Retribution or Reconciliation?
Post-Conflict Attitudes Toward Enemy Collaborators

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Abstract

Armed groups that seek to govern territory require the cooperation of many civilians, who are then widely perceived as enemy collaborators after conflict ends. The empirical literature on attitudes toward transitional justice focuses heavily on fighters, overlooking more nuanced understandings of proportional justice for civilian collaborators. Through a survey experiment conducted in an Iraqi city that was controlled by the Islamic State, we find that the type of collaboration an actor engages in is a strong determinant of preferences for punishment and forgiveness. While direct exposure to violence is associated with a greater desire for revenge, we argue that perceived volition behind an act is more important. Our research provides unique empirical data on the microfoundations of enemy collaborator culpability, filling a gap in the study of conflict. Our findings have important implications for policymakers seeking to balance accountability and the need for reconciliation in post-war settings.

1 Introduction

After violent conflicts over territory end, there is often a widespread assumption that those who lived under the rule of an armed group were "collaborators"[1] and are therefore complicit in crimes perpetrated by the enemy. As one Iraqi interviewee attests: "People assume that everyone who stayed in Mosul is an Islamic State supporter or member, but many of us were victims."[2] Generally, policymakers, scholars, and civilians outside of enemy-held territory tend to assume "unlimited and unwavering support of the [civilian] population for the political actor who claims to represent it," treating individuals involved in conflict as constituting an undifferentiated and monolithic "entity that must be 'won' by political actors" (Kalyvas, 2006: 6-7). In reality, a collaborator can be both a victim and a perpetrator, or lie somewhere on a continuum between the two. Many residents of territory captured by an enemy armed group are victims of its violence and only comply with its policies in order to stay alive. Others do so willingly, or even enthusiastically.

The territorial defeat of the Islamic State ("IS," also known by its Arabic acronym, "Daesh"), a Sunni armed group that captured large swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria, provides a unique opportunity to collect data on public attitudes toward enemy collaborators at a time when when peace processes and accountability mechanisms are still at an early stage in development. Our fieldwork in Iraq indicates that war-torn communities perceive significant variation in the culpability of different types of accused enemy collaborators. At the time of our survey in Mosul, IS's de facto capital from 2014-2017, many former civilian employees of IS's administrative and service-providing institutions were still living in the

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[1] "Collaboration" is a widely used term in conflict research, but not often defined. We use "collaborator" to mean a person who supports an armed group whether voluntarily or under coercion.

[2] Author interview with "Khaled" (38, accountant) in Mosul, Iraq (April 2017). To ensure anonymity, interviewees are identified by pseudonyms.

city without fear of prosecution or reprisals. One municipal worker ("Zyad") explained: "No one blames us for keeping our jobs when IS arrived because we needed to feed our families, and we continued doing the same work we had done before, just with new bosses. Besides, quitting was not an option because it would have been an act of rebellion, which would have put me and my family at risk for severe punishment."[3] Yet, Iraqis affiliated with IS in other ways were not being forgiven so easily. Widows of IS fighters reported that they would rather remain indefinitely in camps for internally displaced persons because they fear for their safety and that of their children if they return to their former hometowns. For example, "Laila," whose brother's house was attacked with grenades as a result of the family's ties to IS, said, "I am afraid that if I return, my neighbors would kill me in my sleep."[4] What explains the stark difference between the cases of these two collaborators? One ("Zyad") is perceived as innocent, while the other ("Laila") is facing death threats.

To assess variation in attitudes towards the punishment and forgiveness of enemy collaborators, we employ an experiment embedded in an original survey of 1,458 Sunni Arab residents of Mosul (Moslawis). We evaluate the effects of randomly varied identity attributes of hypothetical IS collaborators and a range of collaborative acts on preferences for punishment and willingness to forgive. Although attitudes toward reconciliation are necessarily context-specific, our research design can be applied in a wide variety post-conflict settings— including civil wars, foreign occupations, and post-authoritarian transitions—to further our understanding of the prospects for legitimate justice and reconciliation at the micro-level.

By widening our analytical lens to consider a broad spectrum of enemy collaboration, this study challenges a false dichotomy between victims and perpetrators found in much of the existing research on transitional justice (Tabak, 2011). Our results demonstrate that

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[3]Author interview with "Zyad" (35, municipal services) in Mosul (April 2017).

[4]Author interview with "Laila" (40) in Hajj Ali IDP Camp (December 2017).

variation in the *type* of enemy collaboration is an important determinant of preferences for post-conflict punishment and forgiveness. This finding is very strong, remaining robust even in interactions with the identity attributes (age, gender, tribe) manipulated in our experiment as well as with respondent identity characteristics (e.g., age, gender, educational background). We argue that the predominant focus of existing transitional justice work on in- versus out-group dynamics has distracted scholars from considering a potentially stronger determinant of preferences for punishment and forgiveness: variation in individual culpability.

Observationally, we explore several mechanisms that may mediate the effects of collaborator culpability. Our data provides some support for the "revenge hypothesis"—that victimization at the hands of an enemy group leads to an increased desire for retribution—although the effects are substantively small. Instead, a key finding is that attitudes regarding punishment and forgiveness are strongly associated with perceived volition behind the act of collaboration, a mechanism which is understudied in the empirical literature and should receive greater attention in models of attitudes toward transitional justice. In emphasizing this mechanism, we contribute to a growing literature on the dynamics of civilian agency during conflict (e.g., Wood, 2003; Arjona, 2016) by empirically evaluating how it shapes prospects for reconciliation after conflict ends. This study provides uniquely fine-grained data on the factors that shape perceptions of individual enemy collaborators, which have not been systematically tested or theorized by scholars thus far. Moreover, it offers a replicable research design and an expandable theoretical framework for furthering research on perceived collaborators in other post-conflict settings.

