionaries, model mercenaries, model misers and model mongers. We acknowledge reliance on these publications here and apply this modelling framework in our South Asian case studies.

**Model missionaries** are similar to actors whom Sunstein (1997) calls ‘norm entrepreneurs’, who change norms through ‘norm bandwagons’ and ‘norm cascades’. Model missionaries are actors motivated by belief in a model and who travel widely to spread word of that model. The spiritual leaders of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State were model missionaries who spread the imaginary of a dissident form of jihad that was extremely violent. Gandhi was an Indian model missionary of nonviolence who influenced faraway converts to nonviolence, who themselves became converts to the power of that model, such as Martin Luther King Jr in the United States. Nelson Mandela also said he learned much from the nonviolent struggles of Gandhi in his native South Africa. Gandhi, as we have seen, had himself been influenced by another missionary of nonviolence, Bacha Khan. Missionaries of ethnic hatred cascade modelling of violence against the ethnic other. Model mercenaries sometimes then reinforce that model of ethnic hatred because they have an interest in taking over the businesses or political offices of people who are ethnically cleansed (for Indonesian examples from Peacebuilding Compared, see Braithwaite et al. 2010a).

Model missionaries and model mercenaries change the way knowledge is spread in epistemic communities (Yang 2012: 30). **Model mercenaries** are national and transnational promoters of models who commercially exploit models. When we prepared for the Peacebuilding Compared project, we thought mercenaries would play a major role. In our coding of wars
so far, commercial military organisations have proved less important than we thought, including in South Asia. Of course, there is an older history of the Gurkhas from Nepal, for example, providing mercenary services to the British Empire. One of the empirical findings of this study is that in none of South Asia’s conflicts since World War II has a transnational private military corporation played a major role.

Al-Qaeda, in its propaganda messages, has accused Pakistani security and intelligence services of being America’s mercenaries. However, we use the term mercenaries here in a more straightforward sense (Simm 2013). For South Asia, we discuss multiple private armed organisations, which do not control resources and operate as central drivers/spoilers of wars as in the way Peacebuilding Compared has found in Africa. They are very different phenomena from transnational military corporations such as Executive Outcomes. Former military men have joined several private security companies, mainly in Pakistan. In circumstances where the security situation has deteriorated, these private companies have largely been contracted to protect private business interests or hired to provide protection to influential people. Despite the financial imperatives, neither the Pakistani Taliban nor the Afghan Taliban are mercenaries; they function as anti–state security institutions (D’Costa 2016).

The rise of Western private military organisations saw mercenaries such as Mike Hoare start up in Congo in the 1960s. By the 1990s, the leading companies, Executive Outcomes and Sandline, played decisive roles in major African conflicts such as in Sierra Leone and Angola. Sierra Leone illustrated what seemed to be a core emerging business model: private military corporations would exploit the ‘resource curse’ by seizing control of readily tradable and transportable resources (diamond mines in the case of Sierra Leone). Private military control of this asset guaranteed their payment even if their client became powerful enough after a military victory to refuse it. We expected this business model to proliferate because it seemed a logical outgrowth of neoliberalism, characterised by the private corporate takeover of state functions. This model went off the rails with the arrest of Mark Thatcher and others in Africa and in the Bougainville civil war (Braithwaite et al. 2010b: 49). Both national and regional players such as Australia decided to prevent mercenaries from further destabilising their region. Sandline officers found themselves arrested by the Papua New Guinea military and their supply aircraft forced down by the Australian air force and impounded in Australia. Executive Outcomes went bankrupt and closed its doors in 1999; Sandline followed in 2004.
3. TOWARDS A MICRO–MACRO UNDERSTANDING OF CASCADES

The anti-mercenary norm (Percy 2007) was a norm cascade that surged after the American Revolution and went into reverse between 1960 and 1997. Thanks to catastrophes such as those with Executive Outcomes and Sandline, after 1997, the norm cascaded back to global relevance. In any case, the Iraq war supplied a more stable business model for former principals of these entrepreneurial private military corporations: as private contractors of security services subservient to the US military. By December 2008, private contractors made up 69 per cent of the US Department of Defence workforce in Iraq (Saikal 2014: 24).

Model mongers pursue their political agenda by experimental floats of large numbers of models. Our interviews suggest that model mongering can work well for reform groups with thin resources, such as women’s rights groups. Model mongers eschew detailed work such as drafting legislation for a novel governance innovation. Instead, they scan the international horizon for prepackaged models. They keep most of these model options on the backburner, bringing them to the front burner when a ripe moment arises, usually in a crisis. An activist group with meagre resources can run many campaigns with half-baked models. Models are distributed quickly at little cost. A large number of reports can be generated by advocacy campaigns. Mostly, no one reads this material; however, campaigns that do gather serious support, such as by being incorporated into the election platforms of major parties or the priorities of major donors, are then prioritised for more rigorous development and lobbying. This is what we mean by model mongering.

The models that fail to pick up serious political support are not forgotten under this political strategy. They are left on the backburner, continuing to appear in advocacy manifestos as needed reforms. Eventually, the point may be reached where this campaign can be put on the front burner under the banner that ‘Ours is the only country in the region that has failed to introduce this reform’. The model monger sees the domino theory not as a matter of structural explanation, but as an effect they seek to cascade through purposive lobbying, as when Che Guevara says ‘Create two, three, many Vietnams’ (Guevara 2003: 350). In seeking to make the dominos fall, the appeal of legitimacy and modernity, of not being ‘backward’ (see ‘model modernisers’ below), is among the model monger’s most powerful weapons.
The model monger’s strategy is not to push on a door until it begins to open. Politics from the modelling perspective is not about problems looking for solutions. It is about solutions waiting for the right problem (to justify their implementation), the right moment and the right donor. Social problems can sometimes be redefined so that a pet model becomes the right solution.

While conservative politics is about reluctantly scratching when the populace gets an itch, entrepreneurial politics is about scratching all over until a spot is found that makes a polity itchy. The Nepalese case (Chapter 9) shows nicely how Maoism as a model cascaded both violence and nonviolence as models of resistance, and cascaded both transformatively. These models have a power of their own that links countless minds beyond Nepal and countless computers through cyberspace. Maoists have power through using models and models have power through using Maoists. Modelling theory creates fertile soil for such evocative reversals. For example, Oliver Roy (2017) argues that the world does not face a radicalisation of Islam but an Islamisation of radicalism (as a model).7

Prepackaged models (templates) have enormous appeal to peacebuilding and statebuilding actors for a simple reason. Statebuilders have limited time and energy and a limitless range of issues on which they would like to be seen to be making progress. So Simon’s (1957) satisficing model of decision-making and administrative behaviour applies to them. They do not—cannot—search for the best solution to the problems they would like to do something about. Solutions that are good enough will do. Hence, when someone can deliver a prepackaged model that is good enough, they see it as an efficient use of their time to buy it instead of initiating a search for the best solution. This is how it can come to pass that 20 American states can copy almost verbatim a Californian law, with 10 of them even copying two serious typographical errors (Walker 1969: 881–2).

7 Roy (2017) empirically finds radicalised Islamists to be young and devotees of violent youth cultures that are also manifest in Western films such as Scarface or Rambo, in the philosophy of Malcolm X, in Southern icons such as Che Guevara and Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army and in Eastern generational revolts such as the violence of China’s Cultural Revolution or the Khmer Rouge’s hatred of their forefathers. Islamic State suicide bombers are, for Roy, Islamist versions of the radicalism, the youth and the self-destructive violence of those who commit mass murders in American schools.
The more powerless, disorganised and poorly resourced an advocacy group is, the more likely it is that model mongering will be their best strategy. It is an approach that produces political victories for powerless groups. We see in Part II many examples of model mongering in pursuit of political agendas, such as demands for redress and accountability. Examples include models used for development issues by the indigenous advocacy groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh, by networks of political prisoners in Myanmar and by numerous local women’s rights groups across South Asia. At the same time, it is a strategy that does not refute the proposition that powerful groups generally prevail over powerless ones. Most of the model monger’s models are put on the backburner most of the time because coercion keeps them there. Yet the strategy means that resources are not wasted on detailed development of losing campaigns. Model mongering minimises development costs and maximises reform opportunities by transmitting many models through political networks. Properly strategised model mongering activity has the ability to evolve in response to its own shortcomings and to the challenges that emerge at different times. Effective model mongers put in significant resources only when they see cracks begin to open in structures of coercion. The International Centre for Transitional Justice model mongers truth commissions and prosecutions of war criminals in this way. It does not waste resources on campaigns to prosecute Tony Blair or George Bush over Iraq because gaping cracks in the structures of coercion are not sufficiently open.

An important structural variable in model mongering occurs through interaction and observational learning. A theory of modelling that takes the model mongering of powerless groups seriously invites us to take a different view of the way power is exercised—a less pessimistic one, if you will. In addition to the reasons already adduced, this source of power for the powerless arises from the fact that persuasiveness depends less on the power of the promoter than on the power of the model. The power of a model that is taken seriously is that, by being taken seriously, it sets the framework for debate. The model monger has succeeded in putting on the table the terms of debate—the terms in the model. The model is the product of a cross-constituency consensus across ‘peaceland’ (Autesserre 2014), or so the adept model monger says. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that can pull the right model out of their top drawer are particularly likely to enrol the support of donors for the model when they can also draw on the power of a major disaster or a sudden political vacuum.
There is power in the choice within the model as to what the central issues are, what is left off the agenda by the model (Lukes 1974) and the terms of its discourse (Clegg 1989). There is power in what is said, what is unsaid and how the saying is framed. A model such as ‘transitional justice’ can seduce audiences wider than reformers can capture without the model because of the properties of the model. These wider audiences are the model misers and the model modernisers. Model misers and modernisers are persuaded not by the imperatives of solving the problems addressed by the model, but by the virtues of the modelling as modelling. It could be argued that the UN agencies in South Asia with their specified focus on justice through a broad range of policies, such as institutional reforms, reconstruction, gender mainstreaming and peacebuilding, are sometimes model misers and at other times model modernisers.

Model misers are adopters of models who have a preference for copying over innovating because of a desire to economise on model debugging and on marshalling political support for the idea. Thinking through new ways of doing things is costly in time, money and conflict. Reinventing the wheel can be inefficient. The centre has a comparative advantage over the periphery in developing new models; the periphery has a comparative advantage in adapting existing models to local conditions. Model misers are actors who decide that the resources are not available for a research effort to solve a problem from first principles. We might say that model misers are those who are happy to satisfice (Simon 1957) by rummaging through a garbage can full of models that are known to have been applied to similar problems elsewhere (Cohen et al. 1972). Model-following balances the advantage of debugging against the disadvantage of a less-than-perfect fit to local conditions. Any solution to a problem is likely to entail some defects that are universally agreed to be defects but that can be readily debugged with a little experience. Received models have the advantage of being cleared of these obvious bugs. This does not mean that they will not be full of features that are bugs in the eyes of one constituency and things of beauty in the eyes of others. Nevertheless, it is an undoubted advantage of buying rather than writing software that it is debugged, independently of the judgment of how well designed the software is for any given purpose.

Modelling is efficient in many contexts. But model misers risk becoming model morons when they attempt transplantation without local adaptation. In Chapter 12, we conclude this is a widespread problem with peacebuilding. Debugging removes the glaring bugs that seem
uncontroversially bad in any context. Yet new contexts breed new bugs. In previous centuries, the horizon that the emulator could scan in search of ideas was limited. The possibilities for an efficient search for ideas to copy have exploded with the internet. Public policy analysis and good strategic decision-making in business are not the art of muddling through, as Braybrooke and Lindblom (1970) would have us believe. They are the art of modelling through. The effective policymaker does not allow herself to be surrounded by a muddle; she is surrounded by an information system about the problem and evidence about models that have elsewhere been applied to analysing and solving such problems.

At the same time, it is true that model morons are common. The ubiquity of model morons is explained by the seductive exaggerations of model missionaries who are insensitive to context and cultural difference and the dollar appeal of model mercenaries. Furthermore, we see in the next section that the identitive appeal (Etzioni 1965) that has model modernisers in its grip can also readily account for the adoption of patently ineffective models.

