Research Report

Name: Heo Seung-hoon

Organization (at the time of the grant):
The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (Geneva, Switzerland)

Title of Research:
The Politics of Reconciliation between Hereditary Enemy States: An Analytical Framework

Purpose of Research:
This research is about inter-state reconciliations. Reconciliation as a concept has been developed mostly by sociologists, theologians, anthropologists, philosophers, and psychologists. But, rarely was it addressed in the field of political science and international relations (IR). By taking it as a new focus of study in IR, this research attempts to conceptualize reconciliation in IR theory and identify key determinants that influence reconciliatory behaviours among enemy states. If power politics traditionally dissuaded hostile states from pursuing long-term reconciliation policies, globalization has brought a new wave of reconciliatory gestures between erstwhile enemies. Nevertheless, empirical evidence reveals that certain countries successfully reconcile while others do not.

The seemingly contradictory forces raise some fundamental questions: Is this stalemate a normal situation? Is it impossible to break the vicious circle? Are certain countries simply more nationalist than others? How do we explain the seemingly contradictory forces, a growing tendency toward international reconciliation and rising nationalism? What are the external and internal factors pushing or impeding nation-states, especially those with deep-seated hatred against historical enemies, to choose not to compete but to reconcile? What do we mean by a “successful” reconciliation? How do reconciliatory factors on state level interplay with determinants of inter-national or intra-national level? In particular, do national initiatives to reconcile contribute to regional stability, or do they, on the contrary, threaten it by spurring growing nationalism? The main objective of this study is to address these central questions within an analytical framework of reconciliation that identifies the key determinants of reconciliation between hereditary enemy states.

This research question is of particular importance and timely not only because it carries real world implications dealing with the problem of deep-rooted interstate enmity, but also because our society today faces the challenge of a multi-cultural, multi-faith, and multi-ethnic diversity. Even though the probability for “hereditary enemy states” to fall back into military conflicts seems to have lessened in the present era of globalization, rising nationalism and unresolved issues still form serious barriers to a constructing solid bilateral relationship and, to a larger extent, a comprehensive regional cooperation framework. To achieve a lasting peace, a profound change in inter-state relations from enmity to amity is crucial. This study also contributes to scientific progress attempting to conceptualize reconciliation in the field of international relations, which remains under-researched and under-theorized. If the term reconciliation is frequently used in political discourses or in the mass media, it is rarely mentioned in Political Science or International Relations theory textbooks compared to other cooperative interstate behaviors such as rapprochement, coexistence, appeasement, détente, cooperation, interdependence, integration, and so forth. The major utility of inter-state or inter-national reconciliation studies is therefore its contribution as a conceptual, empirical, and methodological link between work on the future of the international system and the future of the nation-states whose interrelationships make up the system.
Content/Methodology of Research:

Methodology
This is an interdisciplinary topic that I propose to address using two types of methods: historical and political (or rather social) scientific.

(1) Historical Approach
It is essential to work on the primary and secondary sources concerning the concept and the empirical cases of reconciliation. By primary sources, I mean here bilateral treaties of friendship or reconciliation, the discourses of political leaders, and statistics relating public opinion. By secondary sources, I mean first a variety of books and articles written on the concept of reconciliation in fields ranging from theology, philosophy, and sociology. It also includes narrative works on the history of nations, their relationships with neighbouring states that expose inter-state amity and enmity from historical and comparative perspective.

(2) Political (or Social) Scientific Approach
To identify the key determinants affecting the relational transformation between erstwhile enemies, I develop an ideal-type of inter-state reconciliation. “Ideal type” (Idealtypus in German), a methodological concept developed by Weber, refers to “heuristic mental constructs that, though simplifications, purport to capture in some way general features of reality and so stimulate thought, discussion, and social comparison.” An abstract ideal-types construction not only contributes to provide a theoretical lens through which various empirical cases can be observed, compared, and tested. It also brings about scientific progress by which humanity can make slow but significant evolution.

As the result of a deductive reasoning from the theoretical framework, this study also intends to propose a tentative typology of reconciliations. Such a classification is valuable for two main reasons. First, it helps clear up the widespread confusion on the term itself. Since there is no common definition accepted in the field of IR, each study takes its own interpretation depending on the cases concerned. Reconciliation’s conceptual overlapping with other terms such as rapprochement, détente, normalization, coexistence, and cooperation makes it even more difficult to draw distinct definitional boundaries around the term. For this reason, it is useful to come up with a clear definition of the term by taking it as a political concept. Second, it helps carry out a comparative analysis across various reconciliation processes. The extant literature mostly takes a historical approach by focusing on one or two specific cases. However, if one wishes to draw a close comparison in order to derive some predictions, it is important to go beyond in-depth case studies and to formulate an overall outline of analysis applicable to empirical cases of reconciliation. And this can be done by making a categorization of socio-political phenomenon.

