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Embracing the ‘Others’

Objective

The primary objective of this book was to reflect upon a research puzzle ‘why certain hereditary enemy dyads reconcile while others do not’. International reconciliation can indeed succeed as much as it can fail. What is essentially needed here is to identify crucial elements that impede or promote reconciliatory politics between governments and people. This reflection led us first to conceptualize the term reconciliation in international politics. The in-depth analysis on the nature of hereditary enmity helped specify the subject of reconciliation and thus clarify what reconciliation between nation-states means for both government and people.

The second aim was to build up an ideal type of international reconciliation. Reconciliation is a phenomenon that should be located into continuum. Each attempt to reconcile has its own value per se, which should be highly appreciated. It does not have much sense to focus on an immediate failure or success to diagnose the direction of reconciliation. An ideal type construction thus helps us better understand the ultimate form that each case with different setting and process can aim at order to achieve a ‘state of peace’ relation.

The last purpose of this research was to bring about various types of reconciliations. Many authors argued that historical events are unique and thus incomparable across space and across time. However, by building an analytical framework of reconciliation between nation-states, I mainly argued that cross-spatial and cross-temporal cases are comparable, to some extent, as they share the final goal of reconciliation: transforming their historical enmity into amicable relations and thus
stabilizing peaceful relations up to the point that any military conflict becomes impossible between dyads.

Findings

Theorizing international reconciliations is a new challenge as there are innumerable variables affecting the phenomenon. Reconciled dyad generally cannot be seen as resulting from a single predominant cause or condition but rather as a result of a number of interrelated factors. Consequently, I assume the existence of multicausal explanations at different level of analysis. In other words, a complex phenomenon such as reconciliation implies equifinality, with several alternative causes and conditions leading to identical results. However, despite the recognition of equifinality, there is still the necessity to find explanatory variables, trying to understand similarities as well as differences across diverse reconciliatory cases. For this purpose, I presented a conceptual framework that addresses two major questions surrounding this phenomenon: (1) how to quantify different degrees of reconciliation? and (2) how to qualify various reconciliation processes?

Some prerequisite definitions are to be made. I first defined the subject of reconciliation as hereditary enemy states by differentiating them from rival states omnipresent in international politics. By the term Hereditary Enemy States, I mean *dyads that share painful historical events in the past, which left scars either at one side or both of populations; still reflect hostile public mood toward each other deeply ingrained at the present; and express collective fear or distrust projected into the future*. Based on the comparative analysis of interstate enmity, this study defines reconciliation as *the most comprehensive cooperative behaviour between hereditary enemy states that implies both people and state of each side to transform their mutual relations from a state of war toward a state of peace*. Within this analytical framework, I suggested then an ideal type of interstate reconciliation at three levels: international (systemic), regional, and domestic dimensions. These approaches are complementary in promoting reconciliatory politics ranging from politic–diplomatic normalization, economic cooperation to socio-cultural interaction and institutional framework.

Finally, I built up typologies of reconciliation focusing at the interaction among systemic, regional, and domestic elements. The first typology allows us to quantify the degree of reconciliation across time. Each case can go through one or more types depending on their