

**The Impact of Social Homophily on the  
On the Virtual Encounter Simulation of  
Value Conflicts**

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# 1. Introduction and Overview

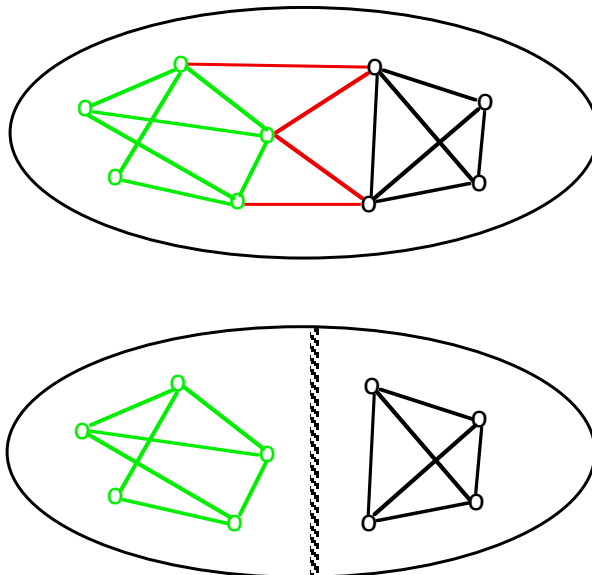
## Homophily:

Tendency to primarily interact/affiliate with peers.

## Examples of homophily:

Marriage between academics  
Ethnically homogeneous neighbourhoods  
Members of filter bubbles

Figs. 1a, b: Structure of universal (up) vs. homophilic (down) networks:



Legend: Green: Group A; Black: Group B

## Comments on Figs. 1a, b:

Homophilic networks have no/limited external contacts (red).

## General hypothesis:

Homophilic networks have less internal conflict than universal networks.

## Rationale of general hypothesis:

Exclusion of "heretics" from homophilic groups.

## Consequence:

Segmentation of society into homophilic groups reduces level of conflict.

## 2. The Methodology of Virtual Encounter Simulations

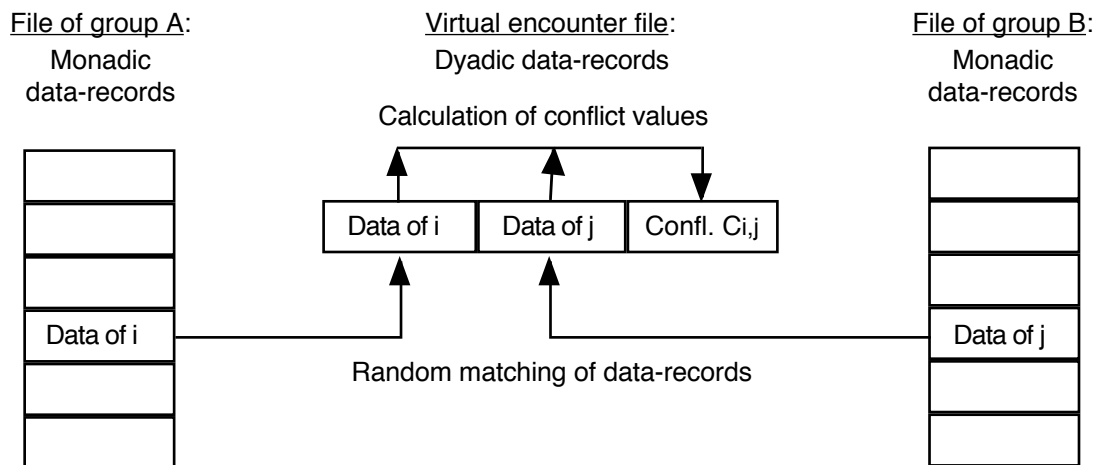
The data problem:

Social data are *monadic*

i.e. focussed on persons and not on pairs

--> lack of *dyadic* conflict data.

Fig. 2: The construction of a virtual encounter file for the calculation of conflicts:



Legend: i and j are members of the groups A and B. Conflict  $C_{i,j}$  with regard to an attribute X = Value difference  $|X_i - X_j|$ .

### Comments on Fig. 2:

Rationale of random matching:

F. Toennies: Contacts with *strangers* prevail

If group A = group B --> Internal conflict.

