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The Social Correlates of War: Conflict Correlations Within Belief Systems.

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by

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Abstract

Previous cross-national research concerning the political or economic factors that lead to international conflict tends to focus on leadership by elites, anarchic security, or democratic peace. However, less quantitative cross-national research focuses on how religious and national belief systems impact international conflict. Previous research suggests that value systems, such as religiosity and nationalism should impact conflict, though there is little cross-national empirical evidence to support these claims. Thus, I expand on this work by testing the relationship between several variables that represent religiosity and nationalism and the initiation and escalation of conflict between nation states. The main dependent variables are the level of aggression toward other nations, as measured in the Correlates of War project by the intensity of the conflicts and the number of international conflicts by each nation each year for the years 1981-2010. I utilize the World Values Survey waves 1 through 6 and the Correlates of War data to investigate the impact that religiosity and nationalism have on the amount and severity of conflict. This project uses a two-way fixed effects negative Poisson count regression to answer the research question: Do the values instilled by religious and nationalistic belief systems influence international conflict in intensity and/or number of conflicts?

Introduction

Though many cultures in recent history have tried to separate the sacred private world of religion from the secular public world of everyday life (Fisher, Kim, & McCalman 2012) they are inextricably intertwined. Both the sense of belonging to a state, or nationalism, and religiosity are belief systems that are held societally and are often subject to various authoritative people or organizations such as the church hierchies or the national government (Fisher, Kim, & McCalman 2012). While many authors have claimed that secular values are often in conflict with sacred values, belief systems, no matter their source, apply social pressures which have the potential to influence international interactions (Welzel 2013).

Every religion holds certain beliefs and tenants to be sacred. These sacred beliefs often influence the societies of which these religious members are part which then becomes part of a society's belief systems. Emile Durkheim first touched on this in his own concept of the 'sacred' and showed how such beliefs could become part of a society and was exemplified by Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Durkheim 1915; Weber 2007). Once it becomes part of a society it becomes part of that society's group identity, even if later the religion is dropped, its beliefs remain part of society (Sun-Ki 2001). It is this societal group identity that this project uses as a baseline for determining how distant a society is from its sacred sources of authority.

Religious identity is tied into self-identity in that the sense of group membership is tied to a religious belief system and the importance of this group membership as it pertains to one's self-concept and one's concept of their social group as well as other social groups (Sun-Ki 2001).

This religious identity refers to religious group affiliation regardless of the amount of religious activity or participation (Sun-Ki 2001). Like gender and ethnicity, religion can be one of the prime factors that shape a person's and groups' identities. Therefore, a person's social exchanges, beliefs, and social identity all factor into how close an individual is to sacred authority. Taken in aggregate, it can show the influence these sacred sources of authority have upon societal behavior. Sacred sources of authority are those social structures and people that influence their believers.[1]

The same can be said of secular values and beliefs such as nationalism or faith in one's nation. These form secular belief systems, sometimes referred to as 'civil religion' by some experts in the field (Bellah 1967). These are belief systems as well as societal values due to the simple fact that they are often held to be true even when there is no evidence or real empirical truth to their being so esteemed in a populous and are reinforced through societal practices, and rituals (Bellah 1967;Welzel 2013). Peter la Cour and Neil Hvidt attest to this in their own research into secular and religious belief systems showing that both types of belief systems focus on meaning and identity making (Cour & Hvidt 2010). Again, I fall back upon the concepts of imagined communities and group identities to provide measurable conceptions to these abstract concepts for a populous can only be a nation and have nationalism if it becomes part of their group identity (Sun-Ki 2001).

Despite these theoretical connections, previous cross-national research concerning the political or economic factors that lead to international conflict tends to focus on leadership by

[1] It must be kept in mind that in most modern societies there are multiple sources of sacred authority and this project analyzes nations that have a clear majority of one particular religion or religion category not denomination of such.

elites, anarchic security, or democratic peace (Babst 1972; Mills 1956; Morgenthau 1948; Kant 1795). Substantially less quantitative cross-national research focuses on how belief systems such as religiosity and nationalism impact international conflict, often concentrating upon the distinct religious organizations themselves, not the belief systems (Brown 2016; IEP 2014). Previous research suggests that value systems, such as religiosity and nationalism should impact conflict, though there is little cross-national empirical evidence to support these claims (Frost 1998). The research there tends to use small scale qualitative narrative analysis for their support such as in J. Frost's '*Why Religions Facilitate War and How Religions Facilitate Peace'* which is a textual analysis of historical and religious texts (Frost 1998). This is especially surprising given that some of the most aggressive nations tend to have similar secular values and seemed on the surface to have high religiosity along with one religious type that was clearly dominant (Palmer et al. 2018).

Thus, I expand on this work by testing the relationship between several variables that represent religiosity and nationalism and the initiation and escalation of conflict between nation states. The dependent variables are the highest action taken each year and the number of conflicts by every nation that has all the data available for the years 1981-2010. I utilize the World Values Survey waves 1 through 6 and the Correlates of War data to investigate the impact that religiosity and nationalism have on the amount and severity of conflict. I have chosen to use two-way fixed effects negative binomial regression modeling for this project as the best fit to be able to analyze the data available.

This research will allow us to better understand human conflict and mitigate human conflict. Thus, my research question was: Do the values instilled by religious and nationalistic belief systems influence international conflict in intensity and/or number of conflicts? The findings

are discussed after a review of the previous literature, a discussion of my methodology and variables, then a break-down of my analysis including limitations within the study.

Literature Review

Defining Religiosity and Nationalism

Religiosity and nationalism are difficult concepts to define and various theorist have muddied the waters by having wildly varying definitions (Holdcroft 2006). They have been defined along many dimensions from the experiential and cultural perspectives to the intellectual and ideological (Chaves 2010). It becomes even more complex on and individual level, since an individual's personal experiences and beliefs are often not in line with religious or nationalist beliefs (Rossi & Scappini 2014).

According to Durkheim, the term religion describes various systems of beliefs and practices that help define what a society considers to be sacred (Durkheim 1915). Durkheim's simple definition does not show the full complexity of religion nor does it show its effects as a social structure. Christian Smith later defines religion in his book *Religion: What it is, How it works, and Why it matters* as , "Religion is a complex of culturally prescribed practices, based on premises about the existence and nature of superhuman powers, whether personal or impersonal, which seek to help practitioners gain access to and communicate or align themselves with these powers, in hopes of realizing human goods and avoiding things bad" (Smith 2019, p. 22). While this is a great definition of organized religions as a social structure, it ignores the spiritual components of faith and turns organized religions into a social transaction.

I reconcile the two definitions by taking Smith's definition and adding the social imperative and awe that is Durkheim's concept of the sacred as it was expanded upon by Mircea Eliade in his work, *The Sacred and the Profane* (Durkheim 1915;Eliade 1983; Smith 2019). In

Eliade's work he discusses how the sacred awe religions hold their beliefs also applies to places and objects as well as rituals that are associated with this sacredness (Eliade 1983). Combined with Smith this makes the beliefs and rituals of a religion not just a social transaction but also a way to share this sacred awe and emotion (Smith 2019; Eliade 1983).

Of particular importance to this project is the concept of religious and nationalist group identities and self-identities. In *Choosing an Identity: A General Model of Preference and Belief Formation,* Chai Sun-Ki denotes religious identity as a specific type of identity formation (Sun-Ki 2001). It is the sense of group membership to a religion and the importance of this group membership as it pertains to one's self-concept and one's concept of their social group as well as other social groups (Sun-Ki 2001). This religious identity refers to religious group affiliation regardless of the amount of religious activity or participation (Sun-Ki 2001). Like gender and ethnicity, religion can be one of the prime factors that shape a person's and groups' identities according to Sun-Ki (Sun-Ki 2001). Benedict Anderson takes a similar approach but with nationalism in his work, *Imagined Communities* (Anderson 1991). Anderson argues that nationalism is partly formed by being part of a socially constructed community that was formed by the people who see themselves as part of that group (Anderson 1991).

As shown by the theorists and social scientist discussed so far, secular belief systems mirror religious ones, showing that faith in one's government or nation forms as valid a belief system as faith in one's religious structure and values. More simply said and further attested to by Douglas Gibler, Marc Hutchinson, and Steven Miller in their paper '*Individual Identity Attachments and International Conflict'*, a belief system is no different for being secular or religious, even if the beliefs contained within differ widely (Gibler, Hutchingson, & Miller 2012). These belief systems are exactly that due to the simple fact that they are often held to be

true even when there is no evidence or real empirical truth to their being so esteemed in a populous (Welzel 2013). Peter la Cour and Neil Hvidt attest to this in their own research into secular and religious belief systems attesting that both focus on meaning and identity making (Cour & Hvidt 2010).

Many theorists in recent history who have tried to separate the sacred private world of religion from the secular public world find that they are inextricably intertwined and cannot be truly understood on their own (Fisher, Kim, & McCalman 2012). Through a complex societal process with many variations, religious and national belief systems are often both held societally and are often subject to various authorities (Fisher, Kim, & McCalman 2012). Though many authors have claimed that secular values are often in conflict with sacred values, belief systems no matter their source, apply social pressures which have the potential to influence international interactions (Welzel 2013). As shown by Mark Juergensmeyer in his work, 'Religious Nationalism in a Global World', religiosity and nationalism can also align, one blending into and reinforcing another (Juergensmeyer 2019). They may also oppose each other as attested to by Johnathan Fox (Fox 2004). These congruencies and oppositions may vary in civil society but can also vary at the elite level and may even become part of the imagined national community (Denton-Borhaug 2019). These belief systems often give a sense of common cause and shared community forming what Benedict Anderson calls 'Imagined Communities' (Anderson 1991). It is along the lines of belief systems that this work focuses its definitions of both nationalism and religiosity as it is the values instilled, links to sources of authority, and the shared imagined communities formed by both religiosity and nationalism that are important for this project (Anderson 1991).

To summarize the definition section of this paper: It is along the lines of belief systems that this work focuses its definitions of both nationalism and religiosity as it is the values instilled, links to sources of authority, and the shared imagined communities formed by both religiosity and nationalism that are important for this project (Anderson 1991). This was done to consider the many definitions of both religiosity and nationalism as shown above. As belief systems, various aspects of both religiosity and nationalism can be accounted for without attempting to argue for a hard and fast definition and will allow for the possible congruence or opposition of the two.

Previous Research

When examining the available data on conflict as well as the literature, there is an easily noticeable trend that begs for further research. Some of the most aggressive nations tend to have similar secular values and seemed on the surface to have high religiosity along with one religious type that was clearly dominant, though research has shown the specific type of religion to be mostly insignificant suggesting that religiously pluralistic societies have learned to respect religious diversity and not see it as a threat (Brown 2017). To test this inductive insight, one needs only to manually look through the data using the most aggressive nations as far as number of conflicts in the *Militarized Interstate Disputes Data* (MIDS) that was compiled by Glenn Palmer, Vito D'Orazio, Michael Kenwick, and Matthew Lane from various sources (Palmer et al. 2018). Comparing the United States to the USSR/Russia, China, Japan, and several European countries a definite trend is evident and there are certain traits of commonality in belief systems that seemed to need further explanation (Palmer et al. 2018). This leads us to the literature on conflict and why religiosity and nationalism would matter in this context and why this project is testing these belief systems with the numerous possible factors in international conflict.

R.M. Williams said in his article *Conflict and Social Order,* "War as a complex multi-dimensional social phenomenon has so many sources and causes that no theory of a single cause can explain its nature. One cannot find a single necessary condition and a single sufficient condition; one can only try to find sources, factors, conditions important for the occurrence of war." (Williams 1972, p. 16). Following along R. M. William's line of thought, many scholars have identified numerous variables that are related either positively or negatively, to conflict initiation and intensity, such as bargaining breakdowns and informational problems (Fearon 1995; Wagner 2000; Shultz 2001), regime types comparing democratic versus authoritarian (Barash & Webel 2018; Bueno de Mesquita 2003), territorial disputes such as the ongoing historical dispute over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Kocs 1995; Tir &Vasquez 2017), ethnic heterogeneity done as an ethnic fractionalization measure (Huntington 1996), free trade and national interest (Johnson & Koyama 2015), the power and influence of those who have any say in national decisions such as the democratic electorate (Bueno de Mesquita 2003), and power asymmetry (Fearon 1995; Powell 2006; Signorino 1999).

The immense volume of literature on conflict covers many possible theoretical and empirical tests of correlation on conflict. Realism, sometimes called rationalism, is the dominant school of thought and centers on unitary rational actors maximizing national security (Waltz 1979). This maximization is often identified with power for the sake of survival and influence growth under anarchy attesting to both national security and leadership by elites (Waltz 1979). Another segment of the literature, called constructivism, argues that norms, values, and ideas are important for the ways that international actors behave under anarchy but the literature for constructivism mostly examines organizational groups not the ideologies that may motivate choices (Wendt 1992).

While there is some overlap with constructivist thought, realists theories of conflict make a human nature argument for war and apply it in an aggregate form, assigning to nation states rationality and self-interest in the interest of influence, power, and security (Hobbes 1651; Barash & Webel 2018; Baylis, Owens, & Smith 2017; Fearon 1995; Ettinger 2013; Hugh, Turner, Morgenthau 1948, Waltz 1979, & Kennedy 1974). The constructivist perspective argues that nations have conflict because of social constructs and values that become ingrained with our national identities and institutions and are controlled by national leaders (Segal & Clever 2013; Weber 1978). This project mixes the two using the social constructs of religion and nationalism as both motivators of a national populous and tools of the nation state actors and elites who also may hold these beliefs.

Realists often state that conflicts occur because there is no higher power capable of keeping nation-states from having them and that this is this way because of a natural state of anarchy (Barash & Webel 2018). Other realists argue that states may act aggressively in order to prevent other nations from rising in power (Fearon 1995). There are also realists' arguments that nation-states use conflicts to maximize their positive expected utility and the benefits will outweigh the costs (Baylis, Owens, & Smith 2017). James Fearon also contends that there are dimensions of information and bargaining influence when dealing with rational state conflicts (Fearon 1995).

Max Weber talked about conflict and is often seen as one of the forebears of constructivism. He established a conflict theory that linked nation states with the use of violence. According to Weber, nation states often monopolize the legitimate use of force within their territory and accord themselves to be the sole proprietors of international power which is thereafter used to control the populous and influence other nation-states (Weber 1978). In many

constructivist theories, the public is indoctrinated by the structures of religion, politics, nationalism, and education to accept conflict and therefore theorize that conflict itself is therefore socially constructed (Montagu 1978). Some theorists also state that international conflicts are caused by certain regime types and the political ideologies of those in power and that certain regime types, such as western democratic and communist regimes, are tied to various ideologies attesting to leadership by the elites of that society (Barash & Webel 2018). Michael Stohl determined, through statistical analysis of policy data combined with the correlates of war data set, that the political ideology of the leaders of nation-states as well as the ideological regime type, does indeed affect war initiation, such as authoritarian regimes having more intense conflicts while democracies tend to actually have more smaller ones, and he also linked this factor into information availability and elite rhetoric which helps support the premise of what this project seeks to examine (Stohl 1971; Stohl 1976). The view of nationhood as a form of group identity formation is also along the lines of constructivist thought with the insight given by symbolic interactionism and was expanded into a factor that is always evolving by Kelly Denton-Borhaug in her article, '*Is This America?: Unfinished Business with the U.S. National Imaginary, Religion and Violence'* (Anderson 199; Denton-Borhaug 2019)).

In the context of this work, the rational viewpoint of an anarchic world state and rational state actors fully applies but along multiple dimensions of group identity. It is not just the nation state that matters but also any authority that has some control over a nation's belief systems which applies to both religiosity and nationalism. The other dimensions of rationalism also apply since any of these elites may deal with bargaining, information and power asymmetry, and utility (Barash & Webel 2018; Baylis, Owens, & Smith 2017; Fearon 1995). Two rationalist arguments of belief systems, that of regime type and free trade, have already been shown to be correlative to

conflict in past works showing a reduction in conflict intensity and amount and are used in this project as control variables that I discuss later (Kant 1795; Maoz & Russett 1993).

Theoretical Framework

This works seeks to examine the effects of the social values and belief systems inherent in both religiosity and nationalism on the interaction between nations at the international level. Since conflicts between nations are both common and one of the most egregious of these interactions, it was decided that using conflicts as the focus for analysis would be apt and perhaps provide some benefit. As the literature shows, the scholarly community has yet to come to an agreement on the effects of nationalism-based belief systems and religion upon conflict initiation due to contradictory findings.

Borrowing from both realism and constructivism, this work theorizes that a person's social exchanges, beliefs, and social identity all factor into how close an individual is to sacred or secular authority. Taken in aggregate, it can show the influence these factors have upon societal behavior. Sources of authority are those social structures and people that influence their believers. It must be kept in mind that in most modern societies there are multiple sources of sacred and secular authority and this project will only analyze nations that have a clear majority of one particular religion or religion category not denomination.

As stated earlier, many other social factors could also be analyzed but in order to keep this project focused and feasible it only focuses upon social values and belief systems. Specifically, it focuses upon the pride and trust of group membership and elite control aspects of both religious and nationalist belief systems. Since these both rely upon having faith in something, whether the nation or the religion, many researchers have expressed skepticism about their influence on international conflict and are seldom tested together. They also both require

group identity formation (Sun-Ki 2001). The rationale behind this choice is that the sources of authority can use these belief systems to have an easier time of mobilizing the populous as well as serving as a common social identity which would tend to act more collectively and these belief systems can be used to generate more conflicts. I assume, for the sake of simplicity, that nation states that show high amounts of trust in both sacred and secular authority are mor internally stable, whereas nation states that have one stronger than the other are more internally unbalanced and it is outside the scope of this current project to determine the effects of such past the aggregate nation state level. The definition of conflict in this work is the same as the one used within the militarized interstate disputes codebook – 'a conflict can be any event when one state has threatened, displayed, or used force against another.' (Palmer et al. 2018).

I believe that there will be little effect from religious belief systems upon conflict initiation but that religious belief systems will show correlations with greater intensities in nations with very dominant religions. I also believe that there will be a large effect from nationalism upon international conflict initiation and intensity due to there being a more direct pathway of influence by the nation state. This leads to two main ideas to be tested.

These two main ideas can then be split among the eight independent variables described in the methodology section. There are four variables for nationalist belief systems and four for religious belief systems, giving us eight individual hypotheses. These eight hypotheses will be tested in two separate regressions, one testing for correlation with conflict initiation and one testing for correlation with conflict intensity. Both regression models take into account known correlates as control variables. The eight hypotheses are formalized and shown below:

- $\mathbf{H_{a1}}$ = The higher the level of importance assigned to religion by a nation's population, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict a country will have with other nations.

$\mathbf{H_{a0}}$ = The importance of religion in a nation's population will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{b1}}$ = The higher the level of trust in religious authority by a nation's population, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict a country will have with other nations.

$\mathbf{H_{b0}}$ = The higher the level of trust in religious authority by a nation's population will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{c1}}$ = The higher the proportion of a nation's population who declare having a specific religious affiliation, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{c0}}$ = The total proportion of a population who declare having a specific religious affiliation will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{d1}}$ = The higher the proportion of a nation's population who claim affiliation with the nation's dominant religion, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{d0}}$ = The nations with higher the proportion of a nation's population who claim affiliation with the nation's dominant religion will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{e1}}$ = The higher the level of a population's willingness to fight for their nation, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{e0}}$ = A population's willingness to fight for their nation will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{f1}}$ = The higher the levels of confidence in their government by a nation's population, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{f0}}$ = The amount of confidence that a nation's population has in its government will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{g1}}$ = The higher levels of pride within a nation's population for being members of that nation, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{g0}}$ = The amount of pride a nation's population has in being members of that nation will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

- $\mathbf{H_{h1}}$ = The lower the level of trust a nation's population has in other nations, the higher the intensity and amount of conflict.

$\mathbf{H_{h0}}$ = The amount of trust a nation's population has in other nations will show no correlation to conflict level or amount.

Methodology

Data and Sampling

The militarized interstate disputes database is a united history of cases of conflict from 1819 to 2018 and provides a base data frame of nation year for this project. Disputes are composed of incidents that range in intensity from threats to use force to actual combat (Jones et al. 1996: 163; Singer 1999; Palmer et al. 2018). While the main unit of observation in the database is the individual conflict, each conflict is separated by the nation(s) involved and the year it takes place.

This project, due to data availability for the independent variables, only examined militarized interstate disputes from 1981 to 2010. There are 5,512 dyadic interstate militarized disputes in the MIDs data set dated 1981 to 2010, many having more than two nations involved when unpacked total around 13,000 observations if each nation is counted individually instead of by conflict (Palmer et al. 2018). Only interstate wars and conflicts from the Militarized interstate disputes data set will be used for this analysis even though intrastate conflicts such as civil war is included in that data. These conflicts sometimes involved more than two actors and each participant has its own entry in the data. This analysis includes all 195 currently existing countries as well as 20 countries that no longer exist, existed only for a bit, or have changed names during the set time frame. The data set made from the MIDS base includes 0's for nation years with no conflict, making for 5,534 conflict observations of nation-year divided among the 215 nations as panel data in the nation years covered.

The World Values Survey (WVS) is a worldwide research project funded by the United Nations and examines social and political values and beliefs. Six of my independent variables come from the World Values Survey Data, which is conducted in waves done roughly twice a decade. I used waves one through six for this project which all came out during my projects time frame. The data had to be interpolated to the nearest wave year for the non-wave years in the combined data set used for this work. True halfway points were averaged between the two waves (WVS 2016).

Dependent Variables

The intensity of conflict and the amount of conflicts are the primary focus of this project. The first dependent variable, intensity, is measured by the highest level of conflict (HACT) a nation engages in within a current year, it is an ordinal count variable whose values are described in more detail below. The second dependent variable is a numeric count variable, TOTMC, that measures how many conflicts a nation has in a given year. It is described in more detail below. Models are examined for each of these dependent variables separately although the models are based on the same sets of independent variables. These variables show the intensity of conflict that a nation is willing to engage in and its propensity to engage in conflict of various types in general.

HACT, or Highest Action Taken, measures the most aggressive amount of force used by a nation-state each year out of all possible conflicts using variable 14 from the MIDS database shown below (COW 2018; Fearon & Laitin 2003). For this work HACT is not a score from each individual conflict but the highest score out of all conflicts in a nation-state-year. This measure relates to James Fearon's bargaining model of war and attest to the lengths a nation will go to achieve what it sees as its goals (Fearon 1995). In the context of this work, I test if a unified

belief system increases this factor. An example of how HACT is figured would be the U.S. in 1983 which was involved in Grenada, Honduras, and Chad. That would make the TOTMC 3. The HACTs were 16 (Grenada), 12 (Honduras), and 2 (Chad) but for my analysis I only used the highest HACT for that single year so it would be HACT 16 for the US for that year (Huntington 1996; COW 2018). The Table below shows the HACT levels:

Table 1: HACT Coding [1]

Highest Action Taken	HACT	Highest action taken. Variable 17 from MIDSB data: coded 0-21 and -9.	0 No militarized action [1] 1 Threat to use force [2] 2 Threat to blockade [2] 3 Threat to occupy territory [2] 4 Threat to declare war [2] 5 Threat to use CBR weapons [2] 6 Threat to join war [2] 7 Show of force [3] 8 Alert [3] 9 Nuclear alert [3] 10 Mobilization [3] 11 Fortify border [3] 12 Border violation [4] 13 Blockade [4] 14 Occupation of territory [4] 15 Seizure [4] 16 Attack [5] 17 Clash [5] 18 Declaration of war [5] 19 Use of CBR weapons [5] 20 Begin interstate war [5] 21 Join interstate war [5] -9 Missing [-9]

1. The number in brackets shown in the variable description above shows the scaling categories that may be used for separate analysis at a later date by turning those categories into individual dummy variables.

TOTMC is a simple count variable of how many conflicts each year a nation is involved in, with multilateral conflicts counting only once. This measure captures the willingness of a nation to engage in conflicts in a given year. This variable enables me to test the various theories that hold that nations that are predominantly one religion or a particular governmental form are more aggressive because of their singular focus.

These dependent variables are based on the individual MIDS data, which list each MID separately (COW 2018). Highest military action taken can rate from null (0) or no action to 21 which denotes all-out war. This rating is based on the whole conflict in question no matter how long it lasted and the year of the MID is when it started. The nations which had no conflict each year will be scored 0. Nations that respond to another's threats or actions with no action of their own after being targeted by another nation will also be scored a 0 but this is a rarity in the data. The other variable is a simple count variable of the number of conflicts in total for a nation each year with HACT being the highest action taken of any of those conflicts for a nation each year (Fearon & Laitin 2003).

Another example in how these two dependent variables are figured, and TOTMC specifically, would be the Iraq conflict in 2003. There were 5 major members of the alliance against Iraq, with 10 other nations in support roles, and 2 nations providing financing only. Every single one of those involved, including Iraq, would have their TOTMC increase by one, the major members have HACTS for that conflict ranging between 16-21, the supporting members between 6-15, The financiers would be HACT 2, and Iraq was HACT 20 (COW 2018).

Independent Variables

There are three categories of independent variables: Religious, Nationalistic, and Control Variables. I split them this way to aid in the analysis and understanding of that analysis allowing for categorical summarizations. Religious variables deal with both individual and national religious identity and the trust placed in religious sources of authority. The Nationalistic variables contain variables that describe the belief systems of a nation's population concerning their own nation showing their nationalistic pride and distance from national authority, as well as their trust in their own and other national governments (Stohl 1971; Fox 2004). Control variables

are known factors of international conflict as discussed in the literature review and include measures for trade, regime type and democratic peace, and power asymmetry (Maoz & Russett 1993; Bueno de Mesquita 2003; Fearon 1995; Johnson & Koyama 2015; Powell 2006; Signorino 1999).

Independent Variables Testing for Religious Belief Systems

Question A006 from the WVS data is contained in every wave of the survey so far. The question specifically asked is," How important is religion in life?" (WVS 2016). Note that it does not make it specific to the responder's life. It is coded as shown below:

Table 2: A006 Coding

A006	1	Very important
	2	Rather important
	3	Not very important
	4	Not at all important
	(-5, -4, -3, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

This question shows, when the means are aggregated for the nation-state-year, the strength of overall religious belief systems. It does not show differing religions, nor the amount of trust put in the religion's leaders. Those are handled in conjunction by the questions below. If religious belief systems are to have any sway upon a nation's actions concerning initiating international conflict and intensity, it must have some strength to do so with or without religious leaders acting in support.

Question G007_35 is from the WVS data and asks about the amount of confidence a person has in religious leaders. It used the national aggregate mean in this project to test that trust

for any elite influence in religious belief systems (Barash & Webel 2018). It exists in only the first and fourth and higher waves of the WVS survey. It asks in each one, “How much do you trust those with religious authority?” (WVS 2016). It is coded as below:

Table 3: G007_35 Coding

G007_35	1	Trust completely
	2	Trust a little
	3	Neither trust or distrust
	4	Not trust very much
	5	Not trust at all
	(-5, -4, -3, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

TOTR, or Total Proportion of People that Declared a Specific Religion in a Nation, is on a .00 to 1.00 scale and is taken from the correlates of war religions data so is coded by nation year already (COW 2018). Originally the values were all separated among various religions but were totaled for this work, not including those who said atheist or not religious. This total shows overall religious membership consisting to the total sum of various religious belief systems in a nation not taking into account the fractionalization of such since that is covered in part by the next variable discussed, HIGR. For this project, this variable will be used in models to test whether religious belief, as a whole, has any impact upon conflict amount and intensity.

HIGR, short for Highest Religious Percentage. is also on a .00 to 1.00 scale, like TOTR above. It also comes from the correlates of war religious data (COW 2018). It only shows the highest percentage religion in a nation, and to eliminate any possible bias concerns, I stripped away any identifier of what specific religion it may be. This was done so I can test if a unified

religious belief system has any effects upon conflict intensity or amount without in anyway denoting characteristics to any specific religion. This was chosen instead of specific fractionalization data because I am testing a unified nation's actions, not for how divided that nation is religiously.

Independent Variables Testing for Nationalist Belief Systems

Question E012 in the WVS/EVS longitudinal data asks simply, "Are you willing to fight for your nation at home and abroad?" in all WVS waves except for Wave 3 (WVS 2016). In Wave 3 it asks instead, "If your nation gets involved in a war, are you willing to fight?" (WVS 2016). The same answer scales were used in all 6 waves as listed below:

Table 4: E012 Coding

E012	0	Yes
	1	Depends
	2	No
	(-5, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

This question shows a certain amount of nationalism within a person's belief by their very willingness to risk for the concept of nation (Anderson 1991). As an aggregate mean, it can also show some national elites' ability to influence their citizens into mobilizing for conflict through nationalist ideology. No matter the reason for a "yes" on this question, it shows a nationalist belief system to answer that way because presumably one would not be willing to fight for something one does not believe in. This is why it was chosen for this project.

WVS E069_11 – Amount of Confidence in One's National Government

This is question E069_11 from the WVS/EVS longitudinal data and exist in in all waves except for the 1st. It ask in all 5 waves, "How much personal confidence do you have in your national government?" (WVS 2016). It is coded as shown below:

Table 5: E069_11 Coding

E069_11	1	A great deal
	2	Quite a lot
	3	Not very much
	4	None at all
	(-5, -4, -3, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

This aggregate mean is used to test the effects of the governmental faith aspects of a nationalist belief system. Confidence in a person's government is an indicator of high amounts of a nationalist belief system. Without trust in one's government, a person obviously would feel alienated from that government and the nation it currently represents. Also, if one does not trust the government, one would not trust the elites making the decisions and would not be easily mobilized by nationalist rhetoric towards international conflict (Waltz 1979). This does not deny that a person may have a differing view of his nation and be in that way 'nationalistic' but such people tend to be on the fringe of their societies and appear mostly in times of high civic instability (Jacobson & Pieri 2020).

Question G006 from the WVS/EVS longitudinal data exist in every wave of the survey. It asks, "How proud are you of your nationality?", in all the waves except in the third when it asks," How proud are you to be [nationality]?" (WVS 2016). It is coded as shown below:

Table 6: G006 Coding

G006	1	Very proud
	2	Quite proud
	3	Not very proud
	4	Not at all proud
	(-5, -4, -3, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

This one is straightforward where it relates to having a nationalist belief system on a personal level. If people are proud to be a particular nationality, it follows that they have faith in their nation and its actions. In the models below, this aggregate mean is used to test the more personal aspects of nationalism on a nation's conflict behavior.

In this project, this aggregate mean taps nationalist belief systems on the premise that if one is 'nationalistic', one would also distrust those of other nations as some theorists contend (Levy 1989; Tilly 1991; Watts 2017). Question G007_36 is from the WVS data and asks, "How much do you trust people of other nations?" (WVS 2016). The question exists only in the fourth and higher waves of the surveys. The coding is shown below:

Table 7: G007_36 Coding

G007_36	1	Trust completely
	2	Trust a little
	3	Neither trust or distrust
	4	Not trust very much
	5	Not trust at all
	(-5, -4, -3, -2, -1)	Not Applicable and Dropped

Control Variables

The research literature shows the factors that that have influence on whether a nation-state goes to war are many-fold and form a very complex system. In this work, I focus upon the effects of belief systems upon these national decisions, but I also can't ignore other effects that may have bearing upon those belief systems. For these reasons, variables attested to in the

literature review are included as part of the overall models for this work. These variables are Gross Domestic Product Per Capita (GDPC), Total Amount of Trade (TTTR), Adjusted Polity Version 4 scores (ADP4), and the Composite Index of National Capability (CINC).

While it has been shown that international conflict usually reduces a nation's gross domestic product, some theorists have shown that a nation that already has a high GDP may be more willing to engage in conflict overall since they more willing and able to bear the costs (Fearon 1995; Baylis, Owens, & Smith 2017). This variable is included in this work's models to reflect those theories of conflict through bargaining and the economics of conflict.

Many other theorists have proposed that increased trade, not only between the two possible conflicting nation-states, but overall, reduces the amount of conflict because a nation engaged in extensive trade would not want to interrupt its trade flow (Johnson & Koyama 2015). In this work this idea is measured by Total Trade which simply a sum of the imports and exports of a nation in a given year done in purchase parity dollars for 2016.