2 Why Study Public Perceptions of Former Enemy Collaborators?

When conflicts end, national and international elites determine transitional justice policies, often paying scant attention to the opinions of local populations (Jones, Parmentier and Weitekamp, 2012). Similarly, studies of post-conflict public opinion focus on attitudes toward different state-imposed justice mechanisms including lustration laws, truth commissions, or peace processes (Hall et al., 2018; Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016; Tellez, 2019). Although these studies make important contributions, the microfoundations of reconciliation with individual enemy collaborators remain poorly understood. As a result, there is increasing concern that transitional justice processes do not adequately address the concerns and needs of victims on the ground, whose support for and belief in the legitimacy of these processes is necessary for the reintegration of individual perpetrators into their local communities (e.g., Shaw, Waldorf and Hazan, 2010), without which sustainable peace cannot be achieved. To fill this gap, our study takes a bottom-up, micro-level, and victim-centered approach that gives voice to the people whose attitudes matter most for conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

Rich descriptive work provides vivid accounts of the wide range of engagement options available to civilians, from defiance to full support of armed groups (e.g., Kalyvas, 2006; Arjona, 2016). Petersen (2001: Ch. 1) develops a scaled spectrum of roles for defectors versus collaborators, placing participation in violence at the extreme end, in order to theorize about when and why individuals decide to take on these different roles. The various types of collaboration that civilians engage in have been shown to shape the internal organization of enemy groups, in addition to the establishment or collapse of their rule (Weinstein, 2006; Arjona, 2016; Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly, 2015). We posit that variation in the type of collaboration also matters for the design of post-conflict transitional justice processes. Individuals develop attitudes toward collaborators based on their actions, which inform

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perceptions of their culpability and preferences for punishment.

Previous quantitative research has largely overlooked this important variation in the different roles and varying culpability of enemy collaborators, focusing on attitudes towards armed groups as a whole (e.g., Blair, Imai and Lyall, 2014; Dyrstad and Binningsbø, 2019) or the most egregious type of enemy collaboration—participation in violence specifically (e.g., Lyall, Blair and Imai, 2013; David, 2014; Samii, 2013). Empirically, we know much less about public opinion toward civilian collaborators despite their importance. Parties to conflicts over territorial control rely heavily on civilians to obtain food, water, shelter, labor, and information (Wood, 2003; Kalyvas, 2006; Weinstein, 2006; Arjona, 2016).

A handful of studies randomize some features of enemy combatants and ask about justice mechanisms to examine the effects of in- versus out-group identities. David (2014) finds that social identity matters for popular perceptions of justice among Serbs and Croats, with out-group members receiving harsher scrutiny (David, 2014: 489). In South Africa, ex-combatant leaders are more likely to be blamed for their actions than their subordinates, and those who were pro-Apartheid in particular, although these outcomes are mediated by respondent race (Gibson and Gouws, 1999). Another study asks respondents about forgiveness of "people of other nationalities for the violence they have committed in the last fifteen years," finding that personal experience with violence and its effects, not ethnic hostility towards out-group members, negatively correlates with willingness to forgive (Bakke, O'Loughlin and Ward, 2009: 1017). Notably, this type of experimental design does not allow us to distinguish whether it is the mention of violence, the various events that have taken place within the last fifteen years, the many different out-groups invoked by the prompt, or combinations of some or all of these factors that drive attitudes.

A common thread linking these studies—and informing ours—is the core idea that characteristics of enemy collaborators shape attitudes towards justice and reconciliation. Yet, in line with other work on attitudes towards enemy combatants (e.g., Lyall, Blair and Imai,

2013; Samii, 2013), they do not examine collaboration by civilians, nor do they consider variation in individual identity characteristics of collaborators such as gender or age. In sum, the existing literature fails to explore more nuanced understandings of guilt and commensurate justice for individuals engaged in lesser crimes. Our research design experimentally manipulates the identities and actions of hypothetical enemy collaborators in order to make causal inferences about micro-level determinants of attitudes toward justice and forgiveness.

Our work also has important and timely policy implications. Although public opinion should never be the sole basis for the design of transitional justice policies because of the risk of "mob justice" (Daly, 2001: 383), it should be taken into consideration by policymakers to facilitate durable peace after conflict. Social psychologists have found that sensitivity to popular concerns about the fairness of legal institutions is an important determinant of trust in the police and courts, warning that failure to consider public opinion may increase the likelihood of noncompliance with laws and state authorities (e.g., Tyler, 2003). Work in criminology finds that justice processes are more likely to lead to reconciliation between adversarial groups and a reduction of criminal recidivism when they take into account the voices of victims (Latimer, Dowden and Muise, 2005). In communities where victims of violence are deeply dissatisfied with the state's official response, they may take matters into their own hands, resulting in extrajudicial revenge killings (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Thus, there is a real need for safeguards to ensure that transitional justice processes protect the fundamental rights of perpetrators—including the right to due process in trials (United Nations, 2006: 36)—and that these processes are acceptable to the society at-large.

3 Conducting Multi-Method Research in Mosul, Iraq

We conducted an original survey of 1,458 Mosul residents from March to April, 2018 with an Iraqi research firm.[5] A team of enumerators recruited from Mosul conducted the face-to-face survey with tablets. In addition to the quantitative data, our research also draws on qualitative evidence from fieldwork in Mosul and other areas of northern Iraq in 2017 (Appendix D). This fieldwork enabled us to ensure the appropriateness of our survey questions for the context and to validate the realism of the experiment. It included visits to public institutions that were previously administered by IS, as well as observations of trials of alleged IS members (Appendix D.2). We conducted interviews with 61 individuals from areas previously controlled by IS, as well as 17 lawyers, judges and experts involved in prosecuting and defending suspected IS collaborators (Appendix Tables A10-A11).

3.1 Case Selection

Civilian collaboration with enemy rule and governance is a widespread phenomenon. Focusing solely on civil wars, Stewart (2018) estimates that one-third of all rebel groups active between 1945 and 2003 engaged in governance of civilians. Scholarly accounts are replete with descriptions of how collaboration is the lifeblood of any armed campaign to control territory (e.g., Kalyvas, 2006; Petersen, 2001).[6] Throughout history and around the world, armed groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) in Colombia (Arjona, 2016), the Taliban in Afghanistan (Terpstra, 2020), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka (Mampilly, 2011), the Bakonozos of Northern Uganda (Kasfir, 2005), and the Nazis in occupied territories during the Second World War (Wistrich, 2013) have relied heav-

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[5]The Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society Studies.

[6]For a long list of armed groups that provided public services see Arjona (2016: Chs. 1-3).

ily on a range of collaborators to capture and hold territory. The spectrum of collaboration in these cases ranged between horrific acts—such as murder, kidnapping, torture, rape, and even genocide—to much less severe transgressions that did not involve violence; civilians collaborators in these cases performed a wide range of non-military functions and services including tax collection, sanitation, healthcare, education, and supplying or otherwise supporting combatants.

IS rule in Mosul is just one example of the broader phenomenon of enemy rule and governance. Across a wide variety of settings and cases, rebel governance, defined as "the set of actions rebels engage in to regulate the social, political, and economic life of non-combatants during war" (Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly, 2015: 3), has become more common with the increase in civil wars since the end of the Cold War (Kalyvas and Balcells, 2010). Likewise, the broader phenomenon of enemy governance is characterized by significant civilian participation—whether voluntary or coerced—in the enemy's governing institutions. IS set up a government, established its own rules of conduct, and maintained control of substantial territory for three years. The group operated a variety of institutions that provided public goods and basic services, which necessitated a civilian bureaucracy staffed by employees who generally did not engage in violence. Moslawis witnessed a wide range of collaboration, including: (1) compliance with taxation (Revkin, 2020b), (2) social integration with the group through marriage to its members and the enrollment of children in IS-controlled schools, (3) employment in IS's civilian workforce as teachers, doctors, or cooks, and, (4) recruitment as fighters (Revkin, 2020a). Since Moslawis confronted these different types of collaboration on a daily basis, they can recognize and imagine the scenarios described in our experiment.

Residents of Mosul are now grappling with the question of what to do with former collaborators and under what conditions they might be forgiven for their transgressions. Surveying people in the place where it occurred provides important insights into the microfoundations of attitudes towards reconciliation in a context where there is an urgent need to reduce the

risk of conflict recurrence. Thus, Mosul is a particularly relevant setting in which to collect data on attitudes toward former enemy collaborators.

Our data includes only Sunni Arabs living in Mosul in June 2014—when IS arrived—and therefore had some exposure to IS. Sunnis made up more than 97% of the city's population at the time of the survey. The sample is not representative of Iraq as a whole. Including representative samples of other identity groups in Iraq (e.g, Shias) would have not only been prohibitively costly, but it would have shifted the focus of this study to the very salient ethno-sectarian divides in Iraq. We expect that Shias would be much less forgiving of former IS collaborators than the Sunni respondents in our sample given IS's particularly harsh treatment of Shia. As our goal was instead to focus on the effects of varying degrees of enemy collaboration on the prospects for post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation, we intentionally held this very salient social identity constant in our study. It is also important to note here that the conflict with IS was not fought purely along in-group versus out-group lines: IS killed more Sunni Muslims than any other religious or ethnic group (Verini, 2016).

In sum, our sample includes both IS collaborators and victims, identities that are not mutually exclusive. It is therefore representative of populations living in territories that have experienced enemy rule and governance and are now grappling with the question of how to assess the culpability of the enemy collaborators among them. These situations are common and often inevitable after conflict over territory. Our findings would not generalize to cases where a defeated enemy did not seek to govern, such as armed groups whose sole purpose is economic predation of a territory's resources or where chaos ensued. Such cases are more rare however, as even "roving bandits" have incentives to establish a social contract with civilian populations to profit over the long-term (Olson, 1993; Arjona, 2016).

We were also motivated by the immediate policy implications that such a study in Mosul could have for post-transitional justice in Iraq. At the height of its expansion in 2014, IS governed millions of people. When IS was militarily defeated in 2017, it left behind a

population that is now widely perceived as collectively complicit in the group's crimes. The government is currently facing the monumental challenge of reintegrating this population back into their local communities, but authorities have taken a heavy-handed approach that fails to differentiate between between voluntary and involuntary collaboration, and more serious crimes and lesser offenses. Iraq's Anti-Terrorism Law criminalizes membership in any terrorist group without requiring proof of a specific criminal act; anyone with a plausible connection to the group can easily be sentenced to life in prison, the minimum punishment allowed by the law.[7] More than 8,000 accused IS collaborators have been convicted in trials that are often decided in under 30 minutes, with a conviction rate of around 98%[8] and more than 3,000 have been sentenced to death (Abdul-Zahra and George, 2018).

This one-punishment-fits-all approach—which is widely perceived as collective punishment of Sunnis—is generating new grievances that could fuel the emergence of an "IS 2.0" (Revkin, 2018). A correlation between repression and radicalization has been documented in many contexts (Davenport and Inman, 2012). It has been argued that the rise of IS— which emerged from the remnants of Al Qaeda in Iraq—was fueled by resentment over the collective punishment of Sunnis through de-Baathification and incarceration (Sly, 2015).

In addition to its direct and immediate implications for the case of Iraq, this work speaks to a broader set of ongoing as well as future cases of post-conflict transitional justice processes. In all cases of conflict involving territorial sovereignty, victors face the challenge of walking a fine line between under- and over-punishment of former enemy collaborators. When punishment of a perpetrator falls short of what the victims believe is commensurate to the crime committed, the resulting perception of an "injustice gap" increases the likelihood of victims being dissatisfied with the outcomes (Worthington Jr, 2006). Yet, excessive

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[7]Law No. 13 (2005).

[8]Author observations of trials in Tel Kaif (December 2017).

punishment may be perceived as victors' justice and delegitimize transitional justice efforts (de Greiff, 2014: 18). Popular opinion data can help policymakers find the middle ground.

4 Theorizing Post-Conflict Justice Preferences

We develop an original theoretical framework for analyzing how individuals in conflict-affected societies form preferences for punishment and forgiveness of other community members who collaborated to varying extents with an enemy. As noted, previous research has established that social identity is an important determinant of reconciliation in inter-group conflicts (e.g., David and Yuk-Ping, 2005; Gibson and Gouws, 1999; Samii, 2013). Our theoretical contribution is to highlight the importance of an additional factor that has been under-studied in the conflict literature: culpability. We posited that culpability varies depending on an individual collaborator's physical proximity to and social intimacy with the enemy. In this section, we develop and test several hypotheses about the expected effects of variation in individual collaborator attributes and acts of enemy collaboration during conflict on preferences for accountability and prospects for reconciliation.[9]

4.1 Variation in Types of Collaboration and Culpability

We argue that information about the type of collaboration, which is closely linked with the perceived culpability of the collaborator, is an important determinant of preferences for punishment. Studies in social psychology posit that more severe transgressions in personal relationships are more difficult to forgive (e.g., Boon and Sulsky, 1997). Work in political science indicates that enemy fighters from more abusive units are less likely to be reintegrated back into society (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007) and commanders are held more

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[9]We pre-registered these hypotheses and secondary expectations prior to data collection in a public online data repository.

responsible than subordinates (Gibson and Gouws, 1999). Considerable evidence across a variety of contexts suggests that individuals see violent behaviors as the most serious offenses (Stylianou, 2003).

To explore variation in perceptions of culpability behind collaboration, we chose collaborator roles that vary in their proximity to violence. In addition to the role of combatants, we examine a spectrum of non-military roles that collaborators—both men and women—may perform. The specific roles included in the experiment are based on our fieldwork in Iraq as well as common patterns of enemy collaboration in other conflicts. In particular, we hypothesized that fighters would be most harshly punished and least likely to be forgiven due to the violent nature of their collaboration. Additionally, we expected that respondents would prefer harsher punishments for collaborators who were physically closest to enemy combatants (cooks for fighters) and those who were the most intimate with them (wives of fighters) in contrast with collaborators in civilian roles for institutions that provided services to other civilians (janitors working in IS's department of municipal services) or those who financially supported the insurgency but did not directly participate (taxpayers).[10]

4.2   Identity Traits

Although not the main focus of this study, we believed that the individual identity characteristics of collaborators would have either direct or moderating effects on attitudes towards punishment and forgiveness. Some identities are seen as less agentic and therefore less culpable than others. Shared identities between the respondent and a collaborator may trigger empathy and forgiveness.

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[10]We validated our assumption that different acts of collaboration are associated with varying levels of severity. 98% of the sample agrees that being a fighter is the most condemnable transgression, followed by civilians directly involved with fighters. Those not directly involved with fighters are ranked as least condemnable (Appendix Table A5).

Based on previous research in criminology, we expected respondents to prefer more lenient punishments for and be more forgiving of younger collaborators. Juveniles are generally assumed to be less agentic than adults because they are easily influenced by those around them and they may not be able to distinguish between right and wrong (Scott et al., 2006). Similar to most penal codes around the world, Iraqi law requires reduced punishments for children, taking into consideration their age and the stage of their mental development at the time of the offense.[11]

We also expected respondents to prefer more lenient punishments for women than for men. Previous studies find that women in other contexts are perceived as being less responsible when they cause harm, and they receive lighter punishments compared to men *ceteris paribus* (Honey, 2017). Interviews in Iraq support this expectation. "Fadila" explained that when her husband decided to join IS and she expressed misgivings, he replied, "You can leave and I will keep the kids."[12] Anecdotal evidence suggests that female collaborators should be perceived as less culpable than men, because, as Fadila put it, "We did not have a choice."

Research demonstrates that members of the same group tend to favor one another and punish outsiders (e.g., David and Yuk-Ping, 2005; Samii, 2013). In conflict settings in particular, in-group biases become more pronounced (Hewstone, Rubin and Willis, 2002). In the context of the tribal society of Iraq, these previous findings concerning in-group biases led us to expect that people should be more empathetic, lenient, and forgiving of transgressions by members of their own tribe (in-group) in comparison with members of other tribes (out-groups). In social psychology, McCullough, Fincham and Tsang (2003) also suggest that shared social identity encourages empathy with and increased benevolence towards a transgressor, citing previous research linking empathy with forgiveness (Worthington Jr,

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[11]Iraq's Penal Code (Act No. 111 of 1969), Articles 67–78.

[12]Author interview with "Fadila" (35, wife of an IS fighter) in Ninewa (December 2017).

2006).

4.3   Victimization

Preferences for punishment of enemy collaborators may be affected by whether an individual was victimized by the enemy group. Many studies find that exposure to violence decreases willingness to forgive, reconcile, and cooperate with transgressors (e.g., Bakke, O'Loughlin and Ward, 2009; Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016; Hall et al., 2018). Based on this previous research, we expected that individuals who have been victimized by an enemy group—as measured by the death or injury of family members or property destruction—would prefer harsher punishments for enemy collaborators than those who did not experience such a personal loss.

4.4   Volition of Collaboration

We expected the perceived volition behind the acts of collaboration to be associated with preferences for punishment of collaboration. Assessing volition behind acts of transgression, while difficult, is a key component of most psychological models of blame and responsibility (e.g., Alicke, 2000: 57). Experimental research finds that belief in intention is a major driver of preferences for punishment of criminals (Aharoni and Fridlund, 2011), and that more intentional transgressions are more difficult to forgive (e.g., Boon and Sulsky, 1997). We test whether these findings generalize to a post-conflict setting.

Perceived volition in engagement might be expected have stronger effects for lesser collaborative acts; as the act increases in condemnability, intent may not be as impactful on attitudes toward retribution or reconciliation. Volition is a particularly important factor in contexts where the collaborator may be acting under considerable economic or physical duress, as is the case in wartime environments where enemy groups exercise coercive control

over territory and people. For instance, IS required all residents of its territory—except for the extremely poor—to pay taxes. Yet, some IS supporters may have voluntarily paid taxes, seeing their payment as an appropriate payment for services that the group was providing. Ten percent of our sample openly agreed that the fees collected by IS were fair in exchange for the services that IS was providing.[13]

There was also considerable variation in the voluntariness of marriage to IS fighters. Some women were already married when their husbands decided to join the group. Others married fighters for the purpose of gaining social status. As one interviewee explains: "In poor neighborhoods, some women believed that they could become princesses by marrying IS emirs."[14] Still others were coerced into marrying fighters through social pressure, economic duress, or physical threats.

4.5   Punishment, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation

We measure two interrelated outcomes: punishment and forgiveness. We adopted a widely-cited definition of forgiveness: the lessening of negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviors toward transgressors (McCullough, Fincham and Tsang, 2003). Following others in the field of social psychology, assumed that benevolence toward transgressors is generally conditional upon the belief that justice has been served (Enright, 1991: 128). Yet, while punishment may facilitate forgiveness in some cases, it may not always be necessary—which we allow for in our design. Hill (2001: 369) underscores that forgiveness is "one of the most important processes in the restoration of interpersonal relationships after conflict."

Our experimental prompt is designed to trigger attitudes toward reintegration and rec-

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[13]Another 74% disagreed and 16% refused to answer.

[14]Author interview with "Salem" in Mosul (April 2017). "Emir" means "prince," which IS used to refer to high-ranking officials.

onciliation by priming respondents with the information that the collaborators want to move back into their neighborhood (and could therefore interact with them in the future). We ask respondents if—after selecting the punishment that they feel is appropriate for a given hypothetical collaborator—they would be willing to forgive this person. Although we cannot identify the causal effect of punishment on forgiveness, this second dependent variable nonetheless enables us to examine the potential for reconciliation through correlational analysis.

5   Experimental Design

To evaluate respondents' beliefs about the type of justice deserved by former collaborators, we implement a rating-based conjoint experiment. The design significantly reduces the number of participants needed while maintaining sufficient power to test multiple hypotheses by randomizing each potential driver of outcomes independently of others. The experimental design included a follow-up question on willingness to forgive after punishment, which we use to assess prospects for reconciliation.

The experiment randomizes enemy collaborators' identities and the nature of their collaboration with IS. As identity characteristics, we included gender,[15] age, and whether or not the collaborator is a member of the respondent's tribe to serve as identity cues.[16] We also randomize acts of collaboration. The five collaboration roles specified in the experiment are: (1) fighting for IS, (2) working as a cook for IS fighters, (3) being married to an IS fighter, (4) working as a janitor for the IS municipality, and (5) paying taxes to IS.

Every respondent evaluated three separate profiles that were generated by randomizing

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[15]Though the majority of IS fighters were men, IS had some female combatants.

[16]We did not vary ethno-religious identities because IS was predominantly a Sunni Arab organization. Almost all Moslawis identify with a tribe.

the attributes listed in Table 1. The total sample of evaluated profiles was 4,275. Before the enumerator reads the descriptions of the hypothetical collaborators, the respondent is told: "I am going to read you some hypothetical scenarios about people from Mosul who are being prosecuted for their past cooperation with *Daesh* (IS). These people now want to move back into your neighborhood. I would like you to choose the type of punishment that you view as appropriate for this person. The person is a [insert profile]."

Table 1: Randomized enemy Attributes

Dimension	Attributes
Gender	Man
	Woman
Age	15
	35
Tribal Member	Respondent's tribal group
	Other Tribe
Type of Collaboration	An IS fighter
	A cook for IS fighters
	Married to a IS fighter (limited to female candidates)
	A janitor at the municipality employed by IS' government
	A resident of Mosul who paid taxes to IS

After the respondent is read a collaborator profile, she is told: "A thorough investigation concluded that this is the only act of collaboration that the person committed. I have ordered the following punishments from least harsh to most harsh. I would like you to choose the type of punishment you deem appropriate for this former *Daesh* collaborator, who now wants to move back into your neighborhood." The responses to this question make up our dependent variables and include the following options: no punishment necessary (least harsh), mandatory community service (e.g., picking up trash, rebuilding homes) for six months, imprisonment for three years, imprisonment for 15 years, and capital punishment (most harsh).

This additional information serves two purposes. The first is to help address the concern

that respondents might impute other types of collaboration to the profile by specifying that the stated act is the only one committed. Second, it encourages respondents to view the five punishment types as an ordered scale from least to most harsh. To validate our ranked scale, we first ran a pilot study in which we asked 100 Moslawis to rank the punishments from least harsh to most harsh. We also ran a post-experiment validation check of this same question.[17]

5.1 Research Ethics

Research in conflict areas raises unique ethical challenges (Wood, 2006), as well as security concerns for researchers and their subjects. Presenting respondents with scenarios describing hypothetical IS collaborators runs the risk of re-traumatizing those who were victimized by the group. However, fieldwork in Mosul and other areas of Iraq revealed that discussions about collaborators, their culpability, and justice mechanisms are commonplace and therefore less sensitive than might be expected. For instance, one Moslawi complained, "Family members of IS fighters, who were beneficiaries of IS and its crimes, are living among us, and no one is holding them accountable."[18] In previous interviews conducted to inform and validate the design of the surveys, many of our interlocutors were often eager to discuss their experiences with IS and their preferences for justice, apparently viewing this study as an opportunity to tell their stories to a broader audience than they could otherwise reach. We found similar enthusiasm for participation in the household survey, with only 15% of potential respondents declining. Within the survey, the response rate for arguably the most

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[17]Over 90% of those asked agreed with our ranking in the pilot and our full sample; the 10% that do not simply add noise to our findings. Only 4% of the sample preferred a different type of punishment (Appendix C.1), suggesting that the scale of punishments we offered was well-aligned with actual preferences.

[18]Author interview with "Walid" (33, store clerk) in Mosul (April 2017).

sensitive question—"During the first six months of Daesh rule, did you believe that Daesh was doing a better job of governing Mosul than the Iraqi government did previously?"—was even higher: only six respondents (4% of the sample) said they did not know or refused to answer. If respondents were uncomfortable with or disturbed by the content of questions, we would have expected much higher refusal rates on this and other potentially sensitive questions.

Given the extent to which IS collaboration is already being publicly debated by Iraqis, as well as an informed consent procedure that allowed all respondents to opt out of the survey at any time, we do not believe that the survey exposed respondents to significant risk.[19] The Appendix discusses other potential risks to survey respondents and the steps taken to minimize those risks.[20]

6 Analyses and Results

Examining the distribution of the dependent variable across all types of collaboration, the two most frequently selected options were no punishment (28%) and capital punishment (33%), indicating that there is considerable variation in the preferences of Moslawis concerning justice. Table 2 shows that IS fighters and those who were most closely associated with fighters (cooks for and wives of fighters) receive consistently harsher punishments than those less closely associated with fighters (janitors who worked for the IS municipality and

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[19]Direct questions about attitudes toward and collaboration with armed groups are highly sensitive and respondents may not answer them truthfully. We designed a list experiment to assess sensitivity about answering a question on preference for IS governance. The results suggest that our results were not significantly affected by social desirability bias. See Appendix B4.

[20]Appendix D. An Institutional Review Board approved the survey instrument (Protocol #2000022022), observations of trials (Protocol #2000021840), and interviews with Iraqis (Protocol #1506016040).

taxpayers). More than three-quarters of the sample sought capital punishment for IS fighters, whereas a similar proportion did not think any punishment was necessary for taxpayers. About a third of the sample considered death to be an appropriate punishment for cooks and wives of fighters, although for married women half of the sample sought less than 15 years in prison. The largest gaps in perceptions of appropriate punishment are between those who are intimately involved with violence in contrast to those who are more distant from it. Importantly, more than two-thirds of the sample sought a restorative punishment (community service) or no punishment for janitors at the IS municipality and taxpayers.

Table 2: Punishments Preferred for Types of Collaboration (% of Cases)

Act	No Punishment	Community Service	3 Years Prison	15 Years Prison	Capital Punishment
IS Fighter	2%	2%	5%	13%	78%
Cook	3%	14%	22%	26%	36%
Married Fighter	17%	17%	16%	18%	31%
Janitor	41%	27%	11%	6%	15%
Paid Taxes	74%	8%	5%	4%	9%
Total	*28%*	*14%*	*12%*	*14%*	*33%*

We employ ordinary least squares regression (OLS) to assess the average marginal component effect (AMCE) of each of the profile attributes, pooling across all respondents and tasks.[21] This allows us to estimate the effects of profile attributes on degree of punishment through the following equation:

$$Punishment_{ijk} = \theta_0 + \theta_1 Gender_{ijk} + \theta_2 Age_{ijk} + \theta_3 Tribe_{ijk} + \theta_4 Collaboration_{ijk} + \varepsilon_{ijk}$$

where i denotes the respondent, j indicates the number of alternative profiles (which in this case is 1), and k denotes which round of three rounds each respondent completes. $Punishment_{ijk}$ is the outcome on the scale of least to most severe punishment. The analysis is run with robust standard errors clustered at the level of the respondent to account for within-respondent correlation across the rounds. The error term ε_{ijk} refers to any random variation and, importantly, the effects of any additional determinants of preferences for punishment not accounted for in our model. The point estimates from the OLS regression are displayed in Figure 1. The dependent variable is the five-point scale of punishment, in which 1 is no punishment, 2 is six months of community service, 3 is three years in prison, 4 is 15 years in prison, and 5 is the death penalty.

Former IS fighters receive punishments that are higher than all other acts of collaboration to a statistically significant level (see Figure 1). On average, former IS taxpayers receive punishments that are 2.97 points lower than IS fighters (shown on the vertical dashed line at 0), accounting for approximately 59% of the entire five-point scale, with a standard error (SE) of 0.06. In other words, punishments for taxpayers were nearly three levels less harsh than for fighters, which on our five-point scale is the difference between six months of community

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[21]The results are robust to ordinal logistical analysis. Following Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2013), we expect OLS to be a consistent estimator of the AMCE.

service and capital punishment.[22] We also find that civilian collaborators who were directly involved with fighters (e.g., women married to fighters and cooks for fighters) receive harsher punishments than those who did not work directly with fighters (e.g., janitors working for the IS municipality). On average, cooks receive punishments that are 0.87 points (SE = 0.05) lower than fighters—a difference of 17% of the five-point scale. Women married to fighters and janitors receive, respectively, punishments that are on average 1.36 (SE = 0.07, 27% of the scale) and 2.37 (SE = 0.07, 47% of the scale) points less harsh than former fighters.

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[22]Other analyses reveal that taxpayers receive significantly less harsh punishments than former collaborators who worked as cooks or janitors for IS or were married to IS fighters.

Figure 1: Effects of Collaborator Identity and Type of Act on Punishment
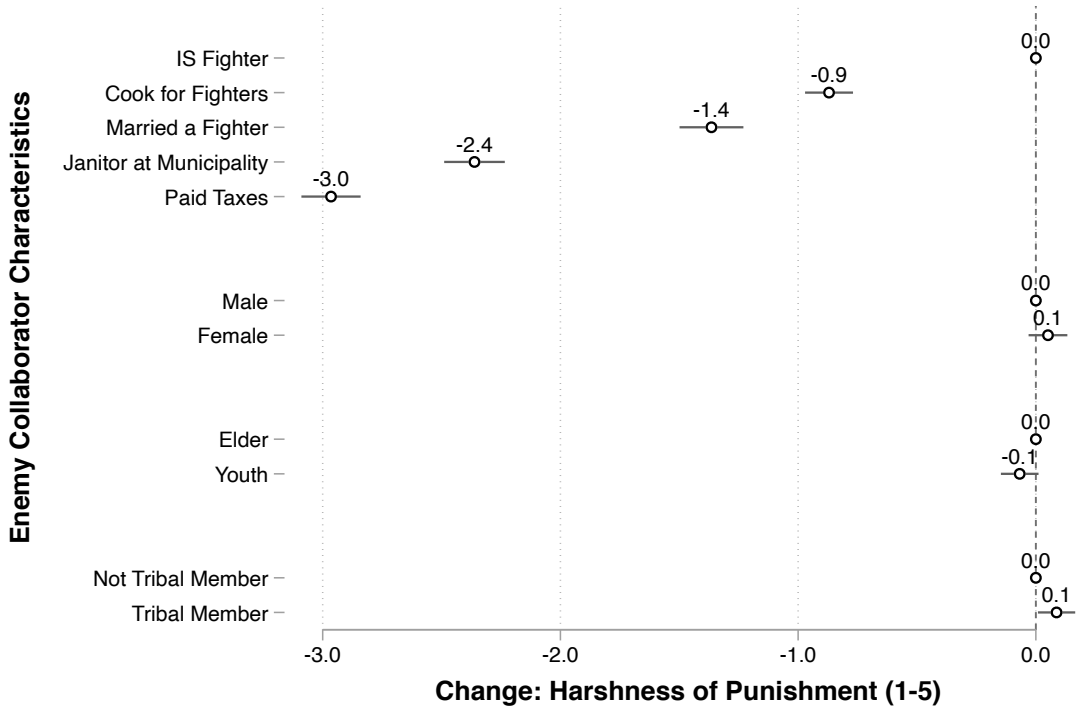
Note: Figure depicts point estimates (circles) with 95% confidence intervals (horizontal lines) and robust standard errors clustered at the individual. The circles on the vertical line at 0 denote the reference category for each attribute.

Contrary to expectations, respondents prefer harsher punishments for members of their own tribe (0.09 points equivalent to 2% of the scale, SE=0.04). This finding suggests that respondents may hold members of their own tribe to a higher moral standard than members of other tribes, consistent with a theory of "in-group policing" (Fearon and Laitin, 1996). However, this effect is substantively quite small. Additionally, more lenient punishments are selected for younger collaborators (15 years old) than for older ones (35 years old) by 0.07 points (SE=0.04), although this outcome is only significant at the p<0.10 level and is substantively small. We lack support for the expectation that female collaborators would receive more lenient punishments than male collaborators, finding instead that women and men are seen as equally culpable for their actions.

Identity characteristics of collaborators included in our experiment do not seem to have a substantial effect on perceptions of culpability, not even in interaction with the different acts.[23] These results underscore the notion that the *type* of collaboration is an important, overlooked determinant of preferences for justice.

6.1   Forgiveness

We ask a post-treatment question for each profile to better understand the implications of variation in collaborator acts and identity characteristics on forgiveness: "Given the punishment you have selected, would you forgive this person?" This question sheds light on whether respondents are able to forgive and are potentially open to the related objectives of reconciliation and reintegration. Overall, a high proportion of respondents (59%) who did not choose the death penalty[24] were willing to forgive collaboration with IS after punishment. Within this sample, 29% who were presented with profiles of IS fighters were willing to forgive them, about a third of those who were presented with profiles of cooks were willing to forgive them, while 42%, 72%, and 85% were willing to forgive women married to fighters, janitors for the IS municipality, and taxpayers respectively.