If group A  $\neq$  group B --> External conflict.

Possible sources of monadic data-records:

International surveys like ISSP, EVS, etc.  
in data-archives.

### Use of virtual encounter simulations for testing the general hypothesis:

Comparison of

a) *internal* conflict within homophilic group with

b) *external* conflict between homophilic group and rest of society

If internal conflict  $\leq$  external conflict

--> General hypothesis ok

### 3. Empirical Analyses

#### 3.1 The Data

Purpose:

Test of general hypothesis with data regarding political conflict about citizenship in Switzerland

Dataset:

International Social Survey Programme  
ISSP 2003 = National Identity II

Country:

Only Switzerland

Variables: Criteria of "Swissness":

V11: Birth in Switzerland

V12: Being Swiss citizen

V13: Most of life in Switzerland

V14: Speaking a nat. language

V15: Being Christian

V16: Respecting pol. institutions

V17: "Feel Swiss"

V18: Having a Swiss ancestry

Homophilic groups:

Based on *language* ( $\approx$  region):

German, French, Italian

Based on *religious denomination*:

Protestant, Catholic, No religion

Based on *political partisanship*:

Left, (Moderate) Right

### 3.2 Global Analysis of Internal and External Conflict

Fig. 3a: The relation between internal and external conflict:  
All groups and variables:

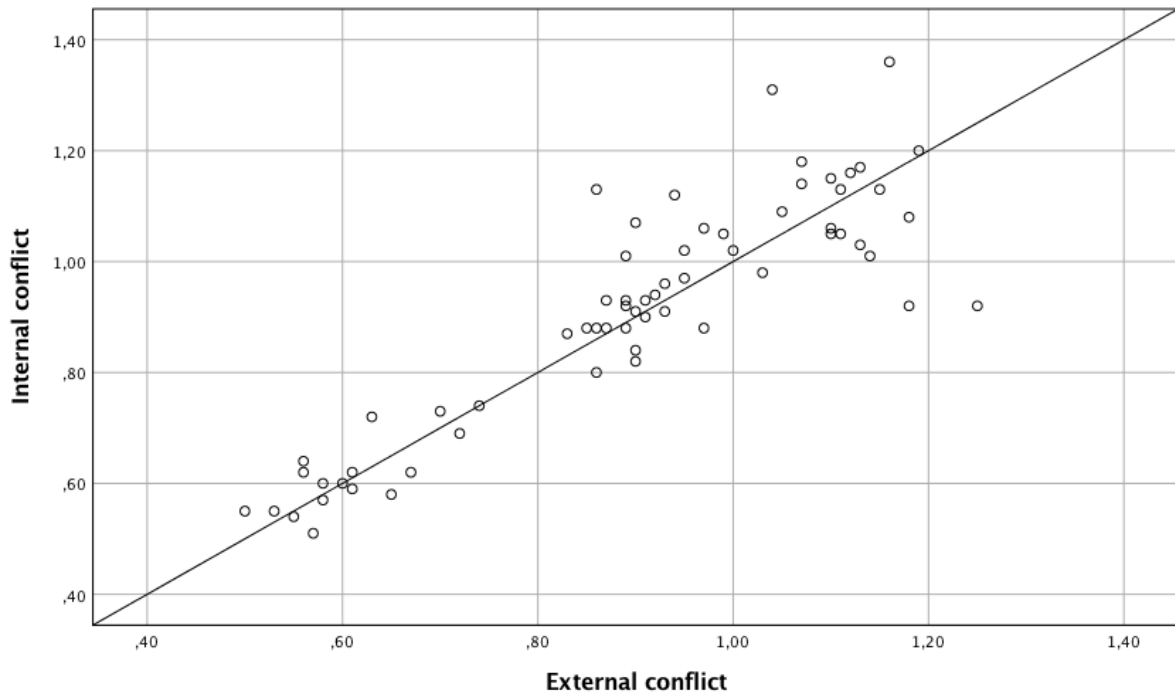
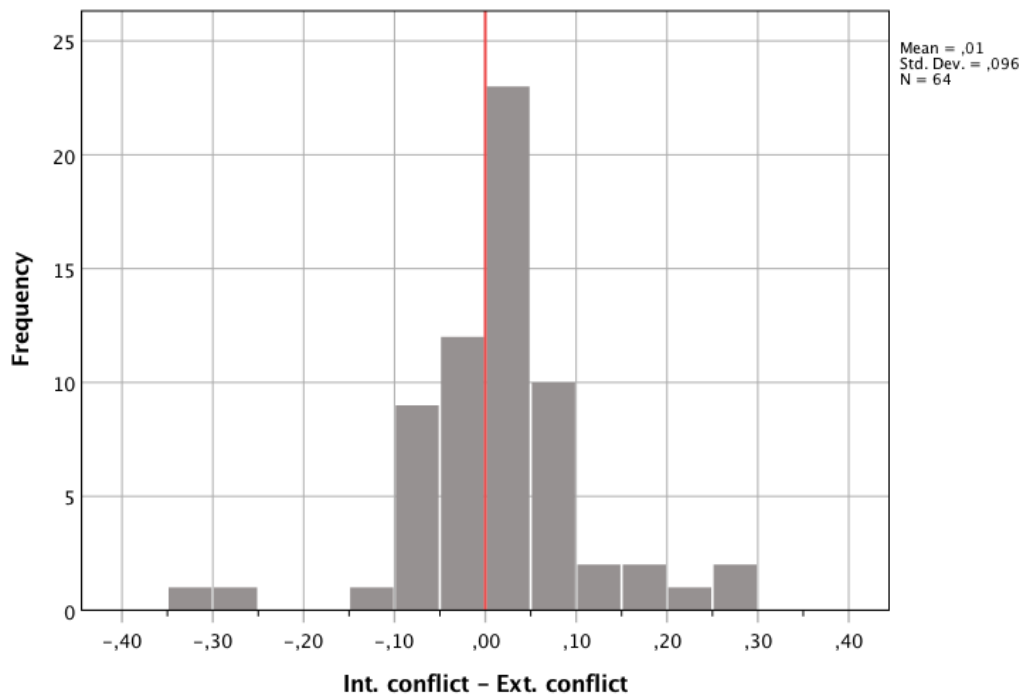