*Model modernisers* are actors who adopt models from the centre for reasons of legitimacy, to harness the identitive power of being perceived as modern, civilised or progressive. Models are adopted when they appeal to identities held dear. Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that the formal structures of many organisations reflect the myths of their institutional environments instead of the demands of their work activities. Meyer and Rowan (1977: 352) hypothesise: ‘Organizations that incorporate societally legitimated rationalized elements in their formal structures maximize their legitimacy and increase their resources and survival capacities.’ In the peacebuilding business, some of this legitimation is more colonial than ‘societal’: organisations on the periphery (including states themselves) maximise their legitimacy by demonstrating that they have incorporated the most ‘developed’ models into their governance structures.

Having an election overseen by an election commission is a symbol of progress and modernising reform (see Chapter 11). So, if you are a Congolese president, you compete with other African presidents in creating the appearance of free and fair elections, when Congolese elections are not; the appearance of being overseen by electoral commissions that are independent, when they are not. In earlier eras of the evolution of the state system, being seen as Christian was more important than having a constitution that provides for elections. Hence Davies (1997: 429) can
comment about a fourteenth-century royal marriage to form a union of Poland and Lithuania in model-moderniser terms: ‘Lithuania, still ruled by a pagan élite and anxious about the rise of neighboring Moscow, was looking for an entrée into the mainstream of Christendom.’

Meyer and Rowan (1977: 356) go further and suggest that, to thrive, organisations must not only conform to myths that are crucial to legitimacy, they must also maintain the appearance that the myths work. For example, many militaries followed the United States into Afghanistan or Iraq to become the kind of modern military that fights a ‘war on terror’ in a modern way. Debates raged over whether different versions of counterterrorism or counterinsurgency (COIN) were really the most up-to-date thinking for military modernisers. In this process of organisations maintaining the appearance that their legitimating myths work, the perceived efficacy of the modelling is reproduced—even when it fails.

Westphalian weaknesses and strengths

The Eurocentrism of dominant understandings of world politics creates challenges for a book like this as we move towards an understanding of Proposition 3. Barkawi and Laffey (2006: 332) reflect that traditional studies of international relations and security studies have rarely investigated how less powerful and more marginalised actors make sense of their historical and colonial experiences. The multiplex and integral relationships among less and more powerful actors are often investigated not for what they are, but for the use of great power politics. For realism, with its focus on great powers, one-sided analysis of this kind is foundational. For some critical approaches in the field of IR, the weak are of interest but primarily as ‘bearers of rights and objects of emancipation, that is, for their normative value in Western political theoretic terms’ (Barkawi and Laffey 2006: 333).

Hence, a learning about Afghanistan happens less because powerful states have been deeply interested in promoting peace in Afghanistan and more because of how it relates to great power rivalry and the balance of power in the world security theatre. Similarly, national liberation struggles in the aftermath of World War II were perceived through the prism of Cold War superpower rivalry. This myopia occurs in current analyses of armed resistance to great power domination as terrorism. In this section, we offer a little taste of our interpretation of colonial experiences of cleavage and conflict.
The state itself, networked into a state system, is one important model of modernity for pacifying spaces and enrolling state allies to warlike projects. This model was born at the Westphalia peace conference. It took place in a Europe that had been devastated by the Thirty Years’ War, from 1618 to 1648. Those 30 years of cross-cutting political and religious conflicts killed one-fifth of the population of Central Europe—from war deaths, disease and hunger. The Westphalian path out of the morass was a system of independent European states that would enjoy a monopoly of force in their own territory, but which agreed on a set of international rules of noninterference in other states with a different religion or politics. The Westphalian design was also for a balance of power that would check military ambition: no state should become so militarily powerful as to dominate all other states combined.

Colonialism saw European model missionaries carry the Westphalian blueprint with them to the Americas, Africa and Asia. In some of the colonised territories—for example, the Highlands of New Guinea—locals genuinely appreciated the arrival of a superordinate power that could mediate peace across a galaxy of intertribal wars and enforce peace agreements militarily when needed (Braithwaite et al. 2010a: 56, 116; Diamond 2013: 148–9). Whether locals appreciated colonial gunboats or hated them, colonial empires mostly succeeded in pacifying large swathes of territory, just as earlier empires had pacified domestic conflict. Indeed, the largest sweeps of pacified space on the globe were empires that became states, such as China, Russia and the United States. The United States was a kind of empire asserted by military suppression of the local population and other colonial powers—the United Kingdom, Spain, France—that had formerly dominated large swathes of the territory and was consolidated by the Civil War among the states of 1861–65.

