NONSTATE ARMED GROUP NEGOTIATION

IN CIVIL WARS, 1946-2011

by

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of Utah
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Political Science

The University of Utah

August 2016

The University of Utah Graduate School

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ABSTRACT

A nuanced understanding of negotiation is essential to combating civil wars, transnational challenges to order, and threatening nonstate actors in the global political arena. This quantitative study goes beyond structural explanations and evaluations of negotiations as mere outcomes to explore the processes and factors that cause nonstate armed groups in civil wars to pursue negotiations sooner. With the use of data on all civil wars from 1946-2011, this study utilizes competing risks survival analysis to demonstrate the relative importance of cultural loyalty to the local population, governing ambitions in the area, and assistance from a third party in the timing of negotiation pursuit by rebel groups. The central findings suggest that, regardless of a nonstate armed group's strength relative to the state, having an outside backer or the goal of defending a cultural identity is associated with earlier attempts at negotiation, while access to lootable resources appears to delay settlement pursuit.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis would have been impossible without the patient guidance of my committee members. I would like to thank Professor Tabitha Benney for the unwavering support and enthusiasm with which she has encouraged me in all of my academic pursuits. Professor Benney has assisted me tremendously and helped guide this project from its inception to completion with her helpful advice and knowledge. I would also like to express deep appreciation for Professor Adam Meirowitz for his patient guidance and insightful feedback. His advice was critical in moving this project forward during some of the most challenging stages of this research. Finally, I wish to acknowledge with my deepest gratitude the support and professional guidance of my advisor, Professor Steven Lobell. I could not have asked for a better advisor in graduate school. He has been an invaluable mentor through this stage of my career and is an ongoing source of inspiration for me to work to become the best political scientist that I can be.

Further heartfelt thanks go to Professor Matthew Burbank for taking time out of his schedule on several occasions to patiently answer dozens of statistical questions and provide detailed feedback on my research design, and to Professor Mahmood Monshipouri for encouraging me to pursue my dreams of academic research.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The well-known estimate of 16.2 million civil war deaths in the latter half of the 20th century[1] demonstrates clearly just how ruinous intrastate conflict is. Although not unique in their ability to annihilate, these internal conflicts are often not only destructive but also profoundly self-destructive. A willingness to accept tremendous losses within the polity for sometimes unclear gains is often accompanied by a viciousness and taboo-breaking that permeates well beyond any designated battlefield.[2] Fighters in recent civil conflicts frequently seem to embrace this mentality of self-destruction, exaggerating it with psychotropic substances and gleefully announcing to the world their irrational indifference to casualties.[3] It is unsurprising that a world witnessing this phenomenon from Somalia to Srebrenica began to ask itself how these conflicts might end and whether there truly was a new type of war, a new type of combatant, or neither.

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[1] James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75.

[2] Though highly visible and severe violence is a salient characteristic of contemporary civil wars, this is not to say the violence is without purpose or logic. See Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[3] Yahya Sadowski, *The Myth of Global Chaos* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), 23-25.

While the debate continues over just how new the so-called "new wars" are,[4] one distinct trend suggests that something is different. While early studies found that negotiated ends to civil wars were rare and typically unstable,[5] studies of recent conflicts show that an increasing proportion of intrastate wars are being negotiated and the success rate of these agreements is higher. A recent study found that of the 216 peace agreements signed between 1975 and 2011, the vast majority were in intrastate conflicts and 125 of these agreements successfully halted the fighting between signatories for at least five years.[6] This suggests that questions about conflict termination remain important, and that research on contemporary war processes and participants must include negotiation.

Negotiation as a form of political behavior by groups has been somewhat understudied in the civil war context. A tremendous amount of research has gone into looking at civil war duration and termination processes, but much of this literature treats negotiation as an outcome rather than a purposive political decision. Research is needed to expand our understanding of negotiation as a communicative process of meaningful, interrelated actions by political actors.

An important area of inquiry in this vein is whether the characteristics of nonstate armed groups in civil war affect their tendency to pursue negotiation at various stages of

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[4] For an overview of this debate, see Mary Kaldor, "In Defense of New Wars," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Stability* 2, no.1 (2013): 1-16.

[5] For a discussion of this, see Jeffery Dixon, "Emerging Consensus: Results from the Second Wave of Statistical Studies on Conflict Termination," *Civil Wars* 11, no. 2 (2009): 121-136.

[6] Stina Högbladh, "Peace Agreements 1975-2011 - Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset," in *States in Armed Conflict 2011*, eds. Pettersson Therése and Lotta Themnér, (Uppsala: Uppsala University Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2011), 51.

the conflict. Will such groups which possess a salient cultural loyalty or ruling ambitions be more likely to negotiate earlier in the conflict? Do nonstate armed groups that receive outside assistance delay negotiation? Can organizational ideas overpower the pull of material processes in conflict decision making? In exploring these questions, this paper will also help contribute to our understanding of whether actor-level variables have explanatory power that reaches beyond what conflict-level variables can tell us about armed civil conflict.

The following section will provide a brief overview of the literature on negotiated conflict termination broadly, as well as what is known about nonstate armed groups and negotiation in civil wars. The study will then present a competing risks survival analysis model that uses existing data to test the relative importance of actor-level characteristics in the duration of conflict prior to nonstate participant pursuit of negotiation. The major findings on the four main explanatory variables will be discussed and then the paper will conclude with a discussion of the contribution of this study, limitations of its findings, and potential directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Conflict termination has been a perennially popular topic in the study of politics. With the shifting patterns and growing prevalence of intrastate war, termination has been no small part of the massive and growing literature on civil wars. As outright defeat of either side becomes an increasingly rare outcome in intrastate armed conflicts,[7] there has been an increasing focus on alternative modes and mechanisms of conflict cessation.

These topics have remained salient in the research due in part to the inarguably massive number of people affected by these conflicts. With recent transnational terrorism and mass migration flows, the world is becoming highly attuned to spillover effects that reach well outside of conflict zones. As policymakers try to design the best responses, conflict termination has been and remains an important area of focus. Indeed, one of the earliest quantitative studies of conflict conclusion patterns was government-commