

Civil war termination*

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DRAFT – comments much appreciated

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Abstract

We argue that commitment problems in the construction of power-sharing arrangements tend to make civil conflicts “all or nothing” fights for control of central or regional government. An implication is that civil wars will tend to end with military victory occasioned by a shock to one side’s relative power or cost tolerance. We code the 119 terminated civil conflicts listed by the Political Instability Task Force using a new scheme that recognizes conceptual differences in the meaning of military victory and negotiated settlements for civil wars where the rebel groups seek power at the center versus in a region. We find that power-sharing is quite rare in center-seeking wars, and somewhat more common in separatist conflicts (in the form of regional autonomy agreements). Finally, we examine case narratives for 30 randomly selected conflicts. We find that shocks to relative power in the form of entry or exit of foreign support for one side commonly caused civil war termination. We also find some evidence that changes in government leadership, possibly the result of shocks to cost tolerance, associates with civil war termination in our set of “random narratives.”

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1 Introduction

Civil wars are almost always wars of “regime change,” whereas only a small fraction of interstate wars have this end. That is, the aim of the rebel side in almost all civil wars is to take over the central government or to take political control of a region of the country. Rebel groups rarely say “we are fighting in order to induce the government to change its policy on X, and once that is accomplished we will disband and leave politics.”

This observation by itself supports the view that civil wars are typically driven by problems of credible commitment. Rebel groups aim at regime change because they could not trust the government to implement the policies they desire even if the government formally agreed to do so. After the rebel group disbands, or after the central government regains strength, or because of monitoring problems arising from the nature of the policy aims (for example, redistribution), the central government would renege on policy concessions it made to end a war. Thus rebel groups must often fight for “all or nothing.” By contrast, the combatants in interstate conflict retain their armies after a peace deal (Walter 2002), and small changes in territorial control are more easily self-enforcing.

Explanations based on commitment problems that prevent disarmament (Walter 2002) or stable power-sharing (Fearon 1998, 2004, 2007) are consistent with several other facts and regularities concerning civil war.² First, civil wars last much longer on average than interstate wars. For conflicts that began and ended after 1945, the median duration of interstate wars was less than three months, compared to about seven years for civil wars (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Fearon 2004). Second, several scholars have coded how civil wars end, always finding that government or rebel “victory” is more common than “negotiated settlement” (Pillar 1983; Stedman 1991; Licklider 1995; Walter 1997). By contrast, codings of how interstate wars end show mainly negotiated settlements. Pillar’s estimate of two-thirds negotiated settlements in interstate wars, and two thirds victories in civil wars, is often cited. Third, case-based evidence suggests that negotiations to end civil wars often break down over issues of mutual disarmament, military integration, or political power sharing. Walter (2002) maintains that civil wars almost never end in a negotiated settlement in the absence of strong third-party security guarantees. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) find that post-war peace breaks down more quickly in the absence of complex international peacekeeping operations (which provide security guarantees in transitional periods).

In this paper we examine determinants of civil war termination. We consider a simple model of civil war based on a commitment problem. In the model, a government and a rebel group can opt at any time for power-sharing, but each knows that power-sharing amounts to a lottery on full control of government and being completely eliminated. Given the risks of power-sharing, it can be safer and better to fight on in the hope that the military tide will turn in one’s favor. Regarding termination, the model suggests that civil wars will tend to end when there is a significant shock to the relative power or cost tolerance of one side or the other, such as the beginning or end of major

foreign support to government or rebels.

Empirically, we draw on brief narratives of civil war termination that we have constructed for the 136 civil wars since 1955 in the Political Instability Task Force's case list. We read the case literature on these wars and their termination, seeking to gain insight from these expert accounts into the various causal mechanisms that led to termination.¹ The narratives also allowed us to reconsider the problem of how to code or classify the ways that civil wars may end. In particular, how does one distinguish between a "negotiated settlement" and a "victory" for one side or the other? This question has not been adequately addressed in the growing literature on civil war termination.

We propose to code civil war outcomes as much as possible on the basis of whether the rebels achieved their end of taking control of the central government or the region they are fighting for, rather than on whether there was a formal "negotiated settlement" or a "truce." Using this standard, we find very little "power-sharing" as the way that center-seeking civil wars have ended. Secession or autonomy-seeking wars have more often ended with small concessions to the rebels by a basically victorious government side, but again the most common outcomes are government military defeat of rebels or rebels gaining *de facto* or significant political autonomy. For both center- and region-seeking civil wars, we are struck by how well rebel groups have done since 1955. Though governments defeat rebel groups more than twice as often as rebels win power in center-seeking wars, the rebels took over the regime in one in four such cases. Separatist rebel groups have done even better in terms of gaining increased regional autonomy, especially since the end of the Cold War.

Using a "random narratives" method (Fearon and Laitin 2008), we randomly selected 30 PITF cases for closer investigation of the causal mechanisms leading to war termination. We find fairly strong support for the hypothesis that shocks to relative military capability due to changes in foreign intervention commonly cause civil wars to end. We also find that changes in leadership (either in government or with rebels) can also act as shocks that lead to one side's victory.

In Section 2, we examine a model of interactions between a government and a rebel group that shows how a set of interrelated commitment problems concerning power sharing deals can force the parties into a fight for complete control of political institutions rather than a deal on policy. In the model, war termination occurs only when some "shock," such as a change in foreign intervention status, changes the military equation in favor of one side.

¹Because we wrote the case narratives as a part of a PITF-funded project on civil war termination, in this paper we use the PITF civil war list for all data analysis, even though we have various disagreements with their codings (particularly concerning start and end dates). In subsequent work we expect to check the findings by adapting and extending the codings here to the current version of the civil war list we developed in Fearon and Laitin (2003). For the PITF list, <http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/pitfdata.htm>.

Sections 3 through 5 are empirical, aimed in part at evaluating implications of the model. Section 3 addresses conceptual and practical questions concerning how to code “military victory” versus “negotiated settlement” or “power sharing” in civil wars. Our main argument here is that these distinctions can be made more cleanly if we recognize that they mean different things depending on whether the rebels aim at the center or power in a region. In Section 4 we discuss broad patterns and secular trends in civil war termination, based on our coding of outcomes for the civil war list compiled by the Political Instability Task Force. In Section 5, relying on a set of thirty “random narratives,” we explore the mechanisms that link two types of external shocks – changes in foreign intervention and changes in leadership – to terminations. Section 6 concludes.

2 A Model

In this section we propose and analyze a simple model of a civil war in which a set of interrelated commitment problems render power-sharing problematic. This has the effect of making the conflict “all or nothing” in terms of feasible outcomes, and also makes relative military capability at any point the key factor in deciding whether the conflict will end. We suggest that sudden changes in relative military power that move a conflict away from stalemate will in practice often occur when foreign intervention begins or ends for one side.

Formally, we consider the interaction between a government, G , and a rebel group R , in successive periods $t = 0, 1, 2, \dots$. We begin by supposing that the rebel group has already mobilized and begun fighting; below we consider the initial decision to organize and rebel. Control of the government is worth a divisible amount $\pi > 0$ in each period.

If both sides choose to fight in a period (choosing, say, in sequence), then there is some probability that a third-party will either come to the aid of, or abandon, one side, so allowing a complete military victory (on the meaning of which, see the next section). We let p_G and p_R be the probabilities of a change in intervention that favors the government and the rebels, respectively. So these are the probabilities that G or R wins a military victory in a period when both fight. For example, p_G can be interpreted as the probability that a third party enters to provide decisive support to the government, or withdraws critical support from the rebels. Note, however, that the event that shifts relative power and enables victory *need not be outside intervention*. It could be a collapse of the will to fight by one side’s supporters, or, perhaps, luck on the battlefield.

We assume that $p_G + p_R < 1$, which means that the conflict may be stalemated in any given period of fighting. For notational convenience let $p = 1 - p_G - p_R$ be the probability that neither side wins militarily in a period. From basic probability theory the expected duration of a conflict with stalemate probability p is $1/(1 - p)$, which can be very long when p is close to one. A period of fighting costs each side $c > 0$, and we assume future payoffs are discounted by the factor $\delta \in (0, 1)$.

per period.²

If one side is militarily eliminated in a period, the victor takes control of government from then on, so getting a payoff of $\Pi \equiv \pi/(1 - \delta)$. The loser, by contrast, gets a bad payoff, $-d < 0$, in all subsequent periods, meant to represent the value of being killed or imprisoned or otherwise punished by the winning side. For convenience let $D = d/(1 - \delta)$ be this cost of being defeated by force of arms. Note that this formulation makes it worse to have lost a fight than to be completely excluded from any share of the benefits π in every period.

The above allows us to write government and rebel expected payoffs if they anticipate a fight that will last until one side wins militarily. For the rebels, this is

$$\begin{aligned} V_R^F &= p_R \Pi - p_G D + p[0 + \delta V_R^F] - c \\ V_R^F &= \frac{p_R \Pi - p_G D - c}{1 - p\delta}, \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

and for the government,

$$\begin{aligned} V_G^F &= p_G \Pi - p_R D + p[\pi + \delta V_G^F] - c \\ V_G^F &= \frac{p_G \Pi - p_R D + p\pi - c}{1 - p\delta}. \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

From (1), note that if $p_R \pi - p_G d > c(1 - \delta)$, then a rebel group would prefer mobilizing and trying to fight to win all to receiving none of the benefits of political power forever. When this is the case we will say that a rebel group is *viable*, in the sense that it has a credible threat to fight for power if the alternative is getting no part of the state-controlled benefits. Notice that a rebel group can be viable even if p_R is quite small, provided that the odds of government decisive victory in any one period are also small.

In the literature on the collective action problem in civil war it is sometimes argued that rebel groups have such long odds of victory that rebellion can't be rational for any reasonable assumptions about the size of the benefits versus the costs. But as we show below, rebel groups that get to the stage of civil war have done reasonably well in terms of taking power. Empirically, p_R is not trivial relative to p_G .

“Expected benefits greater than costs” for a period of fighting is still not enough to make fighting a rational choice, however. The comparison above was fighting versus a status quo arrangement in which the rebel group (or leadership) gets none of the goods of rule. The fact that fighting is costly means that there are divisions of the benefits π that both sides would prefer to fighting.

²The cost terms could be subscripted for R and G but are not to save on notation.

For example, if the government could credibly commit to provide the rebels in every period with a share of π worth slightly more than the rebel's time-averaged (that is, per period) value for fighting, $(1 - \delta)V_R^F$, then both government and rebel group could be better off.

Suppose the government can make an offer $x_t \leq \pi$ in each period t , before decisions about whether to fight have been made. If the rebel leadership accepts, then “power sharing” begins, which we will assume is simply unstable. Power-sharing breaks down immediately, with one side taking full control of government. The rebel leadership takes full control with probability $s_t = x_t/\pi$, which is its share of the government offices or spoils as offered by the government in that period. The government seizes total control with probability $1 - s_t$.

Total control after the breakdown of power sharing allows the winner to completely eliminate the loser at a cost $k > 0$. Elimination means that the strategic interaction ends, with the winner getting π in every subsequent period and the loser getting $-d$ in every subsequent period (the same as the payoff for being eliminated by war). If the winner chooses not to eliminate the loser, payoffs in the current period are π for the winner and zero for the loser, and the game continues as before (though with the roles of government and rebel group reversed if the former rebel group took full control when power sharing broke down).

The assumption that power sharing breaks down right away is both stark and somewhat “reduced form.” A much richer model would unpack the nature of the institutional and social obstacles to constructing stable power-sharing institutions.³ A somewhat richer model would allow power-sharing to break down probabilistically in successive periods rather than right away. For our purposes here, however, this simple version is sufficient to capture what we believe is an important form of the commitment problem that prevents civil wars from being easily settled by compromise. Parties to civil war settlement negotiations know there is a serious risk that agreements will be violated and power-sharing (whether over a central or regional government) will break down. Further, they know that being on the losing side of a breakdown can be extremely dangerous. Having come out into the open is dangerous for a rebel group's leadership; having partially or wholly disarmed or attempted to integrate military force structures can be dangerous for both sides if the other cheats. The danger comes from the winner's option to use the state's coercive powers to eliminate the loser entirely. This can be rational for the winner even if doing so is costly, because failing to do so when it has the chance will lead to a return to civil war if the rebel group is viable (as defined above).

If the losing side in the breakdown of power-sharing could commit not to return to civil war, then the winner would prefer not to try to eliminate the loser permanently. Alternatively, suppose the parties could commit ex ante not to completely eliminate the loser in a power-sharing struggle. Either way, attempts at power-sharing would then become a simple lottery on who gets to control the flow of benefits π in each period. There will always be some power-sharing lottery of this sort

³See Fearon (2006) for one attempt.

that both sides prefer to the more costly and dangerous lottery of civil war. Peace would then be possible and stable and civil war need not occur in the first place. However, as shown below, if the power-sharing lottery has a risk of complete elimination as the loser's outcome, then both sides can prefer civil war to any power sharing "deal."

Thus, there are really three commitment problems here that can combine to render civil-war-till-one-side-wins-all the only equilibrium outcome: (1) the inability of the parties to commit to share power and not try to grab all by coup (or by reneging on a regional autonomy deal) once in government; (2) the inability of the winner in a coup to commit not to eliminate or otherwise persecute the loser; and (3) the inability of a loser who is not eliminated to commit not to return to civil war if this is preferable to getting none of the spoils of rule. All three problems are necessary for there to be parameter values such that both sides fighting till one is defeated the unique equilibrium outcome.

We next establish the conditions under which both sides prefer fighting to attempting to share power. Paying the cost k to eliminate the loser in a power-sharing breakdown is worthwhile provided that

$$\pi - k + \delta\Pi > \pi + \delta V_G^F \quad (3)$$

where V_G^F is the continuation value for the government for fighting till one side wins, defined above. This is certainly the case for small enough k , and when this is so, the expected value of "power sharing" for a rebel group offered s_t is

$$V_R^{PS} = s_t(-k + \Pi) + (1 - s_t)(-D).$$

The expected value of power sharing for the government is the same but with s_t and $1 - s_t$ reversed:

$$V_G^{PS} = (1 - s_t)(-k + \Pi) + s_t(-D).$$

There will be a power-sharing deal that both sides prefer to fighting if and only if there is a s_t that satisfies both $V_R^{PS} > V_R^F$ and $V_G^{PS} > V_G^F$. In turn, this will be the case if and only the total "pie" available from powersharing is greater than the total "pie" obtainable by fighting. That is:

$$\begin{aligned} V_R^{PS} + V_G^{PS} &\geq V_R^F + V_G^F \\ -k + \Pi - D &\geq \frac{(1 - p)(\Pi - D) + p\pi - 2c}{1 - p\delta} \\ 2c &\geq pd + k(1 - p\delta). \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

(The last line follows using algebra from the line before it.)

Inequality (4) is the condition for government and rebels to prefer to attempt power-sharing. It clearly cannot be satisfied for large enough d , the "cost" or disvalue of being eliminated at war or

in a power-sharing breakdown. When (4) does not hold (and rebellion is viable and condition (3) holds), the game's unique subgame perfect equilibrium is a civil war in which each side fights for total control and refuses to seriously attempt power-sharing.

To provide some intuition for this result, consider that because of the inability to design or commit to a stable power-sharing arrangement, government and rebels in the model face a choice between two gambles that both can lead to violent elimination or persecution. Either power sharing will break down and the winner will eliminate the loser. Or war will lead ultimately to one side being defeated by force and so being just as vulnerable as being on the wrong side of a power-sharing breakdown. Compared to power-sharing, civil war has a cost and benefit. The cost is the per period cost of fighting. The benefit is that while fighting, government and rebels *avoid, for a period of time, the really bad outcome of being eliminated or becoming highly vulnerable to the other side.*

An instructive feature of this equilibrium is that each side's murderous intent towards the other – its willingness to kill the opponent or otherwise permanently eliminate the other's capacity to fight when given the chance – is a matter of prudence rather than passion. When a rebel group is viable in the sense of preferring fighting to getting none of the benefits, it can't commit not to return to rebellion if it is "let off the hook." But this makes it rational for a military or power-sharing winner not to let the loser off the hook, and the anticipation of this then undermines power sharing as an option.

We thus have an explanation for why weak states are so much more civil war prone, if we take "weak" here to mean a state where rebel groups are more likely to be viable because p_R is relatively large and p_G is relatively small.⁴

From (4) we can also obtain comparative statics on when the parties are more or less likely to be willing to attempt power sharing, although the interpretation requires care. If (4) holds, then there are deals s_i that government and rebels mutually prefer to fighting. But they both understand that the deal will break down right away and one of them will control the whole government. In this case, both sides are gambling on, say, winning the UN-sponsored election, hoping to gain power quickly and at lower cost this way than by fighting (Angola, Cambodia). No one expects that power sharing will survive.

From (4), such *cynical* attempts at power sharing will be harder to arrange when (a) the per period costs of fighting (relative to the benefits at stake) are small, as perhaps in less developed economies with good social and physical terrain for guerrilla war; (b) the odds of stalemate in any given period of war are higher, again as in guerrilla style conflicts;⁵ and (c) the worse being completely at the mercy of your opponent is relative to winning control and being cut out of all state benefits (which might be the case in conflict between groups that have strong ethnic or religious animosities, or a

⁴Cf. Fearon and Laitin (2003) and Fearon (2008).

⁵This is assuming that $d > k\delta$, which should be uncontroversial.

tradition of treating losers brutally).

For *stable* power sharing to be possible in this model, it has to be that the winner in a power-sharing breakdown would not want to completely eliminate or persecute the loser, because the costs of doing so (k) are too high. This could be, for example, because the rebels have excellent terrain or significant social support and so can return easily to guerrilla war in their region.

Formally, if k is large enough that (3) does not hold, then the winner in a power-sharing struggle prefers not to try to eliminate the loser. As a result, the winner can credibly commit to implement an s_t in each period that induces the losing side not to return to war.⁶

A shortcoming of this simple complete information model is that either the commitment problems bind, in which case there is war till military victory, or they do not, in which case efficient power-sharing can be arranged right away. In reality we observe a few civil wars where the combatants fight for a period of time and then move to power sharing. In a variant of the model, this could occur in equilibrium if the government was initially unsure about the costs of suppressing the rebels (k here), and learned about its value by fighting. That is, the longer the rebels survive at war, the more the government increases its belief that it would not be able to eliminate the rebels entirely, which can make stable power-sharing possible by the argument above.⁷

To conclude this section, we draw out some empirical implications of the equilibrium results concerning war termination. First of all, the model fleshes out the intuition that commitment problems concerning powersharing can force civil conflicts to be fights for all or nothing, fights for “regime change.” In interstate conflicts the cost of completely eliminating an opponent after one has reneged on a political deal will usually be high (or simply impossible to do), because the other side retains its territory and forces. By the results above, this means that deals that divide up territory or other policy goods will be more feasible in interstate interactions than in government/rebel group interactions. In turn, we should expect to see fewer negotiated settlements and more outright military victories in civil wars than in interstate wars.

The second implication concerns the causes of civil war termination. When the commitment problems render power-sharing infeasible, civil war in the model ends stochastically, as a result of something happening that enables one side to achieve its objective by force of arms. For conflicts that do not end fairly quickly because one side makes rapid progress against the other’s inferior

⁶Modify the model slightly so that if power-sharing is attempted, Nature chooses one side to have the opportunity to seize total control and then whether to eliminate the other side. If a player chooses not to take total control, the proposal s_t is implemented and play proceeds to the next period with Nature again giving one side the option to grab control with probability s_{t-1} . Then when k is large enough we can construct an equilibrium in which the side that has the opportunity to seize power chooses not to in each period. Grabbing power and seizing π for a period would be met by a return to fighting by the ‘out’ party.

⁷See ? for essentially this model and argument.

forces, the “something” will most likely be some sort of *shock* to relative military capabilities (or the will to continue fighting).

Two relatively *observable* such shocks would include (a) the beginning or end of major foreign support for one side or the other, and (b) a change in the leadership of the government or rebel side during fighting. The first obviously directly influences relative military capability, while the second might augur a loss of will to fight by one side.

In the small existing literature on the effect of intervention on civil war duration, the tendency is to correlate duration with presence or absence of intervention on behalf of government, rebels, or both (Balch-Lindsay and Enterline 2000). The analysis here suggests that for civil war termination, we should expect *changes* in intervention status to be more important than mere presence or absence. Two different conflicts might have the same p_G and p_R , and thus the same ex ante expected duration $1/(1 - p)$, even though in one case there was no foreign support for either side while in the other there was foreign support for rebels, government, or both. But to the extent that change in foreign support is a shock that can lead to military victory, we would expect such changes to predict war termination.

A major obstacle to testing this hypothesis is that, not surprisingly, there is not much cross-national data documenting foreign intervention in civil wars. The Correlates of War project civil war data lists state participants other than the country in which the conflict is occurring, but they appear to use a strict criterion of whether the intervener has sent its own, uniformed troops to the war. This is not a very common form of intervention. Pat Regan (2002) has compiled extensive, monthly data on economic and military interventions in post 1945 civil wars. But his data appear to record months in which intent to deliver support to one side or another was reported in the press, and does not record subsequent delivery or changes in provision of support.

It might be that, with some work, either or both of these data sets could be used to partially examine the connection between changes in intervention status and civil war termination. In what follows, however, we initially pursue a different method, coding changes in foreign support from a set of brief narratives of 30 randomly selected civil wars.

In the model, changes in foreign support (or whatever makes for decisive victory in a period) are exogenous to prior events in the war. Formally, the probabilities of different military outcomes each period are the same from period to period. One can imagine a richer model in which battles can be won or lost, bringing victory closer or farther away, and third parties choose whether to enter or exit in part on the basis of events on the ground. This would introduce the possibility that new foreign support or the withdrawal of foreign support was correlated with war termination, but not fully causal. That is, “rats” might leave a ship that was going to sink anyway, or might join in a fight that was going to be won anyway.⁸ One advantage of our narrative-based approach to

⁸The first scenario seems more likely, since why pay the costs to help preserve a favored government or

testing is that we can ask in each case about the third party's reasons for intervening or withdrawing support, and so gauge to what extent changes in foreign support are exogenous causes of civil war termination.

3 Categorizing civil war outcomes

Most civil wars do not end with a formal agreement between the combatants. For example, if the rebels take control of the government they do not normally sign a deal with the regime they have replaced.

But the absence of a formal agreement does not imply that there was no negotiation in the termination of the war. Even if a side loses in the sense that it becomes completely unable to continue military operations as it had in the past, it can retain the ability to resist or fight back in other ways. The "unilateral" terms imposed by the military winner must take into account this possibility; the winner realizes that too harsh terms may be unenforceable on the ground or may continue a costly struggle in some other form. Thus even in the case of a "military victory," the loser can retain some residual bargaining power that will make the outcome the result of tacit negotiation, at the least.⁹

For example, the separatist Ibo forces were defeated militarily in Nigeria's Biafran war, a war fought between two conventional armies. The Biafran general staff, after its leader Ojukwu went into exile, rejected his pleas for a guerrilla struggle. That they refused to retreat into the forests was in part a function of the surrender terms.¹⁰ In our narratives we find that it is fairly common for rebels or government to win militarily in the sense that they render their opponent incapable of continuing at a "civil war" level, but nonetheless the winner provides various minor concessions either to region or to the ex-combatants (amnesties, job programs, and so on). So, even lopsided

bring a favored rebel group to power if they would succeed even without the support?

⁹Kecskemeti (1958) observed this phenomenon in his study of the "strategic surrenders" in World War II. For example, despite the complete rout of the French army in May 1940, "To be politically effective, the [victory against France] had to be exploited quickly, before Britain could build up new strength in being. Hence speed in winding up hostilities with France was essential, and the Germans were ready, in the interests of speed, to meet France's minimum conditions in arranging a surrender" (p. 34).

¹⁰O'Connell (1993, 194-95) emphasizes the docility of the occupied Igbo population, especially due to the good behavior of the Middle Belt soldiers who were not responsible for the 1966 pogroms in the North against the Igbo populations living there. But that Ojukwu's successor who surrendered unconditionally got his former rank restored to him with full retirement benefits a few days after surrender suggests that the Federal Government's generous surrender terms were influential in avoiding a guerrilla war. See Stedman (1993, 165, 187) for a similar account of why Southern generals refused to accept President Davis's appeals for a guerrilla war in the face of conventional defeat in America's civil war.

military outcomes can have elements of a “negotiated settlement” or bargain.

Likewise, some civil wars end with a formal negotiated agreement between the combatants, even though the military outcome was lopsided. Analysts always code the Guatemalan civil war as ending with a negotiated settlement due to the UN-sponsored negotiations and peace settlement that formalized its conclusion (e.g., Doyle and Sambanis 2006, Fortna 2004, Walter 2002). But in military terms the guerrillas were almost completely crushed, and they ended up getting very minor concessions that were far from their objective of overthrowing the state (and many of the minor concessions were never implemented).

So how do we draw the distinction between “military victory” and “negotiated settlement” in a civil war, if each can contain aspects of the other? Further, if our criteria, whatever they are, require fine judgements about the balance of concessions or the extent of military success, they may not be operational.

There are also important questions about how sensibly to code civil war outcomes across different types of civil wars. Intuitively, if the rebels are trying to capture the central government, then a “military victory” for the rebels entails decisively defeating the government’s army and seizing control of the center. But if the rebels are trying to secede or gain autonomy for a region, then “military victory” need not mean a complete defeat of the state’s forces. Here, this would only require the ability to maintain control of the territory in question in the face of government attack.

Similarly, while it is fairly clear how to define “power-sharing” as an outcome of a civil war in which the parties fight for control of the center, it is not so clear for a war of secession or regional autonomy. If regional rebels fight the government to a standstill and gain *de facto* control of the region (e.g., Nagorno-Karabagh), then from one perspective this is a tacitly negotiated settlement in which the government has agreed not to use its army to keep fighting the rebels.¹¹ Power in the country is now “shared,” *de facto*, between government and rebels. But intuitively it seems as if we should distinguish between a case like Nagorno-Karabagh, where rebel fighting won *de facto* autonomy, and a case like, say, Northern Ireland, where the military outcome was ambiguous and the conflict ended with an extensive set of mutually agreed power-sharing arrangements.

We propose criteria and a coding scheme that recognize that “military victory” and “negotiated settlement” or “power sharing” have different meanings depending on whether the rebels aim at taking power in the center or in a region. If the rebel group takes over control of the central government by force of arms, this is naturally coded as a military victory for the rebels. If a separatist rebel group gains *de jure* or *de facto* autonomy by successfully driving government forces

¹¹For example, Licklider (1995, 684) defines a negotiated settlement as “an end to the violence reached while both sides had significant military capabilities remaining and therefore could have decided not to have stopped fighting if the terms were not acceptable.” This makes any end to a separatist war other than complete military victory by the government a “negotiated settlement.”

from the region, then this is also naturally described as a military victory (even if the government forces are not disarmed).

By contrast, it is a decisive military victory for the government if government forces disarm or suppress rebel forces to the point that they cannot continue fighting at the level of civil war.¹² This applies for both center- and autonomy-seeking conflicts.

“In between” military victory for rebels or government, there are power-sharing agreements in center-seeking wars and various degrees of explicitly negotiated regional autonomy arrangements in separatist conflicts. In a center-seeking war, a power-sharing agreement is a mutually accepted division of major political and/or military positions among the combatants. In a separatist war, the rebels achieve most of their end when they get significant concessions on regional autonomy, typically including the creation of regional political institutions that the rebels or their affiliated political arm run. Short of this, we find a number of separatist cases where the military outcome is basically stalemated or favors the government, but the conflict is ended by a deal in which the rebels get minor concessions short of regional political institutions that they control.

The third column of Table 1 summarizes the coding scheme we used for center- and region-seeking civil wars in the PITF civil war list. The first column gives the number of cases that we coded in PITF’s list with that type of outcome. The second column gives the percentage for each outcome within its type (center or regional), among the set of wars of that type that have ended.

For the center-seeking wars, in addition to military victories for government or rebels, we include a category for “other government victories.” These are cases where the government essentially won on the battlefield, in the sense of rendering the rebel group or groups militarily ineffectual, but where some political concessions were made to the leadership of the rebels to help gain peace.¹³ In the PITF war list, we have no cases of “other rebel victories,” which occur when the rebel group takes power by means other than force. However, if the termination date of the first Charles Taylor war in Liberia were properly coded (in our view), there would be one such case.¹⁴

¹²As “civil war” is defined by various authors, for instance Fearon and Laitin (2003), Doyle and Sambanis (2006), or the Correlates of War project.

¹³Examples include Guatemala 1996, Mozambique 1992, Tajikistan 1998, and Indonesia 1961 (Darul Islam).

¹⁴PITF codes the first Charles Taylor war in Liberia as ending in 1993 with the Cotonou agreement, which we code as “foreign protectorate/suppression” due to the role of ECOMOG and UNOMIL in the ending the fighting at that point (UNOMIL was attempting to help implement a power-sharing agreement, but power was never shared). However, the fighting really did not end in 1993; most lists have it ending in 1997 with Taylor’s election. For 1997, we would code it as $cterm = 5$, an “other rebel victory,” because Taylor came to power by an election. As Ellman and Wantchekon (2000) argue, it was an election in the shadow of Taylor’s credible threat to return to war if he lost, so it could also be viewed as a rebel military victory.

Finally, we add a category for four cases where the war terminated because foreign governments and/or international organizations intervened to end or suppress the violence, either without causing the victory of one side (Albania 1997, Cyprus 1964, and Liberia 1993), or without leaving (Cyprus 1964, Lebanon 1991). These cases are not really power-sharing in the sense of power being shared among former combatants effectively or by their own devices (they don't actually hold the real power). The Albania 1997 case, where a UN-authorized OSCE force led by the Italians intervened to end the chaos, does not appear in most civil war lists for lack of casualties or a clear rebel organization. As noted above, we disagree with PITF's coding of a war end in Liberia in 1993, but in so far as there was a reduction in the fighting, this was because of foreign intervention seeking to support the Cotonou agreement. In Cyprus, Britain and UNFICYP intervened to end the communal fighting and UNFICYP never left. In Lebanon 1991, a peace that redistributed benefits in favor of Syrian clients was implemented and overseen by Syrian military presence, which did not end till recently.

The categories for outcomes of separatist wars are less complicated. Either the government wins by force of arms and the rebel groups get basically nothing ($rterm = 1$); or there is an agreement following some measure of military stalemate in which the rebels get either regional political institutions ($rterm = 3$) or minor concessions short of some form of political autonomy ($rterm = 2$); or the rebels win de facto autonomy (or in one case, de jure independence) by force of arms ($rterm = 4$).

The coding scheme above does not completely resolve the first conceptual problem introduced above, that lopsided military outcomes can have aspects of a negotiated settlement, and formally negotiated settlements can cover nearly complete military victories. It addresses the problem by trying to code mainly on the observable question of who ends up with control of government or a region, and (something more of a judgement call in some cases) whether control was gained almost completely by military means rather than concessions. In some cases there can also be room for dispute in making distinctions between "power-sharing" and government victory with minor concessions ($cterm = 2$ and 3), and between decisive government victory and outcomes just short of this ($cterm = 1$ and 2).

The main advantage of our scheme, we believe, is that by distinguishing between and center- and autonomy-seeking wars, we can make better sense of the ideas of "power sharing" or "negotiated settlement," which appear differently in these different types of wars.

4 Trends and patterns in how civil wars end

One of the most striking features of the data summarized in Table 1 is how rarely do center-seeking civil wars end with power sharing. This occurred in only 9 of 70 terminated conflicts, or 13%. These nine include the classic elite pact that ended La Violencia in Columbia in the late 1950s,

Table 1. Outcomes for center- and autonomy-seeking civil wars.

Center-seeking civil wars (cterm)		
# cases	%	Outcome coding
13		0 = ongoing
31	44	1 = government military victory
9	13	2 = other government victory (typically military dominance plus some concessions)
9	13	3 = power-sharing at center
4	6	4 = foreign protectorate/suppression (eg Cyprus 1964)
0	0	5 = other rebel victory (no military victory but rebels assume power)
17	24	6 = rebel military victory (rebels take power by force of arms)
83	100	
Autonomy-seeking civil wars (rterm)		
# cases	%	Outcome coding
10		0 = ongoing
23	48	1 = decisive government military victory (rebels crushed)
6	12	2 = rebels get military stalemate plus small concessions
11	23	3 = rebels get military stalemate plus significant concessions on autonomy ¹⁵
8	17	4 = rebel military success allows de facto autonomy
58	100	

Note: “%” is share of outcome for wars that have ended.

and the deals that ended Apartheid in South Africa and white rule in Rhodesia. Moreover, at least three of the power-sharing outcomes fell apart either quickly or slowly, tending to total control by one side in the civil war (Cambodia 1991, Laos 1962, Zimbabwe 1979).¹⁶

For center-seeking wars government victories are the modal category, with 44% judged to be decisive military wins and another 13% with some non-trivial concessions but short of power-sharing (“other government victory”). By comparison, the rebels took power from the government in about one quarter of these cases (24%). So in wars for the central government, the existing government militarily defeats the challenger roughly twice as often as the rebels take over. Even so, the rate of rebel success is hardly trivial – one out of four might be judged reasonably good odds for such a large stake. If we include power-sharing as an outcome that might make the rebels better off than they had been in terms of power and policy, then the rebels were successful in more than one in three center-seeking wars ($24 + 13 = 37\%$).¹⁷

In separatist conflicts, governments rendered their opponents more-or-less incapable of continuing to fight in almost half of the 48 such cases in PITF’s list that have terminated. By contrast, separatist rebel groups gained *de facto* autonomy in 17%, and in another 23% they received significant concessions on regional political control through military stalemate and negotiations. So separatist or autonomy-seeking rebel groups appear to have done fairly well in terms of outcomes, gaining *de facto* or significant regional autonomy provisions in 40% of the cases.

Note also that negotiated settlements ($rterm = 3$ and perhaps some $rterm = 2$ cases) that divide up political power appear to be somewhat more common in separatist conflicts than in fights for the center. This is consistent with the theory that civil wars are mainly driven by commitment problems that render stable power-sharing difficult. Separatist conflicts are more similar to interstate wars where potential resolutions can allow the combatants to retain military capability and not to have to share power within the same administrative structure.

It is also interesting to look at how types of civil war termination have changed over time. Figure 1 plots the end years for the center-seeking wars by type of termination, and includes a smoothed running average to help indicate change over time.¹⁸ Over the whole period, we see some tendency for rebel groups to be more successful at taking power or gaining concessions. Four of the nine power-sharing outcomes cluster around the end of the Cold War, but otherwise there is no strong

¹⁶The other three power-sharing cases in this list are Burundi 1988-2005, El Salvador 1979-1992, Nicaragua 1981-1988, and North Yemen 1962-1970. Burundi might be better coded as foreign intervention/suppression and Albania 1997 could possibly be coded as a case of power-sharing; it is not clear.

¹⁷To be sure, these are rates of success conditional on getting a rebellion to the level of “civil war.” The percentage of all would-be rebel leaders and groups that ultimately gain some share of power is surely much lower.

¹⁸The foreign intervention/suppression cases are omitted.

indication that power-sharing has become much more likely over time.

Figure 2 plots the end years for the autonomy-seeking conflicts by type of termination. Here we see a much more pronounced improvement over time in the fortunes of rebel groups, especially in the form of negotiated regional autonomy agreements since the end of the Cold War.

Figures 3a and 3b combine center- and autonomy-seeking wars, folding the several outcome categories into three: government wins, compromises, and rebel wins. The only difference between the 3a and 3b is that in 3a regional autonomy deals that allow some degree of formal political control for the rebels are coded as compromises, whereas in 3b they are coded as rebel wins.¹⁹ The figures display two lines. The solid line shows a smoothed running average of the proportion of government victories in all victories, by year. The dashed line is a smoothed running average of the proportion of compromise outcomes in all war ends, by year. The crosses and triangles indicate the data points from which the running averages were calculated.

In Figure 3a we see an increase in the rate of compromise outcomes from about 20% of war ends in the 1960s to about 40% today. This change is not evident in Figure 3b, however, which means that *what has changed is the frequency of separatist wars that end with a regional autonomy agreement*.²⁰ We code 11 such cases in the PITF civil war list, eight of which were concluded after 1991. They include Mali's agreement with the Tuaregs (1995 in PITF), the end of the first Chechen war in Russia (1996), the agreement on Bougainville in Papua New Guinea (1997 in PITF), the negotiated independence of East Timor (1999) the agreement on Aceh (2005), and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the SPLM in Sudan (2002).

Finally, in Figure 4 we consider how war duration varies with war outcome in these data. Wars that end with compromise outcomes – whether power-sharing in center-seeking wars or negotiated autonomy agreements or government concessions in separatist conflicts – tend to last longer than civil wars that end with government or rebel military victories. The same pattern is evident, for the most part, when we examine center- and autonomy-seeking wars separately in Table 2. Relatively decisive military victories for the government or the rebels tend to occur fairly quickly if they occur, whereas power-sharing and other outcomes with aspects of concessions by the government tend to take somewhat longer. The longest lasting conflicts have typically been those that ended with government military victory accompanied by minor political concessions to buy off or buy in residual rebel opposition.

¹⁹Otherwise, “government win” is *cterm* = 1 or 2, *rterm* = 1; “rebel win” is *cterm* = 5 or 6, *rterm* = 4; “compromise” is *cterm* = 3, *rterm* = 2.

²⁰? uses data from the COW and Sambanis/Doyle civil war lists to suggest that the rate of “ties” in intrastate conflicts has increased sharply since 1990. Something of this effect is apparent in Figures 1-3, here, although it is much less pronounced than with the Sambanis and Doyle outcome codings.

Table 2. Median war duration by war type and outcome

Center-seeking wars		Autonomy-seeking wars	
Gov't mil victory	3.0	Gov't mil victory	5.0
Gov't victory + minor concessions	13.0	Gov't victory + minor concessions	13.0
Power sharing	9.0	Regional autonomy agreement	6.0
Rebel mil victory	4.0	Rebels win de facto autonomy	2.0
Foreign control	3.5		
On-going	14.0	On-going	11.5
All terminated	4.0	All terminated	5.0

5 Random Narratives

The model analyzed above suggested that shocks to relative power or costs for continuing conflict should associate with higher probability of termination, and not through agreement but by victory. In particular, when we observe changes in third party support for one side or the other, or a change in leadership associated with a change in cost tolerance on one side or the other, we should observe a higher likelihood that the war will end.

To put this model to partial test, we employ a dataset of narratives on the 139 civil wars since 1945 that are on the PITF case list, both those that terminated (119) and those that persist (20).²¹ To construct this dataset we read the case literature on these wars and their termination. From these narratives, we randomly selected thirty civil wars, fourteen where rebel goals were capture of the center, fourteen where rebel goals were for territorial autonomy or secession, and two where goals differed depending on the rebel group. This 50-50 mix is not far from the proportion in the full sample (which has about 60% center, 40% autonomy). We included the ongoing wars in the set from which we randomly selected, and by chance we somewhat oversampled these (8 of our 30 cases). Otherwise, the distribution of outcomes in the random set is quite similar to that in the full list of cases, except that government wins are somewhat oversampled in the center-seeking set.

A list of the thirty randomly selected wars, sorted by rebel aim and termination year, follows.

²¹The actual PITF count is 138, but we have separated the Kurdish and the Shiite rebellions in Iraq whose onset was 1991

Table 3. 30 randomly selected cases for analysis of mechanisms

Country	War years	Conflict	Outcome
Center-seeking civil wars			cterm
Hungary ^g	1956-1956	anticommunist	1
Cuba	1956-1959	Castro	6
Rwanda ^g	1963-1966	Tutsis	1
Yemen North ^g	1962-1970	Royalists	3
Jordan ^r	1970-1971	PLO	1
Laos ^{g,r}	1963-1979	Pathet Lao	6
Uganda	1983-1985	NRA	6
Mozambique ^r	1976-1992	Renamo	2
Chad ^{g,r}	1965-1994	North v. South	2
Rwanda ^{g,r}	1990-1998	RPF	6
Burundi ^{g,r}	1988-2005	Hutu groups	3
Afghanistan ^{g,r}	1992-	Taliban	0
Congo-Kinshasa ^r	1992-	AFDC	0
Iraq ^{g,r}	2003-	Sunni groups	0
Autonomy-seeking civil wars			rterm
Ethiopia ^r	1963-1964	Somalis (Ogaden)	1
Iraq ^r	1980-1988	Kurds	1
Morocco ^{g,r}	1975-1989	Polisario	1
Ethiopia ^{g,r}	1961-1991	Eritrea	4
Indonesia	1975-1991	East Timor I	1
India	1983-1993	Sikhs	1
Azerbaijan ^r	1991-1997	Nagorno-Karabagh	4
Papua New Guinea	1989-1997	Bougainville	3
Indonesia	1997-1999	East Timor II	3
Ethiopia ^r	1999-2000	Oromos	2
India ^r	1990-	Kashmir	0
Pakistan ^g	2004-	Pashtuns, Waziristan	0
Sudan ^r	2003-	Darfur	0
Thailand ^r	2004-	Pattani	0
Mixed aims			
Iraq	1991-1998	Shiites (center)	1
Iraq ^r		Kurds (autonomy)	4
Myanmar ^r	1961-	Communists (center)	0
Myanmar ^r		Hill Tribes (autonomy)	0

^{g,r} Militarily significant foreign support for govt (*g*) or rebels (*r*)

Although our main hypothesis concerns the effect of *changes* in intervention status on war termination, we note at the outset a related finding that emerged from our examination of these 30 cases. We were struck by the high frequency of militarily significant foreign support for government and rebels.²² The evidence suggests that more often than not, civil wars either become – or may even begin as – the object of other states’ foreign policies.

Table 3 indicates whether the narratives or subsequent research on the 30 cases discerned militarily significant foreign support to the government or rebel side. Of the 32 conflicts in the list (breaking up the two “mixed aims” PITF cases), 25, or 78%, showed evidence of significant military support to one side or the other.²³ This estimate is somewhat higher than the 64% of 140 conflicts that Regan (2000) coded as receiving military *or* economic assistance for government or rebels. The 98% confidence interval for our estimate of 78% of conflicts (based on this sample of 32) extends from 63.5% to 100%. This suggests that either (a) by luck of the draw we got a slightly intervention-heavy subsample; (b) our criteria for coding foreign support are less strict than Regan’s; or (c) our case narrative approach more reliably picks up evidence of foreign military support (or some combination of a, b, and c). Comparing our codings for these 30 cases to Regan’s for the same cases (where possible), we find a very high level of agreement. So our best guess at this point is that foreign intervention in the random sample cases is a bit more common than in the population.²⁴

In any event, two thirds to four fifths of civil wars with significant foreign support for one or both sides makes this a remarkably common phenomenon. The results discussed below suggest that changes in foreign support are often highly consequential for war termination as well. Civil wars are normally studied as matters of domestic politics. Future research might make progress by shifting the perspective, and thinking about civil war as *international politics by other means*.²⁵

²²This is consistent with Regan’s (2000) findings.

²³Like Regan (2000), we try to distinguish between routine military aid to a government, and “convention breaking” military support to a government that is for the purpose countering the rebel group.

²⁴Regan does not code Belgian support to the Rwandan government for the 1963-66 conflict, and does not code any foreign support in the wars in Afghanistan after 1991. The first case one might call either way; in second we are confident that involvement by Pakistan, Iran, and Russia was highly significant. On the other hand, Regan codes the USA supporting Museveni and South Korea supporting Obote in the Uganda 1983-85 conflict, whereas we code no significant foreign military support in that case.

²⁵Saleyhan and Gleditsch (2006) argue that civil war in one country raises the risk of civil war in other countries, although they propose refugee flows as the transmission mechanism rather than foreign policy conflicts between states.

5.1 Shock 1: Changed Levels of International Support Hasten Termination

Our reading of the narratives suggests that changes in foreign support hastened the end of many civil wars in the randomly chosen list, while the balancing of foreign support between rebels and government helped long-term civil wars to persist. Our coding of changes in foreign support in these cases is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Cases from random 30 with change in foreign support (plus ongoing cases)

Country/War	Δ foreign support to gov't, rebels	Description	Outcome
Ethiopia/Eritrea	-, 0	USSR ends for support to govt	Rebel Victory
Laos/Pathet Lao	-, 0	US drops support for Hmong (allies of govt Pathet Lao replaced)	Rebel (Pathet Lao) win
Yemen/Royalists	-, 0	Egypt drops support to government	Power sharing
Rwanda/Tutsi RPF	-, 0	Zaire no longer able to protect Hutu refugee fighters, who were the govt militias at start of war	Rebel victory
Azerbaijan/N-K	0, +	Armenia and Russia add support to rebels	De facto autonomy
Iraq/1998 (Kurds)	0, +	US gives increasing support to Kurd rebels	De facto autonomy
Burundi/2005	0, +	AU/UN impose a peace that accepts most rebel demands	Power sharing
Jordan/Palestinian	0, -	Syria withdraws support from rebels	Govt victory
Iraq/1998 (Shi'ites)	0, -	US reneges on promises to Shi'ite rebels	Govt victory
Mozambique/RENAMO	0, -	South Africa drops support for rebels	Govt victory + minor conc.
Ethiopia/Oromo	0, -	Eritrea drops support to rebels	Govt win w/ minor conc's
Rwanda/Tutsi 1966	+, 0	Belgium enters to support govt	Govt victory
Hungary/Anti-Comm.	+, 0	USSR enters to support pre-reform forces in govt	Govt victory
Morocco/Polisario	+, -	US adds support to govt/Algeria reduces support to rebels	Govt victory
Iraq/Kurds 1988	0, 0	Iran gives sustaining support to rebels	Govt victory
Chad/various groups	-, -	France and Libya drop support to both sides	Govt win w/ minor concs

Foreign support in ongoing cases			
Iraq/post-US	0, 0	US maintains support to a shaky govt	Ongoing
Pakistan/Waziristan	0, 0	US pressures govt not to negotiate with rebels	Ongoing
Burma/Hill Tribes	0, -	US and Thailand drop support to rebels	Ongoing
Thailand/Patani	0, 0	Int'l muslim networks give sustaining support to rebels	Ongoing
India/Kashmir	0, 0	Pakistan gives sustaining support to rebels	Ongoing
Afghanistan/Taliban etc	0, 0	US/NATO gives sustaining support to government	Ongoing
DRC/Post-Mobutu	0, 0	Rwanda and Uganda give sustaining support to different sides	Ongoing
Sudan/Darfur	0, 0	China, Chad, Russia and the U.S. give sustaining support to both sides	Ongoing

The table first lists the 15 of 23 cases (65%) with war termination where expert judgments pointed to changed levels of foreign military support for either the rebels or the government as consequential for ending the war.²⁶ In none of these cases do the narratives report significant changes in foreign support without a concomitant termination

The table also lists all eight of the conflicts in our random sample that have not yet terminated. Surprisingly, for *all* of these cases the narratives reported expert judgements or other evidence that continued (that is, not changed) foreign support to one or both sides was helping to sustain the conflict.

In a quantitative analysis of the relationship between war termination and changes in foreign intervention, one might worry that the changes are often caused by third parties' anticipations of how the conflict is going to end anyway, whether they intervene or withdraw. For example, a third

²⁶Only seven of the thirty random cases were not decided in large part by a change in foreign support, or sustained due to continued foreign support for one or both sides. In three of these cases (Cuba, Uganda, and East Timor 1999), the rebels won; in three (Ethiopia in Ogaden, India with the Sihks, and East Timor in 1991), the government won; and in one case, that of Bougainville, there was a negotiated settlement where the rebels got significant concessions. In the narrative for East Timor (1999), the extensive international diplomatic pressure on Indonesia in support of the rebels is considered the principal explanation for the outcome of rebel victory. But since this had no military or aid component, we have not counted it here as an example of foreign involvement.

party might stop supporting a rebel group when it expects that it is going to be defeated even with the support. One advantage of the random narratives approach is that we can ask on a case-by-case basis whether the foreign support changed for reasons largely accidental and exogenous to developments in the conflict in question, or because of changes in the military situation on the ground.

What we find is that changed foreign support is not closely linked to prior changes in the perceived probability of victory on the ground. That is, it does not appear that foreign actors are often opting in or out as a direct result of developments within the civil war that would have made for termination regardless of the foreign actors' support. In fact, of the twenty-three cases where changes/maintenance of foreign support are relevant to outcome, fourteen (or 61%) are coded as exogenous, six (or 26%) are endogenous, and the rest were mixed. Thus these changes are typically a form of external shock not directly caused by internal developments, as in the model's use of a move by Nature to represent the chance that one side will gain a decisive military advantage in any given period.²⁷

The narratives allow for a more fine-grained analysis of foreign intervention and its implications for civil war terminations. We have identified six distinct patterns in which foreign intervention impacts on termination.²⁸

5.1.1 Foreign Support to Government Dries Up - [North Yemen (1970); Rwanda (1998); Ethiopia (1991-Eritrea)]

In three cases, foreign support for the government dried up, changing the power balance in the country experiencing a civil war. In North Yemen, a civil war onset occurred in the wake of the death of its president Imam Ahmad (or "Hamid") in 1962. Egyptian president Nasser took that opportunity to foment a coup there and to send troops into the country – up to 60,000 troops by 1965 – to protect the new government. In opposition, several Yemeni tribes, and especially those linked to the Imam's heir, counterattacked, producing what became several years of war between the Nasserites and the royalists. The royalists received aid from Britain and Saudi Arabia, the latter allowing royalist rebel bases on its territory. The war stalemated. But the coup de

²⁷Our preliminary coding on the endogeneity/exogeneity of changes in foreign intervention showing the relatively high frequency of exogenously induced changes is in some tension with much work in international relations showing that foreign intervention is explained by the expected returns from that war, and is thus endogenous. See, e.g., Regan (2000, chap 3) where intervention is apparently explained by such things as the marginal probability of victory given the intervention.

²⁸The synopses reported below are taken from a narrative dataset that we have constructed. The citations for the claims have been omitted for this paper. Corrections from area experts on the judgments offered in these synopses are welcome.

grace was the Six Day War, which diverted the Egyptians who withdrew all of their troops from North Yemen by October 1967. Without protection, the Egyptian protégé President al-Sallal was immediately overthrown. With al-Sallal and his foreign supporters gone and replaced by al-Iryani, Saudi Arabia lost interest in the outcome and reduced its support. Under these circumstances, inter-tribal negotiations were pursued, and the war essentially withered away over the next three years. It did not end quickly because in the subsequent months, in a period now spoken of as that of “national reconciliation”, the factionalized royalist opposition could not agree upon a deal with the president, and several royalist groups initiated skirmishes. Although it wasn’t immediate, the explanation for the route toward reconciliation is in Egypt’s dropping of support to the republican government, leading to a coup and then a deal with the opposition.²⁹

The termination of the civil war in Rwanda in 1998, with a victory for the RPF rebels, was also hastened by the drying up of foreign support to the Hutu-led government. In this case, the war began in 1990 with the Hutus in power and the RPF (largely a Tutsi force), headquartered in Uganda, seeking to overthrow it. After the genocide of 1994, with the Hutu government orchestrating the mass killing of Tutsi civilians, the RPF took control over Kigali, Rwanda’s capital, and chased the Hutu forces to sanctuaries in Zaire, where they used internationally sanctioned refugee camps as safe havens for military resuscitation. But the host for the Hutu forces, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, was overthrown that year, albeit with some support from the RPF. With the change in government in Zaire – and the new Congolese President Kabila allied with Rwanda’s Tutsis – the Hutu forces were easily attacked by RPF militias. Without a foreign protector, the Hutu armies were no longer able to sustain a counter-insurgency in Rwanda. While the fall of Mobutu was not completely exogenous to the civil war dynamics in Rwanda (and we code it as endogenous), the change in government in Zaire with its changed interest in the political outcome in the Rwandan civil war helped decrease the Hutu war capability sufficiently to be counted as a termination.

Loss of Soviet support by Ethiopia was consequential for its defeat by Eritrean secessionists in 1991. After World War II, the restored Emperor Haile Selassie resisted claims by Eritrea (a former Italian colony) for independence. In 1950, the UN decided that Eritrea should be federated with Ethiopia and two years later the agreement was put into practice after a parliamentary vote in the Eritrean Assembly, though Eritrean nationalists claimed that the British-organized election to that Assembly was rigged. A decade of regulations continued to weaken the powers of the Eritrean Assembly, and by 1961, Eritrean secessionists led by Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) began an insurgency seeking independence. The following year, the Ethiopian armed forces occupied Eritrea and intimidated the Assembly into voting for the dissolution of the federation, making Ethiopia a unitary regime. This intensified the rebellion. Over time the Eritrean rebels received external support from numerous Arab states (Syria, Iraq and Libya), mostly channeled through Sudan. Under the leadership of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had deposed Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, the war was intensified. He had considerable Soviet support. Both in 1977-78 in defeating

²⁹It is interesting that in this case the end of foreign support for one side led to a power-sharing agreement rather than a decisive military victory for the advantaged party.

an insurgency in the Ogaden, and also in the case of Eritrea, the USSR contributed billions of dollars worth of arms. This aid, along with a gaggle of military advisors, gave Ethiopia a military advantage.

But perestroika and the end of the Cold War changed Soviet policy in Africa. In 1989, President Gorbachev cut back Soviet aid to Ethiopia, severely weakening the military. Mengistu subsequently (in 1989) closed a secret agreement with Israel, providing for Israeli military assistance in exchange for Mengistu's promise to let Ethiopian Jews, the Falashas, "return" to Israel. However, this effort was insufficient to maintain Mengistu's rule against his domestic enemies that were surrounding the capital. When Mengistu fell to the Tigray-led EPRDF, the new rulers permitted a referendum in Eritrea, one that ultimately supported secession. While the victory of the EPRDF (one that was initially open to Eritrean independence) was the principal explanation for termination, Mengistu's loss of Soviet support - exogenous to his situation in Ethiopia - severely weakened him and the Ethiopian military capability. In all these three cases - North Yemen, Rwanda, and Ethiopia - the drying up of foreign support for the government changed the war dynamic sufficiently to allow for a termination.

5.1.2 Foreign support to rebels dries up - [Jordan (1971); Laos (1979); Mozambique (1992); Chad (1994); Iraq (1998, for the Shi'ites); Ethiopia (2000 - Oromos); Morocco (Polisario)]

If governments propped up against their enemies by foreign powers lose to those enemies when foreign support collapses, rebels face a parallel danger - their insurgencies can quickly fail when loss of foreign support undermines their cause. Seven of the twenty-three random cases terminated in part due to rebel loss of (already provided or expected) foreign support.

In the case of Jordan in 1970-71, after the 1967 Six Day War forced the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) out of the West Bank, it moved its operations to Jordan, where there was a restive Palestinian population, most of whom lived in refugee camps, whose plight was of considerable concern to Jordanian citizens of Palestinian ethnic identity. When King Hussein, under some international pressure, curbed PLO activities, an extreme wing of the PLO tried to assassinate him initiating an insurgency. Insurgents received military support from Syria, with two brigades sent into Jordan, and symbolic support from Iraq, which had a force of about 12,000 men stationed near Az Zarqa northeast of Amman (although these troops did not participate in the fighting and withdrew to Iraq a few days later). On September 16, 1970, Hussein declared martial law announced a counter-insurgency.

Internal politics in Syria, and the failure of its forces to provide the support expected by PLO leadership, explains the rapid termination of that war in early 1971. It is difficult to assess, without knowing fully Asads reasons for not wanting to support the PLO, the degree to which the loss of Syrian support for the Palestinian uprising was exogenous to the conflict. We therefore code it as

a mixed case of both endogenous and exogenous factors.³⁰

In Laos, an internationally negotiated settlement of 1962 (following two years of civil war between leftist and rightist forces) brought into power a coalition government of neutralists, rightists and leftists (the Pathet Lao). However, the supposedly neutralist government was weak, and North Vietnam was able to support its southern ally, the National Liberation Front, through the Ho Chi Minh trail, which ran through Laos. As the U.S. built up the Republic of South Vietnam's forces, it also provided support for insurgencies in Laos among the separatist Hmongs and the rightist militias as well. These two simultaneous wars began in 1963, aided by the CIA. However, when the U.S. began serious negotiations with North Vietnam in 1973, it abandoned its proxies in Laos, and the warring parties signed a peace treaty, which contained a power-sharing agreement. Without U.S. support, the coalition was displaced two years later by the Pathet Lao, and the former American allies were left out in the cold. Abandonment by the U.S., caused by factors almost wholly exogenous to the progress of the rebellions in Laos, explains the changed power situation and the collapse of the militarized opposition to the Pathet Lao.

The drying up of support for the rebels in Mozambique is the principal mechanism that led to the termination of its civil war in 1992. Following independence from Portugal, Mozambique's government, led by the Marxist FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) supported the black rebels in Rhodesia against the ruling white planter class. In order to counter this threat, the white government of Rhodesia recruited and trained a non-Marxist guerilla group in Mozambique, called RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana). After the white regime in Rhodesia lost power in 1979, funding for RENAMO was taken over by white-dominated South Africa. Despite an accord signed in 1984 in which the two countries agreed not to sponsor rebel movements inside each other's territory, South Africa continued with unofficial support for RENAMO. By 1992, however, South Africa's era of apartheid was coming to an end. President F.W. de Klerk legalized the African National Congress and released ANC leader Nelson Mandela from prison. As part of this transformation of South Africa (and with strong Western pressure for South Africa to abandon its proxies in Mozambique), external support for RENAMO dried up. Its leadership, recognizing its weakness, called on the UN to monitor a settlement after which RENAMO transformed itself into a viable political party. While the UN was a crucial facilitator in peace-making, and while the strategy of negotiation by RENAMO (instead of regrouping in the forests) was important for the peaceful termination, the major factor driving the peace was the political revolution within South Africa that would bring the ANC to power, and the abandonment of the white regime's allies, the rebels in Mozambique. It should be underlined that most area experts report that RENAMO

³⁰Huth's (1988, 86-97) account stresses the imminent Israeli intervention as the cause driving out the Syrian army, and in this case the loss of Syrian support for the Palestinian Resistance would be endogenous. But several Middle East commentators (Drysdale 1982; Galvani 1974) stress the power play by the Asad faction of the Ba'ath Party against the Jadid faction, and the humiliation of the government, exposing its failure in Jordan, as a pretext for a coup. In this perspective, Asad's was one is a series of "corrective coups" within Ba'ath, and the change in support for the Resistance would be exogenous.

had been quite successful in building up civilian support for its insurgency, so South Africa's withdrawal was based on factors exogenous to the success of the insurgency.

In Chad, there have been recurring civil wars starting in 1965 among many communal groups with shifting alliances, but mainly along North-South lines. Southerners were dominant when France officially withdrew from Chad. In the BET region in the far northeast of the country, bordering with Libya, an insurgency emerged with the withdrawal of French military presence several years after formal independence. In 1966, the Front de Liberation Nationale (FROLINAT) was formed in an attempt to unite a set of disparate northern rebellions. Over the many years of conflict, ever new rebel groups emerged. Political leadership changed as well, with Hissène Habré, a northerner, taking power from the southerners in 1982. Idriss Deby, another northerner, displaced Habré in 1990. When Deby came to power, he led a transition back to democracy and created a relatively strong state structure in Chad (though still quite fragile). Though it continued to face disparate insurrections, Deby's government attempted to achieve peace through agreements with rebels. Talks revolved around compensation and job offers to rebels who put down their arms, rather than more substantial political changes. Armed movements in this new climate transformed into political parties, rebel leaders have gone to government agencies, and fighters have been integrated into the national armed forces and received amnesty. By 1994, Deby had sufficiently stabilized the country as to put Chad below the death threshold sufficiently to be coded as a termination by PITF.

But the narrative of Chad's civil war has an important international component, even if the change in international support in this case was not completely exogenous to the facts on the ground. For most of the war, disaffected politicians of almost any political stripe in N'Djamena were assured Libyan money and arms once they declared themselves as rebel leaders, whether from the North or South. France and the U.S. eventually backed Habré, for he was a northerner who turned against Libyan President Qaddafi, then the West's *bête noire*. After a negotiated deal in 1984, French troops had some success enforcing its provisions, pushing back Libya and establishing a "Red Line" beyond which no Libyan forces (or the Chadian militias they were backing) were supposed to advance. When Qaddafi's forces crossed that Red Line in 1986, the French sent in a new military operation which allowed Habré not only to cross it himself, but also to invade Libya. Qaddafi responded by organizing the Zaghawa tribesmen in Darfur to overthrow Habré, and replace him with Deby.

The international landscape had already changed, however. France was then (especially on the eve of the first Gulf War) trying to improve relations with Libya and Sudan in order to gain access to oil. Moreover, Qaddafi's proxy did not deliver. Deby refused to cede to Libya the disputed borderland with the mineral-rich Aouzou strip. (Both countries referred the matter to the International Court of Justice that ruled in favor of Chad in 1994.) Indeed, influencing outcomes in the northern areas of Chad was as difficult for Qaddafi as it was for the French colonialists and a generation of nationalist leaders in N'Djamena. By 1993, Qaddafi hosted a mediation conference, and did not seek to replace Deby through support of a new group of rebels. The loss of Libyan military provocation – in part due to failed policies there, but also because Qaddafi, for reasons having little

to do with Chad, was then trying to improve relations with the West – allowed Deby the relative strength to somewhat demilitarize Chadian politics. France (due to oil and the Gulf War) ceased its opposition to Deby, and this was exogenous to the civil war; Libya (due to its continued failure to orchestrate events in Chad) did not fund armed challengers to Deby, a decision that was largely endogenous to Qaddafi's previous failures in Chad. In both cases, changed foreign support was an important factor in termination.

The two simultaneous rebellions in Iraq in the wake of the first Gulf War in 1991 are clear cases where the change in foreign support in one case (the Shi'ites) and the maintenance (and subsequent upgrading) of foreign support in the other (the Kurds) were largely independent of developments on the ground concerning the rebels' prospect. Following Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War, rebellions broke out among the Kurdish and the Shia populations. The Kurds, who were victorious, will be discussed later. In the south the regime faced opposition from banned Islamist groups, most importantly al-Da'wa but also from the Iranian-backed Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI).

Allied forces had initially encouraged the Shi'ite rebellion. But after Iraq's defeat, U.S. objectives were clarified – a stable but chastened Iraq was the goal, and therefore support for the southern rebels, though promised – as Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf announced a no-fly zone there – was not delivered. Saddam's forces quickly leveled the historical centers of the Shiite towns and bombarded sacred Shiite shrines. Some parts of the Iraqi Presidential Guard had been retained within southern Iraq for the purpose of putting down any unrest that arose there after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Without U.S. interference, they were easily able to suppress the violence within a few weeks and on March 21 a prominent Shia cleric was compelled to call for an end to the rebellion. Many southerners fled to Saudi Arabia or Iran, and 10,000 or more were executed in the course of its suppression. The defeat for the Shi'ite rebellion in 1993 was occasioned by the unfulfilled promise of U.S. support. The narrative reports that the Shi'ite uprising had far less popular support than its leaders had expected, so the facts on the ground might have influenced the Bush administration to separate itself from the rebels. But the decision was mostly exogenous, in that it was a result of a sober evaluation of the Bush administration of what would be in U.S. interests in Iraq, which was a stable regime chastened by the coalition invasion.³¹

Ethiopia since 1973 faced a low-level Oromo insurgency organized to resist domination of the Oromia province by the ruling Amhara elites. Oromos are a congeries of ethnicities who make up some 40 percent of the Ethiopian population. But in PITF's coding, the insurgency escalated to civil war proportions in 1998 at the moment of Ethiopia's border war with Eritrea that provided an opportunity for Oromo rebels to press separatist goals from bases in Somalia and with military support from Eritrea. However, after Eritrea signed a peace agreement with Ethiopia in 2000 in

³¹See Peter Galbraith "The Ghosts of 1991" Washington Post April 12, 2003; for a fuller account, see Tripp (2000).

their interstate war, we surmise that it ceased giving military aid to the Oromo rebels.³² There was never any peace agreement or formal cease fire, but without foreign support (and with a new domestic alliance of the ruling Tigrays with some prominent Oromos against the once-dominant Amharas), PITF at least judged that the insurgency fell below its war threshold.³³ Here, loss of Eritrean support, were it to be confirmed – was exogenous to any assessment of probable Oromo victory in the war.

In its war with the Polisario in the Spanish Sahara, Morocco claimed Spain's former territory of Western Sahara and, since 1979, administered the territory as its own, although the International Court of Justice ruled in 1975 that Morocco had no legitimate claim to the Western Sahara. The war began when rebels applied a guerrilla strategy (1974-1976); but by 1976, with military support from Algeria and Libya, a more conventional war was pursued. Morocco responded by building a walled defense (preventing rebels from hiding in Algeria and then returning to the Western Sahara), a major construction job that was completed in 1987. During this time, the Organization of African Unity supported the Polisario politically, and admitted it as a member in 1984. Morocco consequently quit the OAU. Nonetheless, by 1988 Morocco had achieved a de facto military victory over the rebels, and despite some recurring guerrilla attacks, the majority of the original guerrillas has seeped into Mauritania, found employment there, and effectively left the Polisario army.

Changes in international support played a key role in the virtual collapse of the guerrilla army. The U.S., in a payback for King Hassan's at least moderate support for Israel, provided military support to Morocco. But more importantly, Libya was beginning to extricate itself from willy-nilly funding of guerilla organizations in sub-Saharan Africa, and the Algerian government, beginning to face Islamic mobilization at home, lowered its support for the Polisario. Algeria did not provide the support necessary to subvert the wall's defense, and the Polisario was thus unable to find refuge outside of their small flat country where they could not easily hide from counter-insurgent forces. The fate of the Polisario was therefore determined by foreign policy decisions that had little to do with the rightfulness of their cause or changing military facts on the ground. Foreign policy interests exogenous to the war determined the outcome, namely, a victory for the Moroccan government.

All seven cases of reduced foreign support for rebels led to termination. In three cases (Jordan, Laos, Shi'ites in Iraq in 1993) there was outright military defeat. In one case (Mozambique), the rebels without resources sued for peace which was granted on rather poor terms to them. In two cases (Oromos and Polisario), loss of foreign support did not end the conflict, but lowered the degree of violence, putting the war below the civil war threshold (at least as judged by PITF). And

³²Given that a Cold War ensued, with Eritrea in 2007 providing aid to the Ogadeen rebels in Ethiopia, our surmise requires some additional support.

³³In 2007, the Tigray/Oromo alliance has not held, and there are reports of renewed hostilities, suggesting that PITF's coding this case as a termination may have been premature.

in one case (Chad), changed levels of foreign support away from rebels ended the cycle of newly emergent rebellions fighting against the then-standing president.

5.1.3 Added foreign support to government helps military victory - [Hungary (1956); Rwanda (1963)]

A sudden infusion of new foreign support to the government in two cases from our twenty-three randomly chosen terminations led to a rapid government victory. In Hungary in 1956, a rebellion began when anti-communist protestors took to the streets of Budapest on October 23, 1956 calling for liberal reforms and for the reinstatement of Imre Nagy as Prime Minister. The Hungarian Secret Police, the ÁVH (Államvédelmi Hatóság, 'State Protection Authority'), fired on the protestors. In response, rebels (led by several ultra-nationalist groups) and pro-rebel army units returned fire. The Soviet response, as the rebels probably expected, was to employ already standing Soviet troops along with the ÁVH to cauterize the rebellion and to stop the violence. But after Nagy pulled Hungary from the Warsaw Pact, the Presidium of the Soviet Union ordered troops from within the USSR to attack. The Soviets brought 200,000 troops and 2,500 tanks to Budapest and overwhelmed the unorganized freedom fighters. Although there was significant civilian resistance and the Hungarian Army remained neutral, the revolt was crushed. The Soviets rooted Nagy from his hiding place in the Yugoslav Embassy, deported him, and eventually had him executed. Thus ended the liberal revolt. Khrushchev's memoirs reveal that there was considerable debate within the Soviet presidium about whether to suppress the rebellion. In part, with conflict in Suez diverting Western attention from Hungary, the Soviets could send massive combat troops in Eastern Europe for the first time since the end of World War II without fear of a NATO counter-attack. The rebels surely did not reckon on this intervention, but were destroyed by it. Soviet reputation in the Cold War determined the great level of foreign support, and this is exogenous to the internal dynamics of power within Hungary in 1956. The Soviet decision to use Hungary's internal conflict as a tool to enhance its international reputation was like a shock in the model that quickly enabled a government military victory.

In Rwanda's colonial period, the minority Tutsis had been favored by Belgian authorities. But with elite Tutsi agitation for independence growing in the 1950s, the Belgians ultimately decided to back militarily a "Hutu Revolution" that displaced the Tutsi monarch and led to the massacre of many Tutsis. The nationalist Parmehutu party consolidated Hutu ethnic control after elections in 1960, and the country became formally independent in July 1962. However, in December 1963 the Union Nationale Rwandaise (UNAR), a pro-monarchy Tutsi party, made a raid into the Gikongoro region of Rwanda from across the border with Burundi. In response, the local prefect ordered a local campaign of reprisal attacks on Tutsis. Massacres spread across the country. Over the next few years, the UNAR launched attacks against Rwanda from bases in Burundi, while violence against Tutsis in Rwanda continued. By 1966 probably 150,000-or more than one-third-of all Rwandan Tutsis fled to neighboring countries. Estimates of the number of dead run over ten thousand. While it is possible to interpret this case as one where foreign support did not change, the Parmehutu in-

timidation of Tutsis could not have been accomplished without upgraded Belgian military support of the regime when it was facing incursions by insurgents from neighboring Burundi.

5.1.4 Steady foreign support to government sustains counterinsurgency (no change in foreign support and no war termination) – [Iraq (NT); Pakistan (NT); Afghanistan (NT)]

Relying on the narratives of the wars that have not terminated, we can see (in this and the next two sub-sections) how the lack of change in foreign support correlates with absence of war termination. In this section, we look at three cases where steady foreign support to the government sustained a counterinsurgency the government alone would not or could not have sustained on its own. In Iraq with the transfer of sovereignty to the elected Iraqi government in June 2004 the insurgency that had been active against the American-led occupation regime became, by definition, a civil war. The insurgents were made up of defeated army elements of the previous regime and religiously motivated organizations (both domestic and foreign) that sought to undermine the newly formed state. American support is strong enough to protect the elected Iraqi government from being overthrown by insurgent forces but not strong enough to quell the interrelated insurgencies. Moreover, there has been no sudden and marked change in foreign support for any side since 2004. Iran has played some role, and some Sunni insurgent groups receive support from Al Qaeda, Saudi Arabia, and possibly other Sunni dominated states, but there has been no event that led to the sudden entry or exit of a major foreign supporter.

In Pakistan, similarly, when the US-backed Northern Alliance insurgency ousted the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, many Taliban militants and leaders quickly fled into Pakistani territory near the border to regroup and once again seek aid from the Pakistani security services. But the Pakistani government had by that time shifted its alliances, becoming a frontline ally to the U.S. in its efforts in the “war on terrorism.” The Musharraf government sought to flush out Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants from the Afghan-Pakistan border. Although the Pakistani military campaign began as a search for Al-Qaeda militants, once the military action started in South Waziristan a number of Waziri sub-tribes viewed the action as an attempt to subjugate them. As a result many Waziri tribesmen (aided by Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces) took up arms against the government forces and soon these small clashes escalated to civil war, at least by PITF’s standards. In 2005, the government, facing high costs and mounting casualties, adopted a more diplomatic stance and pushed for negotiations with the rebels. After a few successful rounds of negotiations, a peace treaty (Waziristan Accords) was signed between the rebels and the Pakistani government on September 5, 2006. But U.S. (and NATO) interest in defeat of Al-Qaeda did not permit a modus vivendi between Pakistan and the Waziri rebels, who are seen by the Americans as protectors of Al-Qaeda operatives. To get continued U.S. aid, crucial for regime survival, Musharraf has had to prove to the Americans that his forces are actively fighting rebels in Waziristan.

In Afghanistan, after the capture of Kabul in 1992 by the Mujaheddin fighting against the govern-

ment that had been supported by the Soviets, a civil war for control of government ensued among ethnically-based factions: Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaris, and others. Misrule by warlords in the Pashtun areas, combined with support from Pakistan, led to creation of the Pashtun-based Taliban forces, who proceeded to fight against Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaris, and other Pashtuns for the rest of the decade. Some civil war lists have this war ending, perhaps briefly, after the Northern Alliance retook Kabul in December 2001 with U.S. support. PITF codes a continuing civil war, as the Taliban have gradually returned as a guerrilla force in the south and east of the country.

The third party support that sustains this war has many components. The American backing given to the Northern Alliance in 2001 shifted the balance of power dramatically, ending a long phase of civil war that had been mainly won by the Taliban. Once the Taliban were ejected from Kabul and Kandahar, although NATO forces have been deployed to Afghanistan in order to reinstate political stability in the country, inadequacy of NATO manpower (in conditions highly favorable for guerrillas) has allowed an intensification of conflict. NATO forces are organized to protect the government in Kabul, and much less so to defeat the insurgency in the south. In this case, for geopolitical reasons - having to do with the global war on terrorism - NATO's presence supports a weak government against fairly weak insurgents. While the situation is too complex to address the counter-factual - i.e. whether NATO forces leaving would cause a Taliban restoration - the point here is that NATO support for the Karzai regime is strong enough to keep it in power but not strong enough to defeat the Taliban insurgency.

5.1.5 Upgraded foreign support to rebels favors their victory or at least sustains their insurgency – [Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh); Burundi (2000); Iraq (1988 and 1998); Myanmar (NT), Thailand (NT, Patani); India (NT, Kashmir)]

In three of the randomly chosen cases, foreign support was consequential for rebel victory. In Azerbaijan, Armenian and Russian support which did not come until Armenia was independent and Russia took a position in this conflict different from its Soviet predecessor, were crucial for the victory of the rebels in Nagorno-Karabakh. In Iraq in 1991, Americans committed their forces and attention to the protection of the Kurds, allowing them a de facto victory. In Burundi, a powerful UN Chapter VII force broke a stalemate and was consequential to a peace process that can be called enforced power-sharing which was tantamount to a rebel victory. In these three cases, change in foreign support is causal. In three other cases where wars have not yet terminated, steady foreign support to rebels – often just enough to keep them dangerous – helps account for the wars' persistence.

In Azerbaijan, the majority Armenian population in the mountainous region of Karabakh (N-K), separated from Armenia by a narrow corridor, had throughout the Soviet period petitioned to be incorporated into the Armenian Republic. In 1988, with their petitions rebuffed, and weakness apparent at the Soviet center, an armed revolt began. At first Azerbaijani forces were able to push

back the Armenians, empty Armenian villages outside of Karabakh, and use Russian and Chechen mercenaries effectively. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the independence of Armenia, the insurgents in N-K received military support from a set of Armenian militias operating with the tacit support of the Armenian and Russian governments. With the Azerbaijani winter offensive in December 1993, thousands of their troops, abandoned by their officers, froze to death or were picked off by the Karabakh forces in the mountain passes. At this point, Russia played a brokering role, and threatened to enter militarily if both parties did not accept a ceasefire that acknowledged the de facto rebel victory. A hard-line Stalinist, Azerbaijani President Aliyev had come to power by a coup d'état and had enough stature among Azeris that he could travel to Moscow essentially to sue for peace.³⁴ New foreign support – Armenian militias, when Armenia became independent, able to operate freely in the Caucasus and the Russian Federation taking a pro-Armenian stance as opposed to the pre-Azeri stance of the Soviet Union – on the side of the rebels was consequential for the rebel victory in Azerbaijan.

Burundi, in the war of the Hutu rebels against Tutsi military oppression that reignited in 1988,³⁵ is a case where foreign military intervention by UN forces, authorized by Chapter VII of the Charter, imposed a compromise that fulfilled most of the rebel goals. We code it here as a rebel victory enabled by a foreign force, but it might be coded as an internationally authorized protectorate.

In control over the newly independent government in 1962, with only about 14% of the population, Tutsi leaders ran a repressive state, purging many Hutus from their government jobs. In 1972, the Tutsi-controlled army was called in to end a Hutu rebellion in a southern province. The regime murdered some 100,000 to 150,000 Hutus, quelling active insurgency for sixteen years. But in 1988, a local Hutu uprising against Tutsi officials began to spread, reigniting the war. Rebels re-organized the radical Hutu party of the independence era, known as the Palipehutu, with an armed wing (the National Liberation Force). In 1993, the assassination of an elected Hutu president (though the army remained in Tutsi hands) re-inflamed the violence.

A balance of international forces helped keep the war for a long while in a stalemate. Congo (K) supported Hutu rebel groups, providing them sanctuary. Uganda and Rwanda provided support to the Tutsi-led government. This would have persisted were it not for intense international pressure that compelled a power-sharing agreement in which a Hutu dominant party (with significant Tutsi representation) won in an internationally supervised election in July 2005. Protection for a democratically elected government – despite some Hutu groups holding out for more as of 2007 – fulfilled Palipehutu's original goals. In an important way, then, the enforced power-sharing constituted a rebel victory.

³⁴ Aliyev's stature in Azerbaijan was not unlike Hannibal's, as reported by Machiavelli in chapter XVI of *The Prince*, where his "inhuman cruelty" was listed among "his other virtues" and consequential for assuring factional peace in his army.

³⁵ PITF codes one war beginning in 1988, whereas most lists code a war in 1988 that ends with effective if highly murderous suppression, and another that begins with the rebellion after the 1993 coup.

The UN's role grew substantially over time (and in part a reaction to the egregious failure to avoid genocide in neighboring Rwanda in 1994). The Secretary-General set up an office in Burundi with a Special Representative in 1993. Sanctions were applied. Negotiations in Arusha were led first by former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere and then by former South African President Nelson Mandela, both men of considerable prestige. In 2001, South Africa set up a "neutral protection force" for returning Burundi leaders so that they could participate freely in the political process. From 1992 onwards, the UN Implementation Monitoring Committee oversaw the Arusha Accords, the accords that facilitated the election of President Ndadaye, whose murder sets off the war described here. But the UN did not pull out; rather it intensified its force posture. African Union forces (AMIB, with forces from Mozambique, Ethiopia and South Africa) in 2003 came to monitor the elections scheduled for that year. In early 2004, the UN coordinated a Chapter VII mission known as ONUB, with a military force of 5,650, and led by South Africa. The UN military operation, with sufficient personnel and equipment, deterred militias from challenging the political process that the UN set up. The ONUB forces not only enforced a peace, but oversaw the subsequent political process. Through internationally sanctioned military action, the UN brokered a deal that essentially gave a victory to the rebels. While again the counter-factual is difficult to demonstrate, without ONUB, there is no good reason to think the war would have ended. In this case, we decided to re-code it as a case of foreign support (for the rebels) with the entry of ONUB.³⁶

In the two cases of Kurds in Iraq within our random set of cases, the war that ended in 1988 is a case where foreign influence (the Iranians) was large enough to propel a dormant insurgency back into life, but not enough to win a rebel victory. But when the war reignited after the First Gulf War, new and powerful American support made possible a rebel victory.

Rebellions by Iraqi Kurds go back to 1961, and were never fully quashed by the state. With the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), it became part of Iran's strategy to arm the Iraqi Kurds, hoping to draw Iraqi troops from the Iran-Iraq front to deal with the Kurdish insurgency. In this case, then, exogenous to the Kurdish/Iraqi conflict within Iraq, the Kurdish insurgency was revived by Iranian aid. However, Iraq was able to destroy militarily this Iranian-supported insurgency when in 1987 General Ali Hasam al Majid was given free reign to quash it through attacks on its civilian supporters. Thus began a scorched earth campaign against the Kurds that included mass executions, deportations, and the use of chemical weapons against civilian settlements. The war ended by 1988 amidst a massive humanitarian crisis. In this case, foreign support enabled and sustained the insurgency for several years, but was insufficiently powerful to bring it to victory.

This conflict recurred in the wake of the First Gulf War, and in this case a change in foreign support levels was consequential for rebel victory. Unlike the Shi'ite rebellion in the South, in Kurdistan the U.S. feared that a defeat of the Kurds would create a refugee crisis in Turkey that

³⁶In the quantitative analysis, we stick by our original coding that this is not a case of foreign intervention leading to a termination.

would have aggravated the tense relationship between the Turkish government and its Kurdish population. The U.S. therefore continued to support the rebels through its limitations on Iraqi air power (the so-called “no-fly zone”) in the north. The Kurds, however, were rent by factions, and in 1996, fighting between the KDP and PUK enabled the Iraqi army to move forces into Kurdistan to impose order. Here is where there came an upgrade in U.S. support. In 1997, the humanitarian assistance program dating from 1991 (called “Provide Comfort”) was transformed into “Northern Watch” in which a new fleet of aircraft (from the U.S. and UK and Turkey) was brought into play to harass the Iraqi army in Kurdistan. In 1998, President Clinton brought the leaders of the two Kurdish factions to Washington and hammered out an accord, one that did not threaten Turkey’s interests in stemming its own Kurdish rebellion. This enhanced level of support to the Kurds led to the war ending with de facto Kurdish autonomy and the inability of the Iraqi army to attack.³⁷ U.S. geopolitical goals, in this case to prevent a Turkish invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan – and therefore exogenous to the internal war in Iraq – helps explain the drawn out rebel victory by 1998 in Iraq’s north.

Now for the three cases where steady foreign support for rebels has been just enough to keep their insurgencies alive. This is the flipside of the hypothesis that a major change in foreign support will often cause war termination – absence of change should correlate with lower odds of termination. More than this, however, we find that in several of our randomly selected cases of non-termination, foreign support helps explain long duration or non-termination, because it seems calibrated to be enough to keep one side from losing decisively.³⁸

Myanmar (then called Burma) became independent from the UK in 1948, and within six months the Union of Burma was wracked by several insurgencies. One was of the communists (denied a place in the new government), and four were religious/ethnic: Muslim Arakanese, Karens, Kachins, and Mons. Later insurgencies began among the Shans and Chins. Although these conflicts have domestic causes, both the U.S. and Thailand had geopolitical interests in keeping insurgent movements alive in Burma. As part of its Cold War strategy, the U.S. supported the ethnically-based rebels. Under American tutelage, SEATO sponsored in Thailand a Hill Tribe Research Centre at Chiang Mai University that provided the CIA useful information about potential allies in anti-communist rebellions. Tribals from combatant groups in Burma were permitted to live in Thailand, to buy arms and ammunition, and Thai advisors attached themselves especially to Mon and Karen units.

By the mid-1990s, however, the U.S. lost interest in supporting anti-communist tribals, and nearly

³⁷Tim Youngs and Mark Oakes (10 February 1999) “Iraq: ‘Desert Fox’ and Policy Developments” (UK: House of Commons), Research Paper 99/13.

³⁸In addition to this secondary hypothesis, there are several cases in our random narratives with evidence suggesting that onset of foreign support is a big part of the explanation for onset of the conflict. This is a conjecture that no one has really been able to test well in the onset literature, and perhaps the random narrative approach may allow the research community to get a better handle on this relationship.

all of the insurgent groups had little choice but to negotiate deals with the Myanmar government. Only the Karens have remained (minimally) active insurgents. The major reason for the cascade of rebel failures is the success of the military government that installed itself in August 1988 bringing into power the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which has not only been more competent militarily, but was willing to cut deals, for example in allowing many of the rebel groups to keep their weapons and participate in the opium trade. But the narrative suggests that through the Cold War, the persistence of the tribal insurgencies is explained in part through continued covert American support, more as a means of surveillance over Asian communism than as an attempt to overthrow the government. In this case, reduced foreign support to the rebels has helped bring civil conflict in Myanmar near termination today.

In Thailand, the origins of the current conflict in the Patani region date back to the early 20th century. Since that time, Thailand (then known as the Kingdom of Siam) has retained exclusive sovereignty over a number of traditionally Malaysian provinces, including the disputed region of Patani. Since the 1930's various separatist movements have been active in the region. Although many of these movements were firmly and successfully suppressed in the 1970s, in the early 1980's Patani insurgent groups began to re-emerge. Up until 2003, the Thai government attributed the violence in the Patani region to banditry and fighting between drug lords. But the frequency of attacks and the number of casualties increased in 2003. Following rebel attack of an army camp on January 4, 2004, the Thai government instituted martial law in the region and declared a state of emergency. Since 2004, conflict in the Patani region of Thailand has escalated. Analysts link the escalation to the excessive reliance on untrained and unconstrained provincial police by former Prime Minister Thaksin. But after a lull in the fighting after the army coup that overthrew him in 2006, rebel activity resumed.

International support for rebels helps explain how they persist given the excellent counter-insurgency capabilities of the Thai military. Rebel forces in the conflict enjoy support from not only Patani inhabitants but also the wider Muslim world. Because insurgent groups are pushing the Thai government to recognize the right of Patani residents to practice Islam, the insurgency has received support from other Muslim groups in Southeast Asia, especially those in Malaysia. There have also been rumors that Islamist terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda have supported rebel forces in this conflict. These international support networks are strong enough to keep the insurgency above PITF's civil war threshold but not strong enough to force the Thai government to grant regional autonomy.

In the disputed Indian provinces of Jammu and Kashmir, war erupted following the partitioning of India in 1947. In 1949 a ceasefire line (the Line of Control) agreed upon through UN mediation effectively defined the borders of Kashmir and much of the disputed territory ultimately was acceded to India. A growing anti-Indian insurgency developed and by 1988 local sympathy for extremist military groups increased. The Indian government maintained a strategy of strict repression to cauterize this insurgency for several years, but since 2003, various negotiation initiatives were unleashed, and the level of violence has decreased.

One factor that helps sustain the insurgency is Pakistan's continued interest in the outcome of the war, even if the population of Jammu and Kashmir is ambivalent about incorporation into Pakistan. Throughout the conflict India has accused Pakistan of supporting the Kashmir separatists through provisions of arms, training of militants, and allowing infiltration along the border between the two countries. Although Pakistan has explicitly denied these allegations, and stated that its support to the insurgents is limited to political, cultural, and diplomatic support, it is clear that infiltration by non-Kashmir militants across the internationally recognized Line of Control occurs. Since the beginning of the 1990s, many of those crossing the Line of Control have been Arab veterans of the Afghan war, more or less supported by Pakistani security. With these foreign-based groups lending support to insurgents, they have a lower incentive for them to cut a deal with India. Foreign support - linked to the regional rivalry between India and Pakistan – therefore has sustained the war.

In this sub-section, where we examined foreign support for rebels, we see three cases of new and strong support leading to at least de facto rebel victory (Nagorno-Karabakh; the Hutus in Burundi; the Kurds after the first Gulf War) and four cases of persistent foreign support to rebels leading to moderate rebel successes (Kurds in Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, and Muslims in Thailand and Pakistan).

5.1.6 Equal foreign support sustains war – [Sudan (NT); Congo (K) (NT)]

In two of the non-terminated wars, apparent balanced support from foreign powers has led to persistence.³⁹ In Darfur, there has been a genocide orchestrated by the Sudanese government and their allied local militias of the so-called “African” tribes in the region. The largely agriculturalist tribes in Darfur were in continual conflict with neighboring Arab pastoralists over rights to grazing lands; they were in conflict with the government due to lack of sufficient jobs and government largesse coming to them, especially in light of their service to the Sudanese army in the war against the southern secessionists. The coup de grace was the excellent deal on oil revenues accorded to the south in the peace treaty of 2005, a special deal than that left Darfur, with its oil, as the relative loser. There are many reasons why the war persists, and perhaps most consequential is the apparent fact that elements in the Khartoum regime seek to decimate the African population in the region, and therefore have no reason to seek peace. Time, these elements believe, is on their side.

Yet third party support has played a role in the war's continuation. Major international players (the U.S. and the UK especially) had been focused on the comprehensive settlement of the war in the south. When settled, this opened up oil investment from the West (especially to U.S. multinational

³⁹We acknowledge the problem of assessing balance ex post, finding it where no party is strong enough to win. This raises a bigger issue of reading level of foreign support in general from the outcomes. For this reason, we feel more confident in our assessments of changes in foreign support than we do in causal arguments from its persistence.

firms that had been prohibited by Executive Order to bid for contracts given alleged human rights violations by the Khartoum regime) into Sudan. The Darfur war raged as the settlement with the southern rebels (the SPLA) was on the horizon, and the West ignored Darfur in order to secure the settlement in the south. Meanwhile, Sudan had support from China (due to its oil investments) and Russia (due to its profits from the sale of weapons to Sudan) to pursue rebels without constraint in Darfur. On the rebel side, President Deby of Chad was in debt to one of the Zaghawa groups (the Justice & Equality Movement) for their help in his battle with Hissène Habré. This is the group that undermined a peace agreement May 5, 2006, signed in Abuja, Nigeria, with the African Union playing the mediating role. Oil, arms sales, and cross-border tribal alliances all worked to sustain a balance of forces in Darfur working against pressure for a settlement. While there is no theoretical reason why a balance of forces would lower pressure for a settlement if the forces were calculating the expected returns based on probability of victory, in cases where decisions to provide support are based on factors exogenous to the war itself, as has been the case for China, Russia, U.S., UK and Chad, there has been almost no interest in forging a settlement⁴⁰

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Congo (K) and Zaire), two interrelated insurgencies broke out in the 1990s. First there was a war in Shaba Province (the former Katanga) between the Luba-Kasai minority and the dominant Lunda, and this was largely a war of secession or autonomy. Second, in the east of the country, a Tutsi-led rebel army (aided by Rwanda) sought power in the center and eventually took control of the capital, deposing President Mobutu in 1997. The onset of these wars is easily explained by the rapacious incompetence of Mobutu's rule, but the continuation of the war after his fall in a deadly stalemate is largely the result of competing interests of neighboring states. Rwanda and Uganda struggled over who would control access to natural resources. In May 1999, the rebel coalition split into two factions, the Rwandan backed RCD-Goma and the Ugandan RCD-ML. At the same time a third rebel group, the MLC, arose, also receiving support from Uganda.

In 1999, a regional conference held in Lusaka brought a preliminary peace accord, allowing for the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping force (MONUC) that year. The Lusaka Peace Accords were short on details, and in 2002 and again in 2003 the neighboring states and parties to the conflict within the DRC reaffirmed the Lusaka Accords and added new provisions. Yet peace has not been achieved. The balanced support coming to both government and rebels from neighboring states is part of the explanation. Since the beginning of the conflict in 1996 there has been a strong foreign presence by neighboring African countries such as Rwanda, Uganda, Angola and Zimbabwe. Each of these countries had economic and domestic political interests in supporting often conflicting parties. Although foreign involvement led to quick rebel victory in the first stage of the war, foreign interest in capturing the spoils of victory (the diamonds and precious

⁴⁰ On July 31, 2007, the Security Council finally voted for a serious peacekeeping operation, under Chapter VII authorization, in Darfur.

metals in the eastern region and Shaba) sustains the conflict. ⁴¹

5.1.7 Changes in Foreign Support – A Summary

Jennifer Bernal, our research assistant, read all of our termination narratives, and coded them as to whether a change in foreign support for rebels or for the state was influential in termination. She found 35% of the terminations were significantly influenced by changes in foreign support. For the twenty-two random cases in her coding, eleven (or 50%) were influenced by changes in foreign support. In our set it was twelve (or 55%), which suggests that the random cases oversampled on changes in foreign influence. (Somewhat disturbing, despite the agreement on the percentage of cases that were coded as having been influenced by changes in foreign involvement, was the relatively low intercoder reliability on this variable, with Bernal's coding and ours correlating at only .73. Bernal coded Cuba 1959 as a case where U.S. support for the Batista regime dissipated, allowing for a Castro victory. We judged this case to have terminated without consequential changes in foreign involvement. Meanwhile, we coded Jordan in 1971 and Rwanda 1998, as explained earlier, as cases where change in foreign support was significant for termination, cases in which Bernal did not code as terminated due to changes in foreign support. In nineteen of the twenty-two cases, our codings were the same.

In the Table below, of the 23 terminated cases (now splitting the Shi'ite and Kurd rebellions after the first Gulf War), we include three cases where our initial quantitative coding of change in foreign support was of no consequence, but after identifying this factor, we saw it operating in those cases. The cases are Burundi where the inclusion of a Chapter 7 UN army was influential in imposing a termination, the Kurdish rebellion ending in 1988, where the addition of Iran's support of rebels added to duration, and Chad, where Libyan withdrawal from support of potential rebels brought violence against the Deby regime under the PITF civil war threshold. The Table does not include analysis of the Cuban case that Bernal identified as qualifying but not in our coding.

On the issue of causation, with these three cases added and the Iraq war split, in 16 of the 23 wars influenced by foreign intervention, changes in foreign involvement were not directly related to the progress of the war, but were driven by factors exogenous to those wars. In three cases, the changes were coded as endogenous to the progress of the war, and in three the foreign country's motives were coded as mixed. (In the eight wars that have not terminated, in five cases the motivations of the interested foreign power sustaining the war were coded as exogenous; in three cases endogenous). In ten of the twenty-three cases, changed levels of foreign involvement led to military victories by the side advantaged by this involvement; in three cases, it led to suit for peace

⁴¹This is an ex post inference. With no notable change in foreign support for either side during a conflict and the conflict continues, the most we can say is that this is consistent with the theory that changes in foreign support often cause termination, but no greater claim than that.

by the side that was disadvantaged by this involvement; in eight cases, lack of change in foreign support sustained the war, either by helping the weaker side or through balancing among international actors; and finally, in three cases changed international support weakened the disadvantaged side sufficiently such that the level of violence could no longer be sustained, and the civil war fell below the threshold to remain an active war in our database.

These results give us some confidence that largely exogenous changes in foreign military support have fairly often directly caused civil wars in the last 50 years to end.

5.2 Shock 2: Changed Leadership Opens New Route to Termination

A second factor that comes out clearly from the random set of cases is that change in government or rebel leadership can influence war termination.

Even more than for changes in foreign intervention, change in leadership can of course be endogenous to the war – indeed, changing the leadership of the other side is generally the point of the war! General Ojukwu (Biafra) went into exile in large part because he faced imminent capture. Jonas Savimbi (Angola) was killed in combat in 2002, and Abdullah Öcalan (Kurdish war in Turkey) was captured by the Turkish army in 1999. It would be odd to attribute termination in these cases entirely to the capture or the death of the rebel leader, since they were captured or killed in large part because their side was losing militarily. (Still, in each case we think that the leadership change had an independent causal effect on termination as well.)

In other cases, leadership change had little to do with the progress of the war. The assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi brought her son Rajiv to power, who was willing to make more meaningful concessions (but not enough to count as a rebel victory) to the Sikh rebels than was his mother. The collapse of the Mengistu government in Ethiopia was only distantly linked to the progress of the war in Eritrea, but the new government was far more open to granting Eritrean rebels the secession they prized. In some cases, as with the coup bringing President Aliyev to power in Azerbaijan, the explanation for this change was only partly due to the failure of his predecessor to win the war in Nagorno Karabakh. Post-Soviet analysts saw it as part of a trend in which members of the old nomenklatura reclaimed authority from the more nationalist (in this case Islamicist) leaders who rode to power in the wake of the Soviet collapse. Aliyev quickly negotiated terms of de facto defeat that his predecessor had insufficient power to have done without arousing militant internal opposition.

There are several reasons why new leadership is associated with termination. For one, a leader who strongly advocated for war and has identified his or her political fortunes with it may refuse to give up even when it is clear that victory on his or her original terms is very unlikely, since he or she will lose power either way (Goemans 2000). The replacement of such a leader may raise the prospect for war termination by bringing in a new leader without the same baggage.

Second, some rebel leaders may develop such authoritarian, top-down control of their movements that their capture can render the rest of the group unable to coordinate continued fighting (e.g., Öcalan, or Guzman in Peru). Third, there might be a psychological bias that afflicts leaders in warfare, when they are so focused on victory that they cannot calculate the benefits of cutting losses.⁴² Fourth, at least on the government side and in relatively democratic states, new leaders may come to power because the population is fed up with the costs of the conflict and wants to quit or settle. For all of these mechanisms, new leadership affords an opportunity for a set of concessions to losers or an admission of defeat by losers that terminates the war.

Change in leadership need not augur a brokered peace with a power-sharing agreement, however. In the nine cases where narratives revealed the importance of changed leadership, there were four cases of rebel victory, four cases of government victory, and only one case of power-sharing.

Yet, with leadership change helping to account for nine of the twenty-two termination cases and influencing the course of the war in two of the eight cases that have not terminated, this is a mechanism demanding further analysis. We have done some preliminary analysis looking at whether a change in the government's top leader predicts subsequent civil war termination, and found little sign of an effect once one removes the cases where the leader change is the direct result of the rebel's winning. Our narrative data set may allow us to code changes in rebel leadership, but this remains work in progress.

6 Conclusion

We underline four general points in summary.

1. We introduced a new approach to evaluating civil war outcomes based on distinguishing between center- and autonomy-seeking civil wars. Past authors focused on whether there was a “negotiated settlement” versus a “military victory.” We argue that tacit negotiations, at the least, appear in almost all war ends, and that rebel victory of de facto autonomy in a separatist war need not involve militarily defeating the government's army, which is the usual condition for “military victory.” We argue that it makes more sense to distinguish between outcomes in center seeking wars by whether the rebels took power at the center or were rendered militarily insignificant by the government, and in autonomy-seeking wars by the degree and means by which rebels gain political autonomy.

Applying our coding scheme to the PITF civil war list, we find remarkably little powersharing as the outcome center-seeking wars, and a rather higher rate of negotiated or de facto regional autonomy outcomes in separatist wars. Though government military victories are the most common outcomes in both types of war, rebel groups have taken power at the center in one quarter of

⁴²This is consistent with the approach pioneered by Tversky and Kahneman (1974).

the center-seeking cases and have gained significant regional autonomy in 40% of the separatist conflicts.

2. We develop a model of a government and rebels in strategic interaction in the midst of a civil war, in which a military or political winner can at relatively low cost eliminate the loser's ability to regroup militarily. Though power sharing would be better for both sides than fighting on till victory or defeat, a set of commitment problems undermine the parties ability to divide control of government in a stable manner. Regarding war termination, the model implies that shocks to relative military power or cost tolerance are likely to cause subsequent war termination, by military victory more than by powersharing. Changes in foreign intervention are a plausible and relatively observable shock to relative capabilities.

3. We develop an approach to using case studies (that we term "random narratives") that mitigates problems of selection bias in case study methods while at the same allowing more accurate coding of difficult variables than large-N studies often allow. By reading analysis of a stratified random sample of civil war cases, we identified two potential causal mechanisms leading to termination: changes in foreign support to one of the combatants, and changes in government or rebel leadership. These two mechanisms were induced independently of the model; however, they are consistent with its implications and the theoretical perspective that sees civil wars as being mainly "about" problems of credible commitment.

4. A next step in this research program is to put our findings to statistical test. This would require more attention to the coding rules for civil war outcomes, which up till now have been insufficiently explicit. It would require as well a listing of all changes in foreign support (e.g. if foreign support were added or dropped with no effect, something that might have been missed in the narrative accounts) and leadership (which already exists for government, but is lacking for rebels).

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Figure 1. Center-seeking war outcomes over time

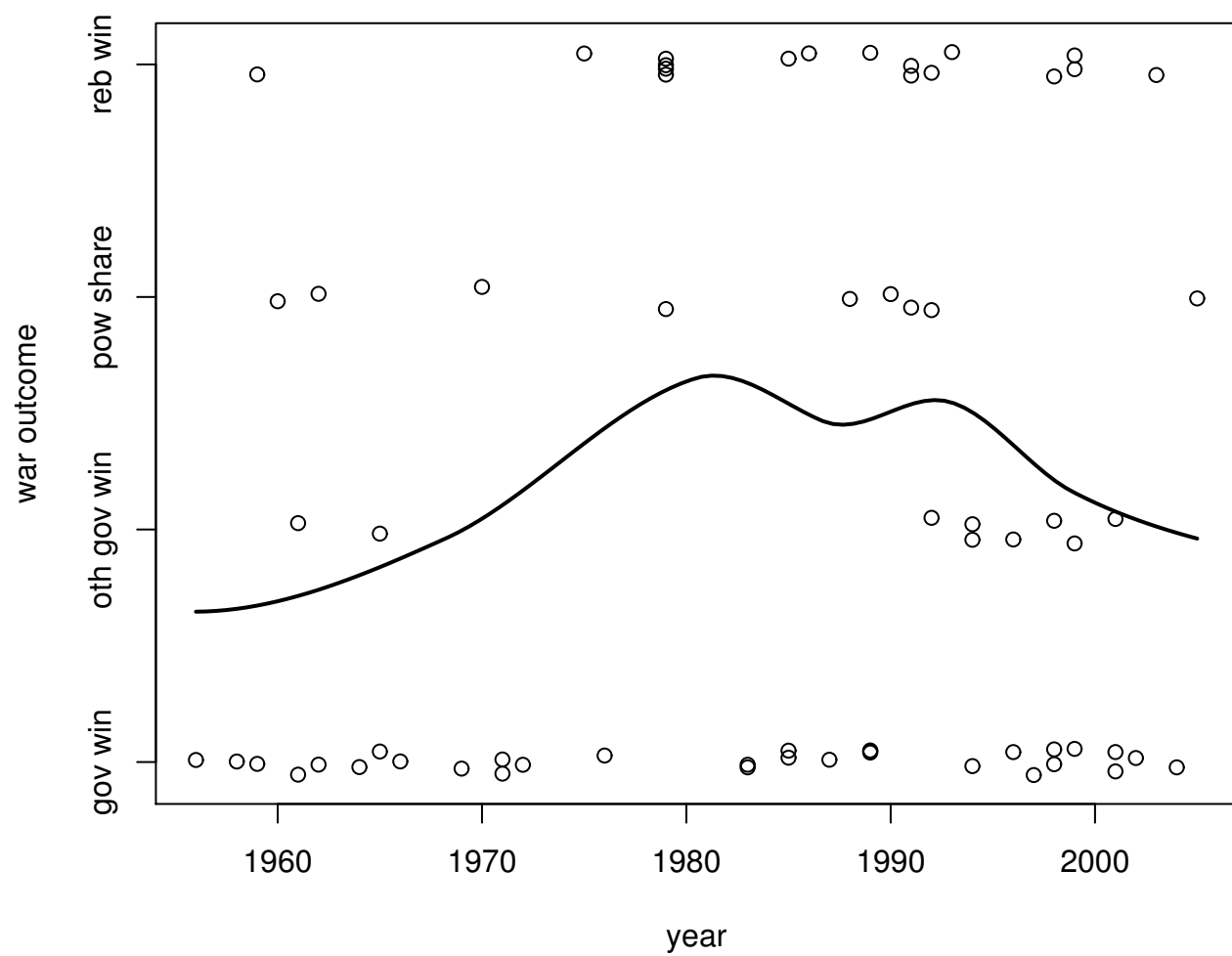


Figure 2. Autonomy-seeking war outcomes over time

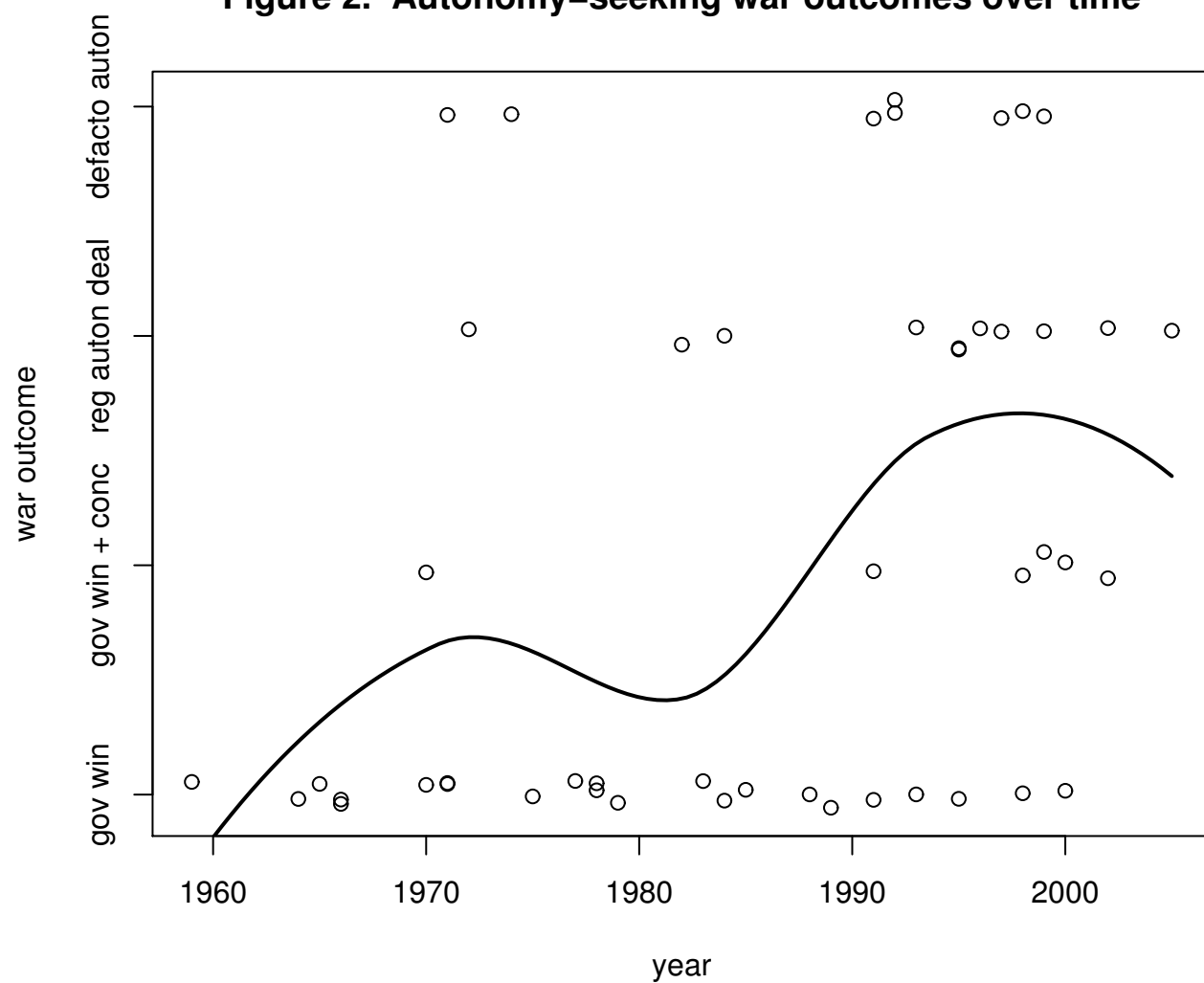


Figure 3a. Change over time in war outcomes

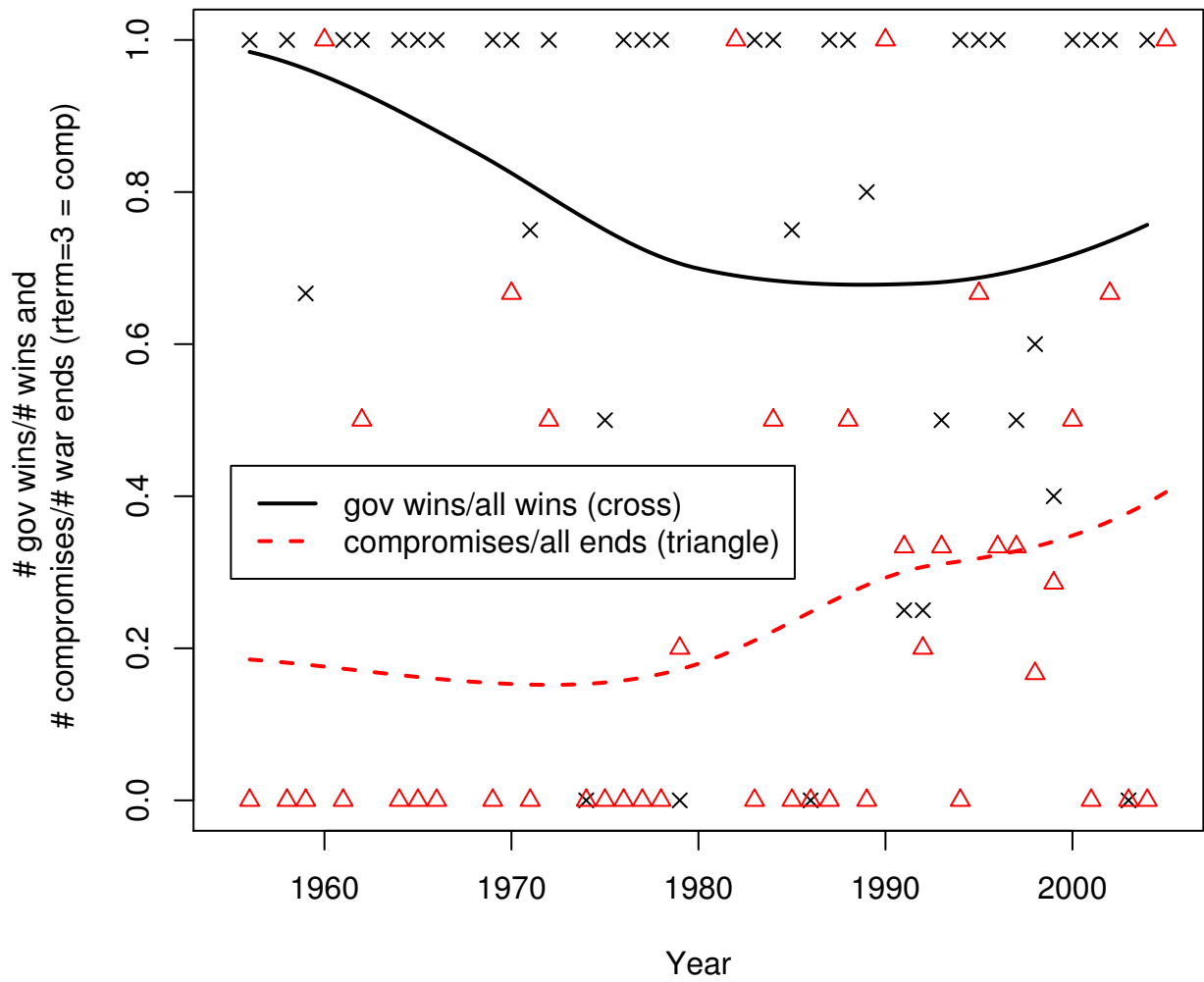


Figure 3b. Change over time in war outcomes

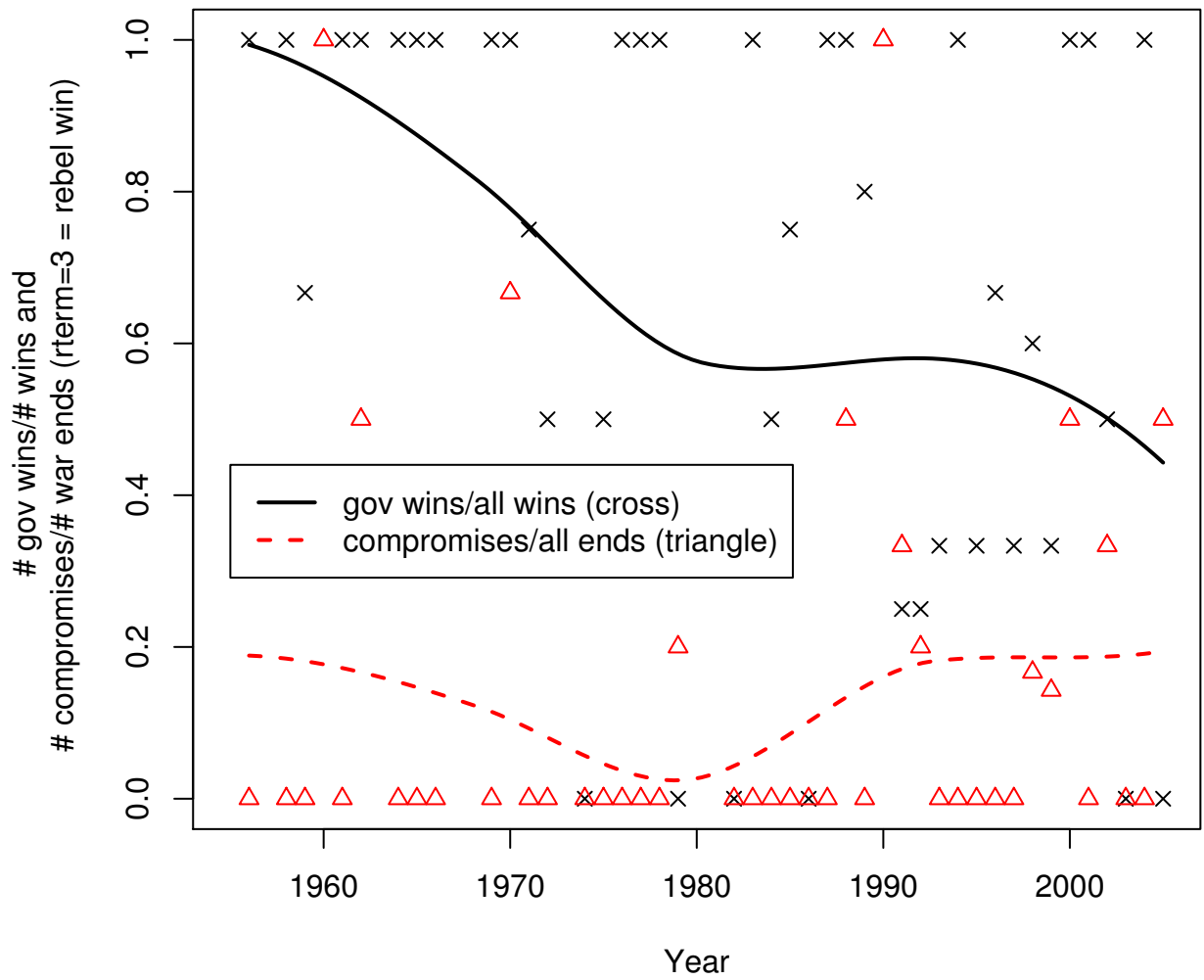
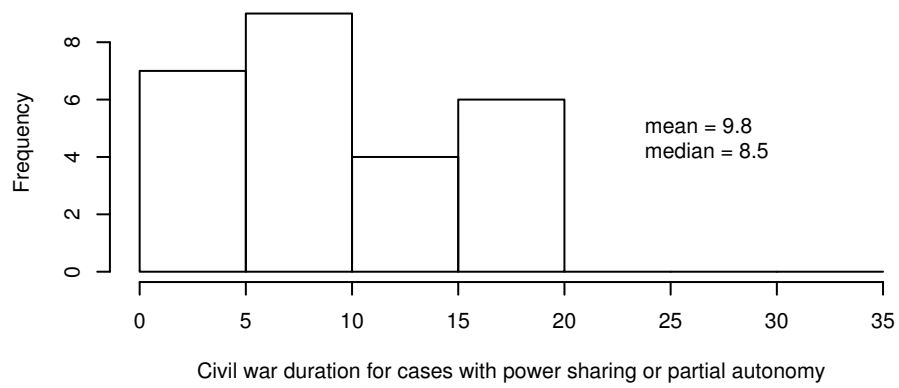


Figure 4. War duration by outcome type.

War duration|gov't victory



War duration|compromise



War duration|rebel victory