In Chapter 5, we interpret the Mughal Empire in India as an exception to this pattern. The reason for the exception is telling in terms of our cascades framework. Because the Mughal Empire was so powerful in the sense of having many more troops at its disposal than the British Empire had worldwide, the only way the British could defeat it was through a policy of military fragmentation. As a consequence, to this day, no one enjoys a monopoly of force in Kashmir and it is possible for Maoist factions to control significant rural spaces in a majority of India’s states (see Chapter 5). As a further consequence, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are ‘extremely violent societies’ in many different ways (Karstedt 2012, 2014).
That part of the Westphalian blueprint that regulated noninterference in the domestic affairs of territory under the control of another state also limited inter-colony warfare slugged out by the gunships of European powers. At least, this was true once nodes and territories of colonial control were settled. Yet, as Niall Ferguson (2006) and Stacey Haldi (2003) concluded, when empires break up, balances of power are unsettled and war becomes likely—in particular, twentieth-century violence ‘was in large measure a consequence of the decline and fall of the large multi-ethnic empires that had dominated the world in 1900’ (Ferguson 2006: xii). This was illustrated in Chapter 2 with the scrambling for pieces of the disintegrating Ottoman and Chinese empires, in the onset of World War I and in the demise of the Habsburg Empire as a consequence of that war. Revolutionary model mongers, such as Mao in China, saw cracks begin to open in the imperial coercion that subdued defiance below deterrence (Proposition 1). In Chapter 5, we conceive the decline of the British Empire as critical for understanding its inability to manage communal violence between Hindus and Muslims in India in the 1940s. As British hegemony cracked, it likewise proved beyond the empire’s capacity to subdue fighting between Arabs and Israelis in Palestine, Sunnis and Shia in Iraq, Mau Mau and whites in Kenya, republicans and loyalists in Northern Ireland and Europeans and Africans in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Pinker (2011: 132) claims that ‘zero is the number of developed countries that have expanded their territory since the late 1940s by conquering another country’, although China (which was a poor country then) conquered Tibet and then subsequently used military means to gradually push further forward its Himalayan frontiers with India and Pakistan. Zacher’s (2001: 137) data show how dramatic has been the drop in territorial wars, which result in the redistribution of territory, since the United Nations consolidated the sacralisation of arbitrary colonial borders. For a major power like France, war with another major European power, such as the United Kingdom, Germany or Russia, no longer makes sense in the way it so often did before 1945. Such a war today would devastate the major cities of both countries, destroy their economies and both would cease being major powers. Even proxy wars in other people’s countries ceased making much sense after Vietnam, though middle powers such as Iran and Saudi Arabia continue to ignite them without success from Yemen to Syria. It is cyberwar that is proving to make more sense today for combative major powers.
In this way, the Westphalian order came to define permanent borders for every corner of the planet. It is not that it is a better model than that of the city-state, the Bedouin tribe, the Mongol or Chinese empires, nor that it has lasted as long as these models. Rather, the Westphalian state is what model modernisers must do in conditions of modernity. Otherwise, they have no legitimacy, no seat at tables that settle world order. Nevertheless, the Westphalian order does have some pluses: it has cascaded pacification domestically and non-interference internationally.

The balance of power broke down when the Westphalian order came under challenge from varied visions of empire—from the Ottoman Empire, from the empire through which Napoleon sought to rule Europe, from the twenty-first-century caliphate of Islamic State. By 1812, however, the power of France and the Ottoman Empire was more or less constrained within the ‘Westphalian state plus colonies’ model. Even so, before, during and particularly after the relatively peaceful century from Napoleon to 1911 (see Pinker 2011: 118–22), the Westphalian state system continued to prove vulnerable to interstate conflict cascading through alliance systems (Haldi 2003). World Wars I and II surpassed all previous slaughter in the history of humankind because of violence cascading from one alliance partner to another. These histories are among those that inform Proposition 3, even though the contemporary cleavages that cause most slaughter discussed in Part II are infrequently defined by contested interstate boundaries:

**Proposition 3:** Violence cascades through alliance structures when a cleavage motivates mobilisation of alliances or unsettling of power balances.

**From state to local fragmentation**

In *Why Wars Widen*, Stacey Haldi (2003) found that the longer (interstate) wars persist the more likely they are to cascade to more states joining the fight. An interesting question is whether the empirical support for Haldi’s theory of predation and balancing, which she found in several centuries of data, would hold up for local civil wars. There is no shortage of analyses of single persistent wars cascading to a proliferation of more fighting factions, as in Casie Copeland’s comment on South Sudan that: ‘We have a much more chaotic situation on the ground than, let’s say, two years ago, when we had one government, one armed opposition’ (cited in Craig 2017: 1).
Haldi (2003) distinguishes between predation and balancing as motivations for states joining a war. She found that, when the political costs of losing a war are low, states are more likely to join wars because they wish to grab an opportunity for predation or an opportunity to gain a strategic asset (to take territory or hurt a longstanding foe, for example). When the political costs of losing a war are high, states are only likely to join for defensive reasons, to preserve a balance that protects them. Balancing means the attempt to prevent an adverse shift in a balance of power. This result could be tested in contexts such as exist in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). For village warlords who start out destitute, the costs of defeat of their fighters in battle are not high when warlords can sue for integration into the Congolese army. They are especially not high compared with the predatory gains from seizing gold or coltan mines. So predation drives cascades into war alliances in contexts where resources are rich and people are poor. Yet in Congolese contexts where a local balance of peaceful accommodation has been achieved, the arrival of a predatory warlord to upset that balance can motivate the formation of village militias (such as many Mai-Mai militias) to join in defence of that balance.

Contemporary wars frequently involve joint action of local with national or international actors, in which local actors are oriented not to national master cleavages, but to local ones. A cleavage is an ‘overarching issue dimension’ such as religious, ethnic or political conflict. The local politics of a cleavage may be quite different from the form it takes at the centre. Central actors pursue central power through alliances that connect the politics of a central cleavage to rather different interests than those that play out in local networks. Local actors enrol central actors to secure the advantages they care about, as well as vice versa. The essence of the politics of contemporary war and peace is not centralised power, but the interaction between the local, the national and the transnational. It can be the interaction that drives cascades of violence.

Propositions 4–10 explore a variety of variables that open up both master cleavages and fissures within fissures. Kalyvas is keen not to construe the politics of local actors (for example, at the village level) as mere local replications or manifestations of central cleavages. Kalyvas (2003, 2006: Ch. 11) further argues that the local and the supralocal interact in the onset of violence through mechanisms of cleavage and alliance.

At the time of writing, Saudi Arabia is fighting an attempted Iran-backed Houthi military takeover of Yemen. This revives an old proxy rivalry that dates at least to Saudi Arabia and Iran backing opposed mujahidin groups
in battles for a share of the control of Afghanistan between 1992 and 1995 (Rashid 2010b: 199). Islamic State is also fighting the Shia Houthis. This is a manifestation of the current three-way cleavage across the Middle East—of Islamic State (and Al-Qaeda–related competitors) versus Iran-backed fighters versus Saudi-backed groups—wherein two of these recurrently concentrate their fighting on defeating the third at a specific locale. The two that combine are different in different places, depending on local factors; which two are fighting against the third is sometimes driven by balancing imperatives in a locale. So Syria differs from Yemen. In Syria, Islamic State and Saudi-backed groups both fight against the Iranian-backed Assad regime. Yet everywhere, the fundamentals of this three-way master cleavage are torn more widely apart, in combination with anti-American, anti-Russian and anti-Israel cleavages, Turkish–Kurd and other cleavages, to rip the region asunder. At the local level, however, the Yemen conflict is driven by local grabs for power by very local politicians with whom Houthi and anti-Houthi fighters ally.

This is a way of restating the themes of Autesserre’s (2010, 2014) work on conflict in the DRC (see also Chapter 2). Conflicts start out very locally in Autesserre’s narrative, but are then enrolled by national and transnational players (particularly the militaries of Rwanda and Uganda). Twice, Rwanda’s President Paul Kagame decided to enrol both local Congolese actors who were estranged from their president and supralocal actors such as the Pentagon (Reyntjens 2009: 57–79) to the project of regime change in the DRC. While Rwanda’s first successful project of regime change in Congo (Zaire) (1996) and its second unsuccessful one (1998 – present) caused a lot of killing, much more killing followed from subsequent cascading of violence, with local politicians and warlords enrolling the DRC Government, some faction of its army, the Rwandan army, the Ugandan army or some other foreign or Congolese army to their projects—in circumstances in which a centralised state monopoly of force had disintegrated. This leads to our fourth hypothesis:

**Proposition 4:** Disintegration of the capacity of a single legitimate armed force to pacify a space through its domination over all competing armed groups enables the cascading of violence across that territory.

The concept of the state defined as a territorial unit with a monopoly of force is rather too Westphalian for contemporary realities. Today, all Western societies have more private police than public police in the employ of the state; most have far more than twice as many (Johnston and
These ratios of private to public monopolisation of force tend to be much higher than two-to-one in post-conflict societies such as South Africa (Johnston and Shearing 2003). These numbers do not include corporate information technology staff, who are the frontline law enforcers against cybercrime and the cyberwarfare that we mentioned earlier as the emerging form of warfare among major powers. While most public police patrols are unarmed in many countries, large numbers of private security operatives patrol with guns.

In post-conflict Timor-Leste, our Peacebuilding Compared interviews at the two leading private security providers revealed that these were the two largest private employers in the country (Braithwaite et al. 2012: 147–8). There are other armed private groups in these spaces, such as private military contractors like Blackwater in Iraq—successors to organisations such as Sandline that enjoy less autonomy from state power than did Sandline. In the 1993–2002 wars in Congo-Brazzaville, the state military did not count among the three major combatant groups. Rather, these were three private militias under the control of each of the three major political leaders in the country (Clark 2008). Some of the funding for these private armies came from foreign states and foreign oil companies. In these Congo-Brazzaville wars, senior state military commanders became relevant only when they deserted with some troops to join one of the three major private militias. Finally, there are more fragmented terrorist movements active in both ‘peaceful’ and ‘post-conflict’ societies.

When we use the expression ‘state monopoly of force’ in this book, it is a loose usage to describe a non-monopoly that is actually a public–private oligopoly of armed force in which one legitimate armed force can pacify a space through its domination over all competing armed groups within the space. Our hypothesis is that when this capacity of a legitimate armed force to dominate all others disintegrates, violence cascades. Chapter 2 introduced this problem through its description of post-Soviet, pre-Taliban Afghanistan, post-Gaddafi Libya, post-Saddam Iraq and post-Mobutu DRC. In each of these four contexts, large private militias controlled much of the countryside, many of them with external sponsors such as Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency in Afghanistan; the United States directly funding the Sunni Awakening in Iraq; Qatar and Egypt funding armed groups on different sides in Libya; and Rwanda, Uganda and other regional states funding competing armed factions in
eastern DRC. A common thread across these four catastrophes is a leader who decided they could better dominate politically if the country lacked a legitimate monopoly of force that might mount a coup.

The president of the DRC cannot control the east of his country, so he hands feudal control over large chunks of it to rapacious private armies and units or factions of the state military who are strong enough to demand it. Gaddafi weakened the capacity of the central Libyan military by fragmenting it, with his sons having control over key units. Fear of a coup led both Mobutu and his successor presidents of the DRC to do something quite similar. The downside of being Mobutu’s state without a coherent army is that an ‘army with a state’ (tiny Rwanda) could effectively invade, enrol discontented local proxies and dominate its massive neighbour.

Former Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki (2006–14) likewise fragmented and so enfeebled his military that, initially, comparatively puny Islamic State forces could overrun them in Sunni areas. Al-Maliki pushed aside competent Sunni commanders in favour of Shia officers distinguished by their determination to crush al-Maliki’s political opponents rather than for their determination or competence as military commanders. The rise of Islamic State can be explained in part by military social selection for venality, incompetence and cowardice. Al-Maliki established separate chains of military command that reported directly to him and then put in place the further insurance of funding his own private security forces. In Iraq, we saw the unedifying spectacle of different floors of the interior ministry controlled by different armed factions with disputes sometimes settled by assassinations in the ministry car park (Bayley and Perito 2010: 34). After the infiltration of the ministry by the Badr Brigade of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq in 2005 and the Sadrists Mahdi Army from 2006 to 2007, the police became a tool for sectarian interests (Saikal 2014: 170). Post-Soviet Afghanistan was different in that it was Pakistan’s ISI rather than a domestic leader, which fragmented any prospect of a monopoly of armed force. This was because, until the Taliban came along, the ISI did not like the look of any of the armed factions with a prospect of military domination.

Empirically, Monica Duffy Toft (2010) has shown why such societies are so conflict-riven. In her study of 116 civil wars since 1940, Toft found that credible security sector reform that delivered unified domination of a state’s territory by its security sector reduced recurrence of another
war after one war had ended. Toft argued that peace agreements deliver a variety of benefits to combatants: protection from physical destruction of themselves and their property, usually development and reconstruction assistance, as well as a share of top offices and lower-level jobs in postwar governments. If peace agreements deliver such benefits without the assurance of a credible threat of punishment, the peace will be vulnerable to cheating. It will also risk tactical ceasefires that are gamed as respite to refocus, retrain, rest and rearm. Toft (2010) finds the quantitative pattern of post-1940 conflict supports the hypothesis that peace agreements increase the prospects of peace only when they both credibly promise benefits and credibly threaten harm. If they promise benefits without threatening harm, they increase prospects of further war. If sticks are to be as credible as carrots, effective domestic security sector reform is required so that the military and police of the post-conflict state can punish spoilers of the peace. If necessary, UN peacekeepers can perform that role until the domestic security sector is unified for the purpose. The United Nations cannot keep doing this forever; part of its job must be the required security sector reform. One way or another, the implication of Toft’s analysis is risk of civil war unless the legitimate are made powerful or the powerful are made legitimate.8