We employ OLS regression to analyze this outcome, coding those who chose the death penalty as not being willing to forgive collaborators.[25] Compared to fighters, cooks are 15 percentage points (pp) more likely to be forgiven on a 0-1 scale (SE=0.02). Likewise, respondents are significantly more likely to forgive wives of fighters (by 24 pp, SE=0.02)

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[23]There are a few exceptions, but the effects are substantively small. See the Appendix for details.

[24]Those who chose the death penalty, who make up 34% of the sample, were not asked this question.

[25]The results are robust to logit regression; they are largely robust to dropping out respondents who chose the death penalty (Appendix Section B.5).

and janitors working for the IS municipality (by 55 pp, SE=0.02) than they are to forgive fighters. Taxpayers are 71 pp (SE=0.02) more likely to be forgiven than fighters.

Notably, women are less likely to be forgiven by about 3 pp (SE=0.014). Although this finding is statistically significant, the effect is small in magnitude. Yet, it is in line with qualitative research documenting the intense stigma surrounding female enemy collaborators (e.g., McKay and Mazurana, 2004). Age and shared tribal membership are insignificant. Figure 2 shows that the actions of former collaborators matter more than their identities for reconciliation.

Figure 2: Effects of Identity and Act on Forgiveness of Former enemy Collaborators

Note: Figure depicts point estimates (circles) with 95% confidence intervals (horizontal lines) and robust standard errors clustered at the individual. The circles on the vertical line at 0 denote the reference category for each attribute.

These results mirror those for the punishment outcome presented above, which suggests that severity of act may drive both punitive preferences and willingness to forgive. If we add punishment to the forgiveness analysis, harsher punishments are negatively correlated with forgiveness, even when holding act constant in sub-samples. It is also notable that 90% of those who chose no punishment for a collaborator were willing to forgive them. These outcomes indicate that those who are already more punitive are less forgiving, and by contrast those who are less retributive are also more open to reconciliation (Appendix Table B3). Further research should examine how punishment relates to forgiveness.

6.2   Correlates of Punishment and Forgiveness

We employed observational analyses to explore the effects of respondent characteristics on forgiveness along with two additional pre-registered hypotheses. Our analyses did not find substantively significant differences among respondents of different ages, genders, and tribal identities. The first hypothesis predicts that personal victimization should lead to a hardening of hearts and a desire for retribution against collaborators, which we refer to as the "revenge hypothesis." The second hypothesis examines perceived agency behind the act of collaboration, an empirically unexplored potential mechanism explaining why different types of collaboration are met with different levels of punishment or forgiveness, which we refer to as the "volition hypothesis."

6.2.1   The Revenge Hypothesis

Following other studies on attitudes toward transitional justice mechanisms (Hall et al., 2018; Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016), we examine whether personal victimization by an enemy group is related to our results. We compare respondents who had their residence seriously damaged or confiscated or had a member of their household injured or killed and hold IS responsible for at least one of these grievances (60% of the sample) with those who did not

experience such harms. Moslawis with these grievances against IS are about 0.26 points (SE=0.05, about 5% of the full five-point scale) harsher in their assessment of appropriate punishment; they are also 6 pp (SE=0.017) less likely to forgive. Thus, we find some support for the revenge hypothesis, but the effect is substantively rather small.

In interaction with type of act committed, our measure of personal victimization loses statistical significance; only the type of act remains a significant driver of punishment. Average marginal effects reveal that victimization is significantly associated with harsher for punishments the act of being a janitor for IS (by 0.43 points or 9% of the scale) and less forgiveness for the taxpayer by 10 pp.[26]

6.2.2 The Volition Hypothesis

Table 3 explores the relationship between perceptions of different types of collaboration as voluntary and preferences for punishment and forgiveness. Respondents overwhelmingly perceived paying taxes to IS as an involuntary act (92%) in contrast with fighting for IS (3%), suggesting that more severe transgressions are associated with more culpability.

Table 3: Perceptions of Collaboration as Voluntary (Percentage of Respondents)

Type of Collaboration	Voluntary	Involuntary
An IS fighter	97%	3%
A cook for IS fighters	88%	12%
Married to an IS fighter	84%	16%
A janitor who worked for the IS municipality	71%	29%
A resident of Mosul who paid taxes to IS	8%	92%

Multivariate OLS regression analysis finds that volition and culpability have separate effects on punishment and forgiveness. On average, if an act is perceived as voluntary, the

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[26]Measuring victimization as those who experienced death or injury of a family member reveals a 0.19 point (SE=0.06, 5% of the full scale) increase in harshness of punishment; this specification is not significantly correlated with forgiveness.

respondent is 0.53 points (SE=0.08, 11% of the full scale) harsher in punishment and 20 pp (SE=0.03) less likely to forgive the collaborator. Figure 3 shows the marginal effects of interactions between these two factors. The most striking result is that taxpayers receive a punishment that is 1.42 more harsh (28% of of the 5-point scale) when they are perceived as having voluntarily paid taxes compared to those who are seen as having done so involuntarily. Voluntary tax payment is treated as harshly as involuntary participation in acts of collaboration that directly support fighters (cooks and wives). These collaborators are also 38 pp less likely to be forgiven than those who were perceived to be coerced. This outcome demonstrates the importance of considering perceived volition of collaboration in addition to the type of collaboration when determining preferences for retribution and reconciliation. Notably, the effect of perceived volition may vary depending on the type of collaboration.

Figure 3: Perceptions of Voluntariness Interacted with Enemy Act
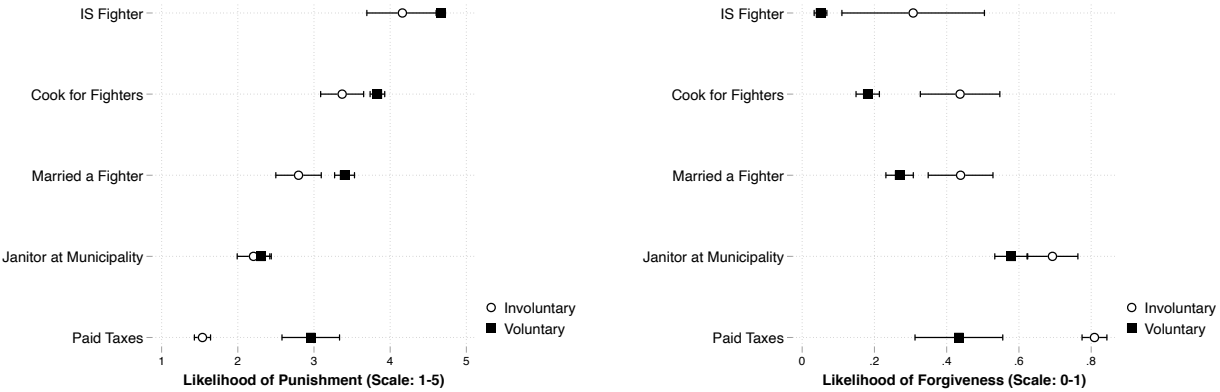
Note: Figure depicts point estimates (circles and squares) with 95% confidence intervals (horizontal lines) and robust standard errors clustered at the individual. Act of collaboration is displayed on the Y axis.

6.3 Discussion of Findings

Our study develops an empirical framework for theorizing and testing the microfoundations of attitudes toward punishment and forgiveness of enemy collaborators. The evidence suggests

the importance of variation in individual collaborator culpability and agency for post-conflict transitional justice and reconciliation.

The experimental design we employ is of immediate relevance to policymakers working to re-establish the rule of law and lasting peace in post-conflict settings. Our results reveal a significant gap between public opinion, which was on average more forgiving of IS collaborators than the harsh, one-punishment-fits-all approach taken by the Iraqi government. The policy implication here is that lighter punishments—including restorative, non-carceral sanctions such as community service or amnesty—should be considered for more cases than the law currently allows. On the other end of the spectrum, much of the sample still refuses to forgive the most condemnable acts of collaboration (e.g. fighters), indicating that reconciliation—even after the implementation of what respondents believed to be appropriate punishment—could be very difficult to achieve in these harder cases. Much more work is needed to understand the conditions under which, if any, violent collaborators can be accepted as rehabilitated.

An important limitation of our study is that we were only able to vary a small number of identity characteristics given limited time and resources. It is possible that other social identity characteristics (e.g. religious identity) would have stronger effects on the likelihood of forgiveness and reconciliation. There is a rich debate over the role of in-group versus out-group dynamics in post-conflict reconciliation which is beyond the scope of our study given the lack of diversity within our sample. That we did not find strong effects of collaborator identity characteristics on punishment demonstrates why public opinion should not be the *sole* basis for the design of transitional justice mechanisms; it is inhumane to hold juvenile offenders to the same standard as adults.

Engaging with an active scholarly debate as to whether personal victimization at the hands of an enemy group leads to either an increased desire for revenge and retribution (Hall et al., 2018; Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016) or pro-sociality and reconciliation through

a post-traumatic growth mechanism (e.g., Blattman, 2009), we find some support for the "revenge hypothesis" in terms of punishment, but not forgiveness. Our study is not the first to question the substantive effects of victimization on post-conflict attitudes (e.g., Dyrstad and Binningsbø, 2019).

Importantly, perceptions of volition behind collaboration are strongly associated with harshness of punishment and have an interactive effect with different types of collaboration. In-depth, qualitative work in post-conflict areas underscores that the perceived voluntariness of collaboration is an important factor in willingness to forgive and allow the reintegration of former enemy collaborators into their home communities (McKay and Mazurana, 2004). More broadly, experimental work in social psychology suggests that intentionality intensifies the perceived damage caused by a transgression (Darley and Huff, 1990). Our research fills a gap in the existing quantitative empirical literature on post-conflict justice and reconciliation, which does not consider variation in agency behind enemy collaboration.

7 Conclusion

Understanding the microfoundations of preferences for punishment and forgiveness of enemy collaborators in post-conflict societies is a necessary first step toward reconciliation. This research has important theoretical and substantive policy implications for the case of post-IS Iraq and beyond. Most of the people who support and enable insurgencies, coups, and occupations are civilians, not fighters (Weinstein, 2006; Petersen, 2001; Arjona, 2016).

Overall, our results challenge scholars and practitioners in the field of transitional justice—where policies are often designed by elites working at the macro-level—to turn their attention to the micro-level processes through which individuals affected by conflict form attitudes toward different types of collaborators. Including the voices of victims in the process of transitional justice policy-making may bolster the legitimacy of state institutions in contexts where

historical experiences with violence, repression, or political exclusion have undermined trust in governments. Our experimental design provides a framework for testing the determinants of justice and willingness to forgive, as well as other important outcomes including support for peace processes and reintegration of former collaborators. We hope it will spark a broader research agenda on the determinants of justice for, reconciliation with, and reintegration of enemy fighters and civilian collaborators across varied contexts.

We suggest several directions for future research. First, additional factors and mechanisms that could affect our outcomes should be further explored. For instance, apologies or humility from transgressors have also been shown to encourage forgiveness (e.g., McCullough, Fincham and Tsang, 2003). Other work shows that prospective assessments of threat drive preferences over justice (e.g., Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016).

Second, much remains to be learned about sub-national variation in popular views of transitional justice processes. The generalizability of our findings should be tested in other areas of Iraq that differ in their demography as well as exposure to IS. In cross-national comparative perspective, Mosul could be thought of as a hard case for post-conflict reconciliation because of the extreme violence that IS engaged in. Yet, within Iraq, our Sunni-only sample of Moslawis is likely an easier case for reconciliation than one drawn from areas with significant Shia, Christian, and Yazidi populations who were severely persecuted by IS. Since our sample includes people who collaborated with IS, it may be on average more empathetic with collaborators than the Iraqi population as a whole. Additionally, since IS had a high degree of control over the city, there is more room for collaborators to claim they were acting under coercion. Replicating our experiment in other areas of Iraq could advance our understanding of punishment and reconciliation of IS collaborators among non-Sunnis and those who experienced differing levels of IS rule (from none to contested to complete control).

Third, our design could be employed to make contributions to understanding the microdynamics of enemy collaboration and the potential for reconciliation beyond Iraq. Future

studies could run our design in other settings that differ from the case of post-IS Mosul in important ways: variation in regime type (e.g., democracies versus autocracies), cultural or religious norms and legal traditions, levels of development, duration of conflict and enemy rule, and different patterns of violence and intensities of violence. Another important question is how the passage of time since the cessation of conflict affects prospects for reconciliation, which can be assessed through longitudinal data collection. Our finding that variations in perceptions of enemy culpability and agency shape attitudes toward transitional justice and reconciliation is likely to hold across all of these varying contexts. Replication of our experimental design in other settings would contribute to the development of a more comprehensive, systematic model of attitudes toward post-conflict retribution and reconciliation.

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