Democratic peace theory claims that democracies overall are less likely to escalate conflicts, especially with other democracies (Maoz & Russett 1993; Babst 1972; Kant 1795; Singer 1999; Paine 1945[1776]). This theory has led to other theories that seek to show certain regime types are more likely to engage in conflict (Barash & Webel 2018; Bueno de Mesquita 2003). The methodology of this work will not test for increased peace between democracies but will test the democratic peace theory for the general idea that democracies are more peaceful and less likely to escalate conflicts. Polity scores rate nations in an index based upon the amount of democracy they have on a -10 to +10 scale (Marshall, Gurr, & Jaggers 2016). This work recalibrates this variable to a 0-20 scale and uses this adjusted score to account for democratic

peace and regime types. The recalibration of the original scores is why they are called adjusted polity 4 scores in this work.

The Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) is a statistical measure of national power created by J. David Singer for the Correlates of War project (Singer 1999). It uses an average of percentages of world totals in six different components: Total population of a nation, the amount of urban population as a ratio, heavy metal production of a nation (Iron, Steel, Titanium, etc.), energy production to consumption ratio, military expenditures, and amount of military personnel. The components represent demographic, economic, and military strength. It must be noted that CINC scores only measure hard powers and may not represent soft powers or total national power. In this work, this variable attests to all the 'might makes right' theories of conflict such as the power model of bargaining, power asymmetry, and the 'iron triangle' if the military industrial congressional complex (Fearon 1995; Powell 2006; Signorino 1999; Higgs 2006).

Due to the multicollinearity with parts of this index and other variables in the models, only the Military expenditures and total population measures are used from this index and are called MILX and TPOP respectively. Military personnel was not useable outside of the index due to measures taken by the people who made it to reduce the collinearity with military expenditures. Heavy metal production and power consumption are very roughly represented by the earlier GDP per capita variable. Urban population shows collinearity with the total population, again useful in the index because of the measures used, but not useable for this work. MILX is the total expenditures spent by a nation each year in United States dollars, pro-rated for 2016. TPOP is the total population of a nation each year.

Known Correlates Not Tested and Other Limitations.

Several known correlates discussed in the literature review that cannot be tested within this project due to differing methodologies, time constraints, or data availability. Most of James Fearon's bargaining models and informational problems require a different form of statistical analysis and a more case by case analysis as well as network modeling and were not tested for these reasons (Fearon 1995). Huntington's and Fearon's various ethnic fractionalization data was not completely available for the time span examined in this project and what was available was mostly for internal conflict not international (Fearon 2000; Huntington 1996). Territorial disputes, such as those discussed by Tir and Vasquez, require a much more historical approach than this project takes and while the Correlates of War data goes back to the 1800's, it would not be feasible in time span allotted for this work (Kocs 1995; Tir &Vasquez 2017). Along the lines of regime type influencing the analysis, I tried a corruption index, but the measure was over dispersed and showed too much multicollinearity with several other variables, so was dropped (Barash & Webel 2018; Bueno de Mesquita 2003).

I also wanted to test for congruence between nationalistic belief systems and religious belief systems, but my methodology would not allow for interaction terms, so it is an idea for future research. Also an idea for future research would be the amount that separation of church and state is codified in various nations, but as only 28 nations codify this at any national level currently, this would have to be a separate project since it lowers the populations of the regressions beyond safe analytical levels for the data that I have available.

Variable Test Models

Both HACT and TOTMC were tested with a control variable only model, full model, a religious variable model and a Nationalism model for a total of 8 test models. The full models included all the variables described above tested separately for HACT and TOTMC. The religious models included all except the nationalist belief models while the nationalism models excluded the religious variables. All 8 models were tested for robustness, overdispersion, and collinearity. The full model contained full data for 1428 observations among 49 nations. The removal of either the nationalism or religious variables did not affect the populations significantly. The control only model was done to show that by themselves all control variables would have significant effects upon these models, performing as theorized and shown in others' works. This control only model's regression table is shown in Appendix II (Table 3A).

The overdispersion test for regression showed little overdispersion with a p value of less than .004 in each test and no standard error higher than 2. The Etsat Ic test showed that HACT was slightly more reliable than TOTMC though not by much and showed all test were within limits. The variable inflation test originally showed very high numbers, which was discouraging but after removing a variable for a corruption index all VIF scores were below the 2.5 threshold. A summary table of statistics for all variables is provided in Appendix II (Table 2A) providing the means, standard distributions, and the ranges.

Analysis Method

These data will be analyzed by using a two-way fixed effect negative Poisson count regression model. This alternative was selected due to the dyadic nature of the originating data as well as the numerous variables involved. The first dependent variable, HACT, is a discrete count ordinal, not continuous, variable and simply measures the highest conflict related action taken as

shown in the description of the variable and in Appendix II (Table 1A). The second dependent variable is also a discrete count variable but one that is numeric since it counts the number of conflicts in a year that a nation engages in.

Using ordinary least squares regression, or traditional fixed effects regression would therefore be inappropriate, as the estimates would be inefficient and biased (Clausen and York 2008; Hoffmann 2004; Long 1997). However, both Poisson and negative Poisson count regression can be used when the dependent variable uses count or ordinal data. Still, the restrictions of a straight Poisson regression, that events are independent, makes it impossible to use in this analysis, as conflict events are clearly not independent (Clausen and York 2008; Hoffmann 2004). Tests of overdispersion also showed that the conditional variance does not equal the conditional mean, making this modeling strategy inappropriate for the data (Clausen and York 2008; Hoffmann 2004). Therefore, negative Poisson count fixed effects regression was used to test what factors have an influence upon conflict.

Negative Poisson count regression is more appropriate because it allows for interdependent events (i.e. allows the conditional variance to exceed the conditional mean) (Long 1997). Fixed effects will be used for ease of analysis. In a fixed effects model, each country has a unique intercept in the master equation that controls for unobserved heterogeneity in the set of nations and assesses the impact of your independent variables controlling for each unique country effect. I also chose to do it in a panel regression which will use two dimensions: cross-sectional units of observation and a temporal reference in order to control for time invariant unmeasured factors that differ across countries (Halaby 2004; Hsiao 2003).

The equation for a negative Poisson count regression is as follows: $prob(Y = y_{i1}\varepsilon_i) = \frac{e^{\mu(\varepsilon_i)}[\mu_i(\varepsilon_i)]^{y_i}}{y_i l}, y_i = 0,1,2, \ldots,$ and $ln\,\mu_i(\varepsilon_i) = x_i\beta' + \varepsilon_i$. In this equation Y is a random

variable, $y_i!$ is the number of occurrences, μ_i is the mean intensity parameter, x_i is the vector of independent variables, β' is the vector of regression coefficients, and $\underline{\varepsilon}$ is the error terms which is assumed to have a gamma distribution with a mean of one and variance ∞, a measure of dispersion of the data. The event counts for each conflict are assumed to be independent, although unconditionally they may be dependent. Post estimation tests reveal no potential issues with multicollinearity, influential cases, and multivariate outliers. I used the Stata statistical software program as well as 'R' to help analyze the data for this project (StataCorp 2020; R Core Team 2018).

Analysis

Findings

On the next page is the results table, Table R2, from my two full regression models, one for the highest conflict action taken by a nation (HACT) and another for the Total Amount of Conflicts (TOTMC). Both models include all the independent variables discussed and only differ in their dependent variable. I report the incidence rate ratios and flag significance at the .05, .01, and .001 levels for a two-tailed test. I also note near significance as a marker for potential further research and potential analysis without possible confounding variables. To calculate percentages, 1 is subtracted from each incidence rate ratio. Thus, an IRR<1 translates into a negative percentage which means that larger values of its associated variable decrease the incidence rate of the dependent variable. Now since key independent variables are reverse coded care must be taken in interpretation. For instance, trust in religious authorities is coded so that low numbers mean high trust and high numbers mean low trust so an IRR < 1 for this variable means that the lower the trust in religious authorities (hence the larger the variable score) the lower is the incidence rate of the dependent variable. Both models show decent pseudo chi^2s which were significant attesting to their viability as well as low log likelihoods.

I kept the organizational categories that I used when describing the variables so the output would be easier to read. I tried to round all output numbers to the nearest 10,000th except when that was not possible then it is rounded to the highest digit that it could be rounded up to. The first number is the coefficient and the second is the IRR, or Incident Rate Ratio. Below the

coefficient is the standard error in parentheses. Incidence risk ratios are not rounded up if .9999 for easier interpretation since it would round up into 100% which would not have showed as significant that way and would mean no rate of change. Many variables were insignificant in both models and insignificant scores are not noted. Both models had 1428 observations among 49 nations since incomplete groups were dropped.