8 John Braithwaite and his co-authors had not read Toft’s empirical results when a previous Peacebuilding Compared book was written (Braithwaite et al. 2012). The combination of having absorbed Toft now and the further engagement of Peacebuilding Compared with the recent data on war cascading to war in Libya, Iraq and Congo as a result of a want of a unified security sector that could disarm fighting factions causes us to reinterpret the data for that case (Timor-Leste). Timor-Leste is a tiny country of a million people with militarily powerful neighbours such as Indonesia and Australia. So, when the separatist forces of Falintil gained independence from Indonesia in 1999, Falintil’s policy was to be like Costa Rica and do without a military. What could little Timor-Leste achieve militarily if Indonesia or Australia decided to invade them again? In the end, the postwar Government of Timor-Leste reversed this policy and converted Falintil into a national army. Seven years later, UN peacekeepers were forced to return when factions of that army deserted with their weapons and sought to take over the state. Firefights also broke out in the capital between the army and heavily armed police. Ten police were killed and 30 wounded by the army as they surrendered under a UN flag. With a huge proportion of impoverished Timor-Leste’s budget going into the military, we were convinced that leaders such as Xanana Gusmao erred in reversing their previous policy of doing without an army. That conclusion and analysis were weak in their counterfactual analysis. We did not ask if cleavages of a similar kind might have opened up even had there not been an army. Might fighting, albeit with less sophisticated weapons, have broken out in any case? Then who would put that fighting down? Hence, John Braithwaite is now inclined to the more conservative, Toftian analysis. Where Timor-Leste and the United Nations erred was not in reversing the decision to do without an army, but in failing to make security sector reform work to create a unified security sector under democratic control. As in Iraq, Libya and Congo, in Timor-Leste, the roots of the problem were not internal to the security sector, but in the way the sector was politically controlled and used. Different political factions within the state harnessed cleavages the war left behind in the security sector to make factions of the security sector their personal political militias.
Towards a Micro–Macro Understanding of Cascades

Toft’s (2010) analysis must be qualified by caution against excessive spending on the security sector. There is considerable evidence that high levels of defence expenditure slow economic development (e.g. Dunne 2015; Galvin 2003; Nikolaidou 2012). More directly, Collier (2009: 113) found that states that have experienced a civil war are more likely to experience another if their military spending is high. While a security sector sufficiently credible to be a guarantor of the rule of law against internal armed groups is imperative, excessive security sector investment can be dangerous in the threatening message it sends to neighbours, in threatening a militarisation of the society internally (see Chapter 6 on Pakistan, for example) and in constricting economic growth. This book shows that, in the worst cases, militaries become guarantors of private monopolies or even monopolies controlled by military officers or units. Collier (2009: 115–16) further found that one of the most disastrous effects of militarisation of the economy is that military armories become the cheapest supplier in the illegal arms market, making military weapons cheap. Philip Killicoat found, when working with Collier (2009), that cheap weapons increase the risk of civil war.

In the DRC, the cleavage–alliance interactions that cause most killings involve bits of states (such as factions within the national army or foreign militaries) and dozens of local armed groups of fewer than 1,000 fighters, such as Mai-Mai militias—sons of the soil defending their villages from ‘foreigners’. These are the kinds of local cleavage–alliance interactions that become most devastating when Westphalian norms collapse in a region such as the Great Lakes of Africa. Yet World Wars I and II showed (as we saw in Chapter 2) that cleavage–alliance cascades can be even more deadly when the alliance partners that are enrolled to violence are Westphalian states.

Security dilemmas

Once alliances begin to cascade behind violence on different sides of a cleavage, security dilemmas can arise that further accelerate cascades, as in the onset of World War I discussed in previous chapters. In a security dilemma, each side’s efforts to achieve its own security inadvertently threaten the other side. Security dilemmas arise when two or more actors each feel insecure in relation to other actors. None of the actors involved wants war, but, as each actor prepares to make itself more secure, the other
actors interpret its preparations as threatening. Cycles of unintended provocations can emerge that culminate in one actor mistakenly deciding that it is best for them to attack before they are attacked. Congolese village elders can meet to decide that unless we rise up to kill the Hutu or Tutsi ‘foreigners’ (refugees) in our district, they will kill us. This may be false. Local Tutsis, most of whom are not recent refugees from Rwanda but people who have long lived and been accepted in the district, may have no intention of attacking the indigenous Congolese ethnic group. Sadly, however, misperceived cleavages can cascade to more violence as local Tutsis call in the support of an armed group to counterattack with the backing of the Rwandan military. Terror and insecurity foster herding by people who cling to whatever belonging they think might protect them.

As a senior UN police officer in Bunia, DRC, said in a 2012 interview:

> The politics in the district goes like the wind. If the wind blows for democracy, politics here goes for democracy. If the wind goes for militarisation, politics here goes for militarisation. People look out for the direction of the wind.

Hence, we can see our Proposition 5 as being partly about a herding cascade:

**Proposition 5:** Once cleavages put alliance cascades on the march, security dilemmas can further accelerate the cascade.

Sadly, whether people flee or stand and fight in the face of these dilemmas, violence cascades. Hutu refugees who had fled Rwanda after the 1994 genocide against Tutsis opted for flight rather than fight in response to the 1996 advance of Rwandan-backed armed groups. Then the Rwandan-backed forces pursued them right across the DRC. This chase cascaded violence from hotspot to hotspot. It cascaded a countergenocide in which probably 233,000 Hutu refugees perished, most of whom had no involvement in the Rwandan genocide (Reyntjens 2009: 80–101). Many were cut down; many died of disease and starvation; 600 drowned in one terrible incident when they tried to reach safety by swimming across the Congo River. A Tutsi–Hutu genocide cascaded from a Hutu–Tutsi genocide (which, in turn, had cascaded from earlier genocidal cascades involving these two groups in Rwanda and Burundi). As this cycle cascaded through the chase across the DRC, other unrelated villages through which refugees passed were caught up in the cascade, as were the Congolese national military.
Part II finds this reflected in South Asian small and large conflicts. In Bangladesh, Biharis, most of whom were Partition refugees (*mohajirs*), were slaughtered when they were perceived to be pro-Pakistan. Plantation Tamils, originally brought in by the British from South India to work in the tea plantations, were feared and targeted by the Sri Lankan state because, without evidence, they were believed to be supporters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Nevertheless, our data on the recent history of South Asia in Part II suggest that cascades from security dilemmas of this kind may be less important to the present and future character of war for most of the globe than the formidable importance they had in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The micro cascades of herding violence that spread across Congolese spot fires in the early 1990s morphed into a more macro security dilemma in the late 1990s that cascaded even more terrible violence in 1998. We have seen that Rwanda, in particular, saw itself in a security dilemma with respect to Rwandan Hutu génocidaires who had fled to Congo. The engagement of Rwanda’s high command with the Israeli defence forces after its genocide affirmed the security dilemma. The Israelis advised offensive, pre-emptive war outside Rwanda’s borders (Roessler and Verhoeven 2016: 150). Philip Roessler (2016) argues that, after president
Laurent Kabila’s victory over his predecessor, Sese Seko Mobutu, backed by Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Angola (with support from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tanzania and other African states), Kabila was in a ‘coup–civil war trap’. Roessler (2016) shows empirically that such coup–civil war traps are widespread security dilemmas across Africa. The dilemma was that Kabila had to share power with ethnic rivals who had been part of his coalition to overthrow Mobutu, yet he had reason to fear that these rivals, such as eastern Tutsis, might mobilise their powersharing control of parts of the state in a coup d’état. Kabila therefore excluded those competitors, purging them from the powersharing deal.

Roessler (2016) shows that purges against former co-conspirators who worked together to take over African states are a recurrent African pattern of cascading from one form of power grab to another. Indeed, Roessler found that rulers are systematically more likely to exclude co-conspirators than other stakeholders from power. The judgment is frequently made that a coup d’état is the bigger risk (because the partner in power has their hands on some of the levers of power). The risk of civil war that can result from totally excluding ethnic rivals from power is then viewed as the lesser risk. It is easier to mount a grab for power from a base of control over one part of the state than it is to win a war as an excluded faction against the might of the whole state infrastructure. This is nevertheless a trap. Laurent Kabila was a common case of a leader who cascaded waves of civil war by exclusionary attempts at coup-proofing his state. As Roessler expresses it:

Though rarely analysed in this way, Africa’s Great War that erupted in the DRC in August 1998 is a paradigmatic case of a co-conspirator civil war. Original fieldwork in the DRC and Rwanda illustrates how the expulsion order by Congo’s President, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, against his comrades in the RPF [Rwanda Patriotic Front] in late July 1998 represented a preemptive strike to coup-proof his regime at the price of triggering the most devastating war since World War II. (Roessler 2016: 232)

The coup–civil war trap has been most acute in Africa in recent decades. In the previous 200 years, however, when new nation-states were recurrently being formed on the ashes of disintegrating empires in Europe, the Middle East and West and Central Asia, this trap was also a recurrent cascade (Wimmer 2013). Andreas Wimmer (2013: 3) has a particular theory of how the power imbalances caused by breakups of empires led to war: ‘A world of multi-ethnic empires, dynastic kingdoms, tribal confederacies and city-states’ was overturned for ‘a world of states each ruled in the name of a nation’. Each of these nations was socially
constructed in modernity as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 2004). Diffusion of the nation-state form of governance was itself a cascade phenomenon that was ‘both the cause and [the] consequence’ of ‘waves of wars’ (Wimmer 2013: 4). Across the globe, starting in Europe, with African decolonisation as the final frontier of the process, nation-states consolidated power mainly by dismembering the hegemony of empires that formerly controlled most of the planet. ‘Waves of wars’ of ethnic control then arose to define the character of the ‘nation’ that controlled each ‘state’ (Wimmer 2013). According to Wimmer, this process of the global diffusion of modelling France, the United Kingdom and the United States as the early successes of the nation-state form happened in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a successor process to Charles Tilly’s (1992) diffusion of the sovereign state in the three previous centuries. These were Tilly’s states that were ‘made by war and that made war’ from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

Roessler’s (2016) coup–civil war trap is now infrequent in the Middle East and Europe, although it still happens, as we saw with the breakup of Yugoslavia and Nouri al-Maliki’s 2006–14 regime in Iraq. Al-Maliki’s majoritarian Shia regime was theoretically designed to achieve conditions of peaceful inclusion of Sunni and Kurdish Iraqi power blocs. We have seen that al-Maliki’s fear of overthrow by them, however, motivated coup-aversion through progressive exclusion of his ethnic rivals from effective access to genuine levers of state power. Al-Maliki’s ethnopolitical exclusion, particularly through ‘Shiafication’ of Iraq’s security forces, replaced coup risk with civil war risk. It caused new cascades of civil war that are not yet extinguished (Roessler 2016: Ch. 11). Likewise, the Syrian Alawite regime’s exclusion of Sunni Arabs, Sunni Kurds and Druze from access to levers of power they might use to mount a coup was important to understanding the failed civil war launched by the Muslim Brotherhood (1976–82) that cascaded to the current Syrian civil war (Roessler 2016: Ch. 11).

Cascades from multilayered security dilemmas are thus fundamental to understanding the modern history of violence, even though a conclusion of this book is that the security dilemma may have already become less fundamental to understanding the future of violence, at least in South Asia.
Conclusion

This chapter has considered the limits of macro explanation in international relations without credible micro foundations. Micro dynamics of cleavage in most conflicts are grafted on to macro cleavages and vice versa. That theme has been engaged at many levels. Rational choice accounts that construe passive deterrence as potent and as a foundation for realist international relations theory are construed as less credible micro foundations than models that balance defiance–deterrence. Defiance to coercion can exceed deterrence—from suicide bombers back to the Roman Empire throwing Christians to the lions.