Structure of the Research
It first suggests an analytical framework of inter-state reconciliation in the field of IR. It is important to note that the definitional tool I build here is not the one, but a proposition which will be used to test the four hypotheses mentioned above. In so doing, I start with defining two major concepts, hereditary enmity and reconciliation. I develop some particular characteristics of an “enemy state” in IR. This clarification is indispensible since the term is ubiquitous in media and academic circle with so many different meanings whenever employed. By demonstrating how and why inter-state antagonisms were nurtured, the comparative analysis of hereditary enmity will contribute to better understand the nature of reconciliation in political sense.

Within the suggested definitional framework, I then propose an ideal type for inter-state reconciliation processes in the second chapter by taking a differentiated level approach: inter-governmental, intra-national, and regional level. Several empirical observations will be provided to illustrate whether government-to-government or people-to-people reconciliation processes are more efficient in transforming hostility into sympathy in various field ranging from

2. For the purpose of brevity, the term reconciliation will be used here to refer to inter-state reconciliation between hereditary enemies. This is not meant to imply that the study of reconciliation is in any way limited to the inter-state level.
Contrary to the common expression that “time heals all wounds,” time often only perpetuates enmity in cases where the structural conditions and historical patterns underpinning animosity remain unaltered. How to alter those conditions in order to ameliorate inter-state relations requires a thorough understanding of the multiple factors that stand to either undermine or facilitate reconciliation. Chapter three examines decisive external and internal factors influencing inter-state reconciliation. External impulses have a certain limit in promoting a durable reconciliation process since it is difficult to transform the perception of enmity into amity only with outside factor. Nevertheless, international contexts constitute a powerful factor in affecting reconciliation either by promoting or impeding it. The historical case analyses will demonstrate in detail to what extent structural elements have an impact on inter-state reconciliation. It also helps understand whether there is a causal link between external pressures and national motivations of reconciliation, strong enough to explain the decision to reconcile or not.

The fourth chapter finally proposes a tentative typology of reconciliations. The causes of interstate enmity provide the first dimension to classify various forms of reconciliation while the second one is based on the existence of political will at intergovernmental and intra-national levels. This scientific, rather artificial, categorization does not either mean that all category is historically proven and worthwhile to be equally analyzed in detail. To circumvent the drawbacks of this typology, I will examine whether the change in independent variables (un-or-favourable international and regional contexts) have resulted in the comparable changes in the dependent variables It would have been difficult to find out whether the key explanatory variable is genuinely associated with the dependent variable if I had not manipulated my dependent variable (symmetric or asymmetric form of reconciliation).

**Conclusion/Observation**

The primary objective of my research on “The Politics of Reconciliation between Historical Enemy States: An Analytical Framework” was to build up various typologies of interstate reconciliations focusing on the interaction among systemic, regional, and domestic factors. Taking into account the specificity of each dyadic relationship, I selected two main variables: power disparity and the nature of historical enmity construction, which by then co-vary to some extent. I first demonstrated that regardless of power relations, bilateral reconciliation and regional integration are two phenomenon that are mutually helpful, which is for the time being the only and the deepest framework that successfully contained mutual or unilateral fear perception and stabilized a long term peaceful relationship between historical enemy states. Then, I shed light on the fact that what the dyad had experience together in the past has an impact on the degree of resistance to reconcile. Reconciliation after war can be relatively easily triggered on the state level by taking a legal approach although it should be accompanied by a societal reconciliation. The gap between state and popular approach toward reconciliation becomes deeper when colonial experience occurred since it requires a more psychological approach toward reconciliation between people. I finally argued that reconciliation between enemy dyads that suffered from ethnic, religious, or cultural difference is the most difficult case since the only possibility to reconcile lies on the embracement of diversity by creating a new common identity based on shared values.

This study is timely because our society today faces the challenge of cultural and religious diversity. As a matter of fact, a stereotyped image on races, cultures, and religions constitutes the core element in haunting reconciliation since without destroying the barrier between “us” and “others,” there will be no genuine reconciliation. Even after advances in politico-diplomatic normalization and any further economic cooperation driven by states, distrustful public mood can still remain strong if there is any discriminatory social atmosphere, visible or invisible, on religious or ethnic minorities. Ethnocentric or mono-religious nationalism can be a serious obstacle to reconciliation. Identity construction itself is certainly not a bad thing. It only becomes dangerous when emotional nationalism is intolerable to cultural or ethnic diversity. It becomes even more dangerous “when it turns out to be aggressive against others by putting only its own national identity superior to all others. It can only be destructive as it creates threat and counter-threat perception.”