Table 8: Full Model Regressions

			Full Models			
			Highest Action Taken	IRR	Total Amount of Conflicts	IRR
Religious Variables	Importance of Religion	A006				
	Trust Religious Authority	G007_35	-1.5448 (.6936)	.2134*		
	Total Religious Membership Proportion	TOTR	2.0717 (.543)	7.938***	1.7195 (.5084)	5.582***
	Highest Religion Percentage	HIGHR			-5.3285 (.9519)	.0049***
Nationalistic Variables	Willingness to Fight for One's Nation.	E012	-.4334 (.1828)	.6483**		
	Amount of Confidence in One's National Government	E069_11	.8064 (.9732)	2.2397***		
	The Amount of Pride in One's Nation.	G006				
	The Amount of Trust in Other Nations	G007_36	.7925 (.1819)	2.2088***		
Control Variables	Gross Domestic Product Per Capita	GDPC			-5.19e-06 (2.61e-06)	.9999*
	Total Amount of Trade	TTTR				
	Adjusted Polity 4 Scores	ADP4	-.0219 (.0551)	.9783***	-.0357 (.0135)	.9649**
	Total Population	TPOP	1.85e-06 3.80e-07	1.000002***		
	Military Expenditures	MILX	2.96e-06 (6.35e-07)	1.000003***		
Model log likelihood			-7737.3008		-1026.3567	
Model Wald Chi^2			472.60***		87.53***	
Number of observations			1428		1428	
Nations			49		49	

The first number is the incidence risk ratio and the second is the standard error in parentheses. Incidence risk ratios are not rounded up if .9999 for easier interpretation.

† = near significance(p < .10); * =p < .05; ** = p < .01; *** = p < .001

Importance of religion showed no correlation for either model. Trust in religious authority showed a roughly 79% decrease to the intensity of conflicts for each level of less trust but and no impact upon the amount of conflicts. Total religious membership proportion of the population showed a 693.8 % increase in conflict intensity for higher levels of religious membership as a proportion and showed a 458.2% increase, as a proportion, to the amounts of conflicts. The highest religion percentage showed a very marked decrease of 99.5% in the total amount of conflicts at 100% membership but showed no significance for conflict intensity.

In the nationalist belief system variables, Willingness to fight showed a very significant 35.17% decrease in conflict intensity for every level that the nation's populous was less willing to fight but was not significant for the amount of conflicts. The government confidence measure has a 123.1% per level increase in intensity for every level of less confidence. It also was not significant for total amounts of conflict. The amount of trust in other nations measure has a 120.88% increase per level in incidence rate for every level of less trust. In short, HACT increases if the populous is more willing to fight, confidence in one's own government declines, or if trust in other nations declines. Pride in one's nation did not show any significance in any model.

Out of the five control variables, three showed as significant for conflict intensity and two of them did for the amount of conflicts, though as said earlier they all showed their known significance in the control variables only test model in Appendix II (Table R1). The three variables of significance for conflict intensity were the adjusted polarity scores which show a 2% decrease in conflict intensity for each rating level, total population which showed a .0002% increase in intensity per 10000 population, and military expenditures which showed a .0003% increase in intensity per million dollars in military expenditure. For the amount of conflicts,

gross domestic product per capita showed a .01% decrease in the number of conflicts per dollar of gross domestic product per capita and the adjusted polity 4 scores showed a 3.5% decrease per point in polity score.

Discussion

With the results shown above, I can reject the null for some of the religious belief system variables when it concerns conflict intensity and number of conflicts. I can also reject the null for most nationalist belief system variables when it concerns conflict intensity. I failed to reject the null for all the nationalist belief system variables when it concerns the amount of conflicts and I would have to say that nationalist belief systems does not show any correlation with the amount of conflicts new conflicts. Even with these factors concerning my hypotheses, the data shows much more research needs to be done as to why the variables have the effects that they do. Each of my hypothesis lead not to definite answers, but instead lead to many more questions. I do believe though that I have shown that there is correlation between religious and nationalist belief systems and conflict, I just can't truly show why without many more years of study and analysis of the issue.

Trust in religious authority showed that the less religious authority is trusted by a populous, the less intense conflicts become. Total religious membership proportion showed an increase in the aggressiveness of conflicts by a high amount when the proportion was high and had a similar effect upon conflict initiation. In the total amount of conflict regression, the highest religious percentage, which shows the most dominant religion as a percentage of the population, showed a marked decrease in the amount of conflicts. This is mitigated by the highest religious percentage, which shows the most dominant religion as a percentage of the population, showed a marked decrease in the amount of conflicts.

For religious belief systems, I found some truly interesting findings. It seems to say is that high amounts of trust in religious authority correlates with more intense conflicts. This could be showing that a populous may turn to religion, or at least its leaders, in times of increased strife. (Smith 2017). It also shows that having high religious membership proportions increases both the intensity and amount of conflicts except when one religion is very dominant and this mitigates the amount of conflicts. This is probably due to the religious membership proportion variable counting all religions and may actually reflect a nations internal instability due to being very fractionalized but the mitigating effect could also be because of a sense of shared community (Anderson 1991; Fearon 2003; Sun-Ki 2001).

Nationalistic belief systems, overall, showed itself to be correlated with conflict intensity but not the amount of conflicts. The willingness of a nation's populous to fight shows a net positive correlative increase to the intensity of conflict. Though whether the intensity is increased because the population is willing to fight or, because once a conflict is started, the populous becomes more willing to fight as it escalates would have to be tested elsewhere. The amount of trust in other nations shows a high amount of intensity increase when other nations are trusted less. This may be because once the conflict is started and the population becomes more willing to fight, trust in other nations would likely drop which increases the intensity of the conflict. Trust in one's own government shows a high amount of intensity increase when the government is trusted less. This would argue that the theories of the population affecting the elites as much as the elites mobilize them are correct (Barash & Webel 2018). It could also be interpreted that the population, as a shared group identity, is being taken advantage of by the government and is therefore trusted less (Sun-Ki 2001). It could also attest to the national cost of

an intense conflict in ‘blood and treasure’, showing a decrease in the amount of trust in the government as a conflict cost escalate and body counts rise. (Bueno de Mesquita 2003).

Only some of the control variables showed significance in the full models but were fully significant in the test runs with just them and the dependent variables. This attest to their strength in the literature as shown correlates of conflict but some of it, such as international trade, disappears in my models. In the intensity model (HACT), military expenditures and total population both showed as very significant influencers in the intensity of conflicts but neither of those variables showed true significance for the amount of conflicts a nation has. Military expenditures and total population increasing the intensity of the conflicts does help affirm Fearon’s power bargaining models that those with the capabilities are more willing to use it when engaged in conflict, which is a form of bargaining under Fearon’s framework (Fearon 1995). It may also attest to simple power asymmetry (Signorino 1999): If one nation in a conflict has more military and more populous they are more willing to use their higher military power and population leaving the other side(s) to either have to back off or escalate their intensity to compensate (Waltz 1979; Barash & Webel 2018; Stohl 1976; Fearon 1995; Powell 2006; Signorino 1999). GDP per capita showed a significant result in reducing the number of conflicts by a slight amount, perhaps showing some effects of internal national prosperity mitigating conflict initiation. The adjusted polity scores are the only control variable that showed significance in both models and it showed correlation for a decrease in intensity and the amount of conflict. This helps show the strength of democratic peace theory and shows that, overall, the more democratic the nation the less intense and numerous the conflicts (Barash & Webel 2018; Bueno de Mesquita 2003). Unfortunately, though I didn’t get to see if being a democracy is an

even greater reducer of conflict between democracies specifically as that was outside the capability and purpose of this project.

Conclusion

This project produced some very interesting results that were in some ways counter to the known literature. I believe I have shown that theoretically, the belief system concept is viable, but that this method of testing could be tweaked, or other methods used to verify this. Some of the variables performed as the theoretical framework says they should while most did not, especially within the control variables. This leads me to believe that while this work showed there is correlational evidence for belief systems being a factor in international conflict, a method that deals with individual observations, taking each conflict as its own entity, could show better results that could be interpreted more directly. This would be even better if I could delay the reaction variables by a year for conflicts already started so as to compare over time effects allowing for better interpretation of what was exactly influencing what.