Outcomes are driven not only by whether defiance effects do or do not exceed deterrence effects, but also by whether deterrence is dynamic rather than passive. That is, deterrence tends to have more leverage when it gradually but inexorably escalates to the level required to change behaviour, but only after iterated dialogue is attempted first, ideally to persuade fighters of the injustice of war, followed by iterated non-war attempts at deterrence.9 Dynamically responsive deterrence (Braithwaite 2018) averts a rush to coercion, as we discuss in Chapter 12. It averts threats. Instead, it displays a responsive enforcement pyramid of deterrents through which a state or the United Nations is willing to escalate until peace with justice is secured. This inexorability is a set of facts about capability for escalation that are threatening in the background, but not actively threatened in the foreground of diplomacy. Through this responsive lens, we can understand why Saddam Hussein in 1990 opted for defiance. Diplomatic communication with him utterly failed to display inexorability of escalation until the sovereignty of Kuwait was restored. A year later, when the United States urged Shia and Kurds to rise up against Saddam, it is easy to understand why this led them to slaughter. There was no semblance of Shia and Kurd courage being backed by NATO willingness to escalate support for them. So, Saddam defied international pressure again, returning to the slaughter of his own people.

9 Henry Kissinger (2014: 288–9) is a dissenter from this view at least for non-nuclear deterrence: ‘The dilemmas of Vietnam were very much the consequence of academic theories regarding graduated escalation that had sustained the Cold War; while conceptually coherent in terms of a standoff between nuclear superpowers, they were less applicable to an asymmetric conflict fought against an adversary pursuing a guerrilla strategy. Some of the expectations of the relationship of economic reform to political evolution proved unfeasible in Asia.’ Kissinger is certainly right that escalation from war to more intensive war is unlikely to deter and will build counterproductive defiance unless there is a will to push on all the way to total victory, as in World War II or Sri Lanka in 2009 (Chapter 8, this volume). At least that is the interpretation proposed in this book.
Fear and greed certainly motivate, as do defiance and grievance. Defiance is particularly ascendant when actors experience humiliation during an existential defence of their identity. Modelling is driven more by the identitive power promoted by model mongers, model modernisers and model missionaries than by rational choice. Some join women’s rights groups that confront sexual and gender-based violence in war for economic and social benefits; most join because of the identitive power of feminist models of resistance. Fear commonly drives herding that defies rational choice, such as herding into security dilemmas. Keynes (1936) tried to instruct economics of this limitation of rational choice when he put his finger on herding (‘animal spirits’) as a cause of economic crisis. All this means one must study in a local way how these micro motivations cascade into something bigger. That is one thing we attempt in Part II.

This chapter has hypothesised that another reason attention to the micro is imperative for the peacebuilder is that the cleavages that animate local anger are usually not the master cleavages of the war’s grand narrative. One recent Congolese mini-war was triggered by an extramarital affair that cascaded to a murder and then a conflict in which men were castrated and hundreds killed (Gettleman 2016). The grand narratives of World War I tell us nothing about the cleavages that agitated the Black Hand in Sarajevo. Hence, we concur with Kalyvas (2003, 2006: Ch. 11) and Autesserre (2010) that international peace agreements that address the root causes of a war, as constructed by the big players, are limited unless complemented by local peace processes that address local cleavages hotspot by hotspot.

Effective peacebuilding is therefore neither determinedly micro nor determinedly macro. Rather, it listens; it has an ear for interactive micro–macro resolutions. Attending to the cacophony of shouting across micro–macro divides, it seeks to calm and caress the clamour into a symphony of shared purpose for peace. The music metaphor is apt because, as Bougainville peacekeepers have often repeated, the guns available to peacekeepers are less useful than the instruments in military bands that can attract people together when combined with good food (Braithwaite et al. 2010b). Astute peacekeeping seeks arrangements for the micro and macro governance of spaces that are granted legitimacy at those different levels. Then, and perhaps only then, a locally and nationally legitimate monopoly of armed force can regulate spoilers of the peace. Support and security for the refugees who pose such a risk of igniting a new war—the next proposition addressed in Chapter 4—also become possible.
In all this, we agree with Kalyvas (2003: 480) that a danger is an ‘epistemic preference for the universal over the particular’. Local cleavages among peoples who might not speak national languages are the hardest to access and paint on a regional canvas in this book. Equally, we must steer clear of analysis so obsessed with the defiant and the particular that it fails to conceive national militaries and great powers as capable of deterrence. Local cleavages are often harnessed by the military might of forces such as the Rwandan military for decisive regime change in places such as eastern DRC. Afghan tribesmen endlessly enrol great powers to their projects by telling foreign soldiers that their clan’s local rivals are Taliban (or anti-communists), when they are not. To understand how to prevent cascades of killing, we must grasp how macro cleavages and their master narratives are exploited for local advantage and how micro cleavages are exploited by larger actors.

This is a complex business in a case such as the African Great Lakes cascade, where there are so many micro and macro cleavages that have been attracted to fight it out in an anomic space with actors—local and international—enrolling one against another every which way. The positive reading of complexity is that it provides the peacebuilder with many points of intervention where, if only in one small area, an ‘island of civility’ (Kaldor 1999) might be settled and might begin to spread cascades of nonviolence (see Chapter 11).

It is true that effort ought to be made to ensure that post-conflict ‘building’ efforts maximise any circuit-breaking opportunity: one ought to avoid simply rebuilding or reconstructing undesirable hegemonies and cleavages in a society. This underlies the preference of some for the term conflict transformation over conflict resolution. External and national intervention can be effective and legitimate (and often necessary or inevitable). However, one intellectual motive of this book is exploring how exercises in externally driven or supervised transformation, especially when premised on prescribing institutions and procedures, risk the creation of parallel or empty states (or peace processes) removed from people’s everyday experiences of violence. Peacebuilding lessons on the importance of process over outcome and lessons on participation remind us that institutions and peace are best built by the people in the spaces where they fear violence, not built principally by outsiders for the people.

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10 Kalyvas (2003, 2006) discusses this example. Much evidence of it is to be found in our fieldwork notes from Afghanistan.
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