Fig. 3b: Histogram of differences of between int. and ext. conflict:

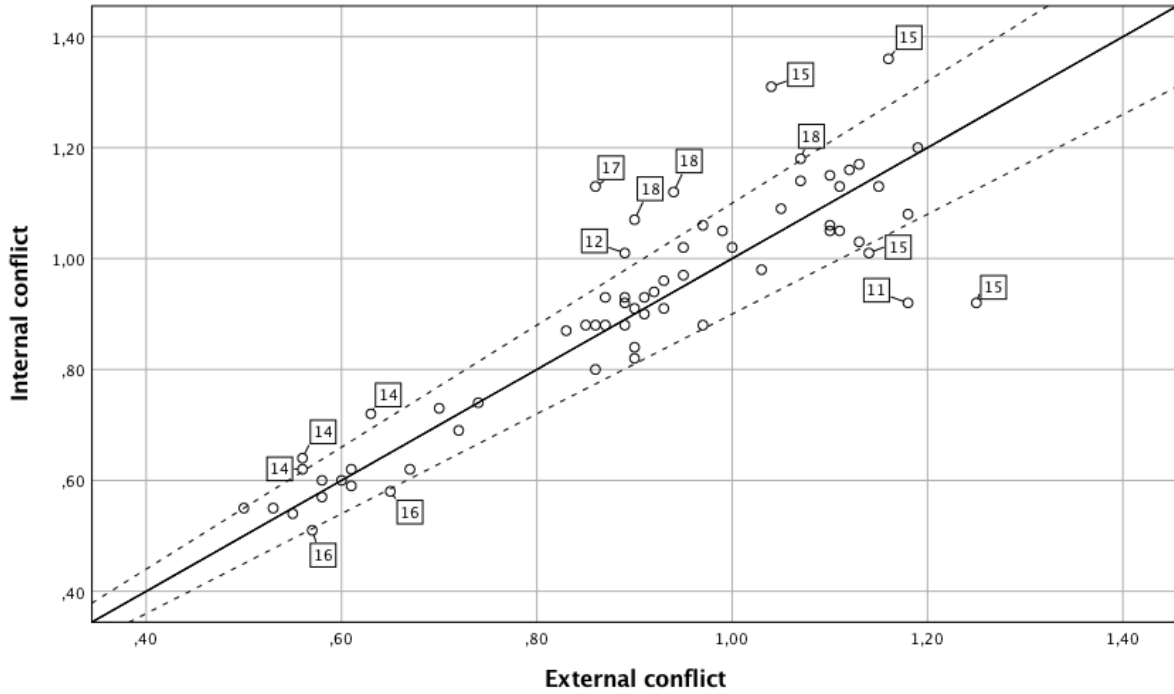


Comments on Fig. 3a, b:

Internal conflict  $\geq$  External conflict  
--> Falsification of general hypothesis

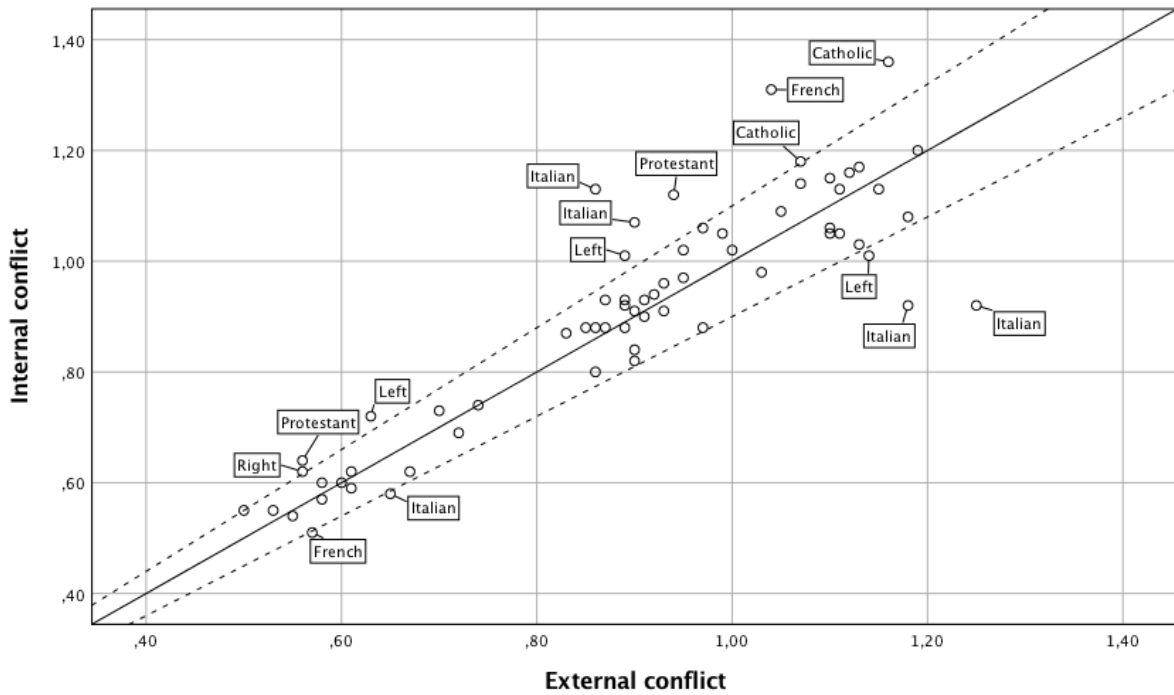
### 3.3 Analysis of the Best and Worst Confirmations of the General Hypothesis

Fig. 4a: The best/worst variables:



Legend: Dashed lines: Int. conflict = +/- 10% of ext. conflict; Boxes = Id. of extreme variables.

Fig. 4b: The best/worst groups:

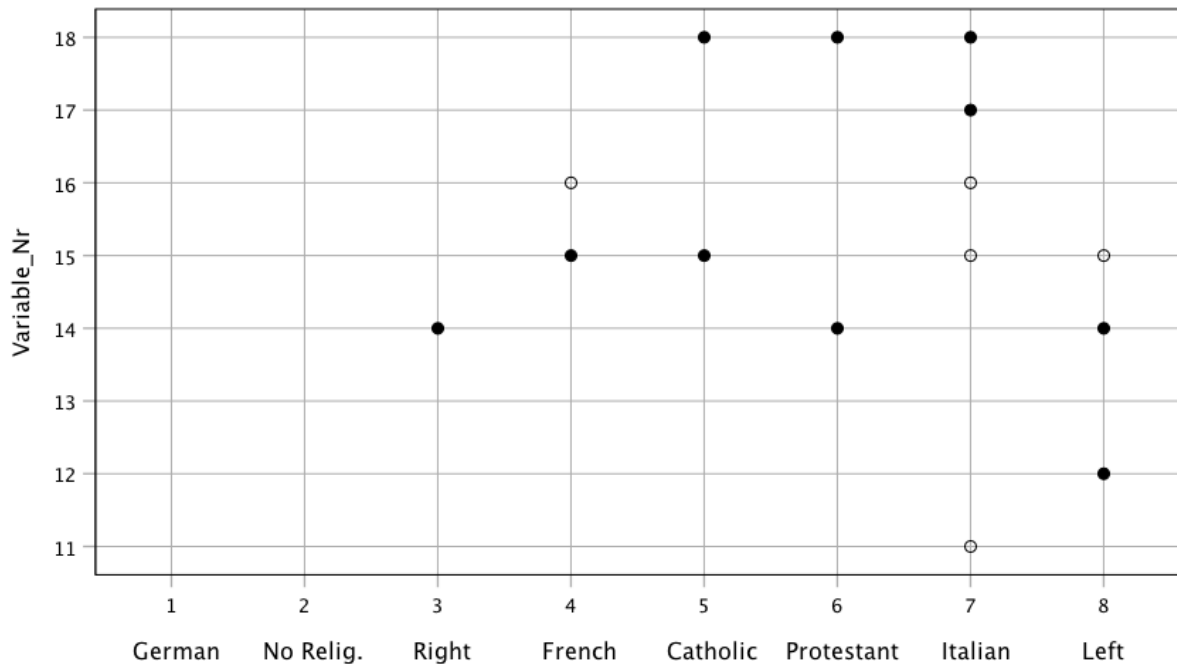


Legend: Dashed lines: Int. conflict = +/- 10% of ext. conflict; Boxes = Id. of extreme groups.

#### Comments on Figs. 4a, b:

Many odd cases *above* the upper dashed line

**Fig. 5: Synopsis of the best/worst groups/variables:**



Legend: *Black* bullets: Worst cases: Int. conflict > 1.1\*Ext. conflict; *White* bullets: Best cases: Int. conflict < 0.9\*Ext. conflict

Slight confirmation: Int. confl. ≤ Ext. confl.:

V16: Respecting polit. institutions: French: pos.; Italian: pos.; German: neutral; Rest: neutral.

V11: Birth in Switzerland: Italian: pos.; French, German: neutral; Rest: neutral.

Disconfirmation: Int. confl. ≥ Ext. confl.:

V12: Being Swiss citizen: Left: neg.; Right: neutral; Rest: neutral.

V13: Most of life in Switzerland: All cases: neutral.  
--> Int. confl. ≈ Ext. confl.

V14: Speaking a nat. language: Right, Protestant, Left: neg.; Rest: neutral.

V17: "Feel Swiss": Italian: neg.; French, German: neutral; Rest: neutral.

V18: Having a Swiss ancestry: Catholic, Italian, Protestant: neg.; Rest: neutral.

Mixed: Int. confl. ≤ or ≥ Ext. confl.:

V15: Being Christian: French, Catholic: negative; Italian, Left: pos.; Rest: neutral.

#### 4. Summary and Conclusions

General hypothesis about homophilic groups:

Internal conflict of homophilic groups  $\leq$   
External conflict

General empirical result:

Internal conflict  $\geq$  External conflict  
--> Segmentation into homophilic groups  
does *not* reduce conflicts.

Exceptional slight confirmations:

Linguistic regions with regard to  
V11 = Birth in Switzerland  
V16 = Respecting pol. institutions

Possible explanation 1 of failure:

Some topics are not on the *political agenda*  
of the analysed homophilic groups.  
E.g: Protestants not concerned about language.

Possible explanation 2 of failure:

Some homophilic groups have *no identity* that is  
different from the rest: E.g: Non-religious people

Possible explanation 3 of failure:

Some homophilic groups are internally *polarised*  
--> Internal conflict  $\geq$  external conflict.  
E.g: Working class left vs. academic left  
with regard to (universal) citizenship.

In sum:

This is work in progress,  
which requires further investigations.