This project had more limitations than only those inherent when using self-reported survey data, such as incomplete and unavailable data which led to much smaller population sizes than I wanted in the panel data. It was also a fact that it was hard to see what each variable was influencing or being influenced by. Time itself was an issue, too, because as I realized as I was writing this thesis, there was so much more that I could do and should do but did not have time for. One of the biggest limitations though, and this would be true of any conflict study, is that there are so many possible correlates that there is no way to account for all of them. Conflict is a very complex and intertwined social phenomenon that the social sciences are only starting to understand. Because I could not investigate the interaction between religious belief systems and

nationalistic ones given these various limitations, future research should explore these interactions.

Although this work neither confirmed nor disconfirmed the findings of some of the research presented in my literature review, some of my hypotheses were supported. The one theoretical area that showed some promise was that of the sense of group identity and self-identity such as those involved in the socially constructed 'imagined communities' being used in belief system construction (Anderson 1991; Sun-Ki 2001). The data in this thesis project also seemed to confirm some other known theories in the literature such as power asymmetry, bargaining, and the power of the elites (Waltz 1979; Barash & Webel 2018; Stohl 1976; Fearon 1995; Powell 2006). On the religious belief system side of things, Christian Smith's thoughts in '*Religion: What It Is, How It Works, and Why It Matters'* align quite well with what is seen here since he states that religious organizations often seek stability within their membership and organizations as one of their structural goals (Smith 2017).

It is my hope that works such as this, and what spins off from this work and other works in the literature on human conflict, may help us understand and mitigate human conflict. My research question was: Do the values instilled by religious and nationalistic belief systems influence international conflict in intensity and/or number of conflicts? Now that I have done the regressions and analyzed the results, I would say that belief systems show signs of influencing conflicts and that this project help show that. I would also say that further, more detailed, and in-depth research would need to be done before giving a more conclusive answer.

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Appendix I: Codebook

Descriptor Variables	Label	Description	Values
National ID/ Country Code	CCODE	Numerical representation of the country. Used from COW dataset, Ccode.	See Chart C1.
Year	YEAR	The year of the conflict(s) in question	Year A.D. 1981-2014

Dependent Variables	Label	Description	Values
Highest Action Taken	HACT	Highest action taken. Variable 17 from MIDSB data: coded 0-21 and -9.	0 No militarized action [1] 1 Threat to use force [2] 2 Threat to blockade [2] 3 Threat to occupy territory [2] 4 Threat to declare war [2] 5 Threat to use CBR weapons [2] 6 Threat to join war [2] 7 Show of force [3] 8 Alert [3] 9 Nuclear alert [3] 10 Mobilization [3] 11 Fortify border [3] 12 Border violation [4] 13 Blockade [4] 14 Occupation of territory [4] 15 Seizure [4] 16 Attack [5] 17 Clash [5] 18 Declaration of war [5] 19 Use of CBR weapons [5] 20 Begin interstate war [5] 21 Join interstate war [5] -9 Missing [-9]

Total Amount of Conflicts	TOTMC	simple count variable of how many conflicts, with multilateral conflicts only counting once for each nation state involved in that year, of a 1+ HACT level a nation-state has had in a particular year.	Simple count variable

Independent Variables Testing for Religious Belief Systems	**Label**	**Description**	**Values**
Importance of Religion	A006	WVS question A006 – 'How important is religion in life?'	1 Very important 2 Rather important 3 Not very important 4 Not at all important (-5, -4, -3, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped
Trust Religious Authority	G007_35	WVS question G007_35 'How much do you trust those with religious authority?'	1 Trust completely 2 Trust a little 3 Neither trust or distrust 4 Not trust very much 5 Not trust at all (-5, -4, -3, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped
Total Religious Membership	TOTR	Total proportion of people that declared a specific religion in a nation	This number is on a .00 to 1.00 scale and is taken from the correlates of war religions data. Originally the percentages were all separated among various religions but were totaled, not including those who said atheist or not religious.
Highest Religion Percentage	HIGHR	Highest religious percentage, showing a dominate religion.	This variable is also on a .00 to 1.00 scale, like TOTR above. It also comes from the correlates of war religious data. It only shows the highest percentage religion in a nation, stripping away identifier of what specific religion it may be.

Independent Variables Testing for Nationalist Belief Systems	Label	Description	Values
Willingness to Fight for One's Nation.	E012	This question is question E012 in the WVS/EVS longitudinal data and ask simply "Are you willing to fight for your nation at home and abroad?" in all WVS waves except for Wave 3. In Wave 3 it ask instead, "If your nation gets involved in a war, are you willing to fight?".	0 Yes 1 Depends 2 No (-5, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped
Amount of Confidence in One's National Government	E069_11	This is question E069_11 from the WVS/EVS longitudinal data and exist in in all waves except for the 1st. It ask in all 5 waves that it is in, "How much personal confidence do you have in your national government?".	1 A great deal 2 Quite a lot 3 Not very much 4 None at all (-5, -4, -3, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped
The Amount of Pride in One's Nation.	G006	This is question G006 from the WVS/EVS longitudinal data and exist in in every wave of the survey. It ask, "How proud are you of your nationality?", in all the waves except in the third when it ask," How proud are you to be [nationality]?".	1 Very proud 2 Quite proud 3 Not very proud 4 Not at all proud (-5, -4, -3, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped
The Amount of Trust in Other Nations and Nationalities.	G007_36	Question G007_36 from the WVS data ask, "How much do you trust people of other nations?" and exist only in the fourth and higher waves of surveys.	1 Trust completely 2 Trust a little 3 Neither trust or distrust 4 Not trust very much 5 Not trust at all (-5, -4, -3, -2, -1) Not Applicable and Dropped

Control Variables	Label	Description	Values
Gross Domestic Product Per Capita	GDPC	GDP per Capita from Gleditsch's data. (Gleditsch 2016)	GDP per capita done in $ increments (Purchase Parity USD 2016).
Total Amount of Trade	TTTR	Total Trade from Gleditsch's data. (Gleditsch 2016)	This amounts to the sum of import and export of a country, in millions of 2016 purchase parity US dollars, estimated as the sum of all dyadic import and export figures of that country
Adjusted Polity 4 Scores	ADP4	Adjusted Polity IV Scores. These scores rank the amount of freedom in a country giving a dynamic range for regime types.	Adjusted Polity numbers from Polity IV data to create a positive scale of 0-20 instead of -10 to +10
Total Population	TPOP	Total Population. Used from National Material Capabilities Dataset.	In 10s of Thousands.
Military Expendatures	MILX	Military Expenditure. Used from National Material Capabilities Dataset	Purchase Parity USD for 2016. In Millions.

Appendix II: Tables

Table 1A: National ID Codes

USA	2	United States of America	GDR	265	German Democratic Republic	STP	403	Sao Tome and Principe	SYR	652	Syria
CAN	20	Canada	BAD	267	Baden	GNB	404	Guinea-Bissau	SYR	652	Syria
BHM	31	Bahamas	SAX	269	Saxony	EQG	411	Equatorial Guinea	LEB	660	Lebanon
CUB	40	Cuba	WRT	271	Wuerttemburg	GAM	420	Gambia	JOR	663	Jordan
CUB	40	Cuba	HSE	273	Hesse Electoral	MLI	432	Mali	ISR	666	Israel
HAI	41	Haiti	HSG	275	Hesse Grand Ducal	SEN	433	Senegal	SAU	670	Saudi Arabia
HAI	41	Haiti	MEC	280	Mecklenburg Schwerin	BEN	434	Benin	YAR	678	Yemen Arab Republic
DOM	42	Dominican Republic	POL	290	Poland	MAA	435	Mauritania	YEM	679	Yemen
DOM	42	Dominican Republic	POL	290	Poland	NIR	436	Niger	YPR	680	Yemen People's Republic
JAM	51	Jamaica	AUH	300	Austria-Hungary	CDI	437	Ivory Coast	KUW	690	Kuwait
TRI	52	Trinidad and Tobago	AUS	305	Austria	GUI	438	Guinea	BAH	692	Bahrain
BAR	53	Barbados	AUS	305	Austria	BFO	439	Burkina Faso	QAT	694	Qatar
DMA	54	Dominica	HUN	310	Hungary	LBR	450	Liberia	UAE	696	United Arab Emirates
GRN	55	Grenada	CZE	315	Czechoslovakia	SIE	451	Sierra Leone	OMA	698	Oman
SLU	56	St. Lucia	CZE	315	Czechoslovakia	GHA	452	Ghana	AFG	700	Afghanistan
SVG	57	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	CZR	316	Czech Republic	TOG	461	Togo	TKM	701	Turkmenistan
AAB	58	Antigua & Barbuda	SLO	317	Slovakia	CAO	471	Cameroon	TAJ	702	Tajikistan
SKN	60	St. Kitts and Nevis	ITA	325	Italy	NIG	475	Nigeria	KYR	703	Kyrgyzstan
MEX	70	Mexico	PAP	327	Papal States	GAB	481	Gabon	UZB	704	Uzbekistan
BLZ	80	Belize	SIC	329	Two Sicilies	CEN	482	Central African Republic	KZK	705	Kazakhstan
GUA	90	Guatemala	SNM	331	San Marino	CHA	483	Chad	CHN	710	China
HON	91	Honduras	MOD	332	Modena	CON	484	Congo	MON	712	Mongolia
SAL	92	El Salvador	PMA	335	Parma	DRC	490	Democratic Republic of the Congo	TAW	713	Taiwan
NIC	93	Nicaragua	TUS	337	Tuscany	UGA	500	Uganda	KOR	730	Korea
COS	94	Costa Rica	MLT	338	Malta	KEN	501	Kenya	PRK	731	North Korea
PAN	95	Panama	ALB	339	Albania	TAZ	510	Tanzania	ROK	732	South Korea
COL	100	Colombia	ALB	339	Albania	ZAN	511	Zanzibar	JPN	740	Japan
VEN	101	Venezuela	MNG	341	Montenegro	BUI	516	Burundi	JPN	740	Japan
GUY	110	Guyana	MAC	343	Macedonia	RWA	517	Rwanda	IND	750	India
SUR	115	Suriname	CRO	344	Croatia	SOM	520	Somalia	BHU	760	Bhutan
ECU	130	Ecuador	YUG	345	Yugoslavia	DJI	522	Djibouti	PAK	770	Pakistan
PER	135	Peru	YUG	345	Yugoslavia	ETH	530	Ethiopia	BNG	771	Bangladesh
BRA	140	Brazil	BOS	346	Bosnia and Herzegovina	ETH	530	Ethiopia	MYA	775	Myanmar
BOL	145	Bolivia	KOS	347	Kosovo	ERI	531	Eritrea	SRI	780	Sri Lanka
PAR	150	Paraguay	SLV	349	Slovenia	ANG	540	Angola	MAD	781	Maldives
PAR	150	Paraguay	GRC	350	Greece	MZM	541	Mozambique	NEP	790	Nepal
CHL	155	Chile	GRC	350	Greece	ZAM	551	Zambia	THI	800	Thailand
ARG	160	Argentina	CYP	352	Cyprus	ZIM	552	Zimbabwe	CAM	811	Cambodia
URU	165	Uruguay	BUL	355	Bulgaria	MAW	553	Malawi	LAO	812	Laos
UKG	200	United Kingdom	MLD	359	Moldova	SAF	560	South Africa	DRV	816	Vietnam
IRE	205	Ireland	ROM	360	Romania	NAM	565	Namibia	RVN	817	Republic of Vietnam
NTH	210	Netherlands	RUS	365	Russia	LES	570	Lesotho	MAL	820	Malaysia
NTH	210	Netherlands	EST	366	Estonia	BOT	571	Botswana	SIN	830	Singapore
BEL	211	Belgium	EST	366	Estonia	SWA	572	Swaziland	BRU	835	Brunei
BEL	211	Belgium	LAT	367	Latvia	MAG	580	Madagascar	PHI	840	Philippines
LUX	212	Luxembourg	LAT	367	Latvia	COM	581	Comoros	INS	850	Indonesia
LUX	212	Luxembourg	LIT	368	Lithuania	MAS	590	Mauritius	ETM	860	East Timor
FRN	220	France	LIT	368	Lithuania	SEY	591	Seychelles	AUL	900	Australia
FRN	220	France	UKR	369	Ukraine	MOR	600	Morocco	PNG	910	Papua New Guinea
MNC	221	Monaco	BLR	370	Belarus	MOR	600	Morocco	NEW	920	New Zealand
LIE	223	Liechtenstein	ARM	371	Armenia	ALG	615	Algeria	VAN	935	Vanuatu
SWZ	225	Switzerland	GRG	372	Georgia	TUN	616	Tunisia	SOL	940	Solomon Islands
SPN	230	Spain	AZE	373	Azerbaijan	TUN	616	Tunisia	KIR	946	Kiribati
AND	232	Andorra	FIN	375	Finland	LIB	620	Libya	TUV	947	Tuvalu
POR	235	Portugal	SWD	380	Sweden	SUD	625	Sudan	FIJ	950	Fiji
HAN	240	Hanover	NOR	385	Norway	SSD	626	South Sudan	TON	955	Tonga
BAV	245	Bavaria	NOR	385	Norway	IRN	630	Iran	NAU	970	Nauru
GMY	255	Germany	DEN	390	Denmark	TUR	640	Turkey	MSI	983	Marshall Islands
GMY	255	Germany	DEN	390	Denmark	IRQ	645	Iraq	PAL	986	Palau
GFR	260	German Federal Republic	ICE	395	Iceland	EGY	651	Egypt	FSM	987	Federated States of Micronesia
			CAP	402	Cape Verde	EGY	651	Egypt	WSM	990	Samoa

Table 2A: Summary Statistics for All Variables

	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
HACT	5,534	2.556921	5.663617	0	21
TOTMC	5,534	0.3773039	0.9068478	0	24
TOTR	5,534	0.829648	0.2138192	0.74	1.
HIGR	5,534	0.797298	0.176544	0.118	1
GDPC	4,806	7857.388	10692.24	183.48	92541.97
TTTR	5,205	68483.06	233432.4	13.5042	3802631
ADP4	5,055	11.53947	6.886666	0	20
A006	2,595	1.882665	0.6166184	1.013208	3.642
E012	2,535	0.6470013	0.1910566	0.3928175	0.9773585
E069_11	2,475	2.471078	0.4309193	0.9741982	3.358294
G006	2,625	1.459227	0.2768709	0.7329193	2.358598
G007_35B	1,620	2.370314	0.3969334	0.7327044	3.004
G007_36B	1,620	2.488065	0.3918191	1.638809	3.171419
TPOP	5,534	30784.26	116776.9	10	1359821
MILX	4,806	14097.91	56746.32	1	693600

Table 3A: Regression of Control Variables

	Total Amount of Conflicts	Highest Action Taken
Gross Domestic Product	0.000*** (IRR .999/Z -4.35)	Not Significant
Total Amount of Trade	Not Significant	0.011* (IRR .999/Z -2.54)
Adjusted Polity 4 Scores	0.015** (IRR .982/Z -2.42)	0.009** (IRR .985/Z -2.63)
MILX	0.045* (IRR 63.847/Z 2.01)	0.000*** (IRR 1.569/Z 17.37)
TPOP	Not Significant.	Not Significant.
Constant **Wald Chi^2** **N**	8.410802*** 32.29*** 4650	8.410802*** 387.86*** 4227
Note * = P<.05, = P <.01, *** = P < .001**		

Appendix III - Ethics Statement and Citi Certification

This research project sought to examine the social factors that may or may not be involved in international conflict using existing data. This project met all ethical standards set by the Institutional Review Board (IRB),. It did not interact with human subjects and consists of aggregate data already available. All the data used also followed, to my knowledge, IRB and international guidelines in its collection. There was no harm or real risk involved in this project. I have taken the IRB required classes and certification is provided in Appendix III. For these reasons, this project was exempt under IRB protocols and was submitted for IRB review. This project, part of a larger project called the Social Correlates of War, was determined by the USF IRB review board to be 'Not Human Subjects Research' on 5/21/2020

Completion Date 29-Jan-2020
Expiration Date 28-Jan-2023
Record ID 34875930

This is to certify that:

Richard DeCampa

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Research (Curriculum Group)
Social / Behavioral Investigators and Key Personnel (Course Learner Group)
2 - Refresher Course (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

University of South Florida

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w06363191-928c-4fba-84dc-a839dcc749c9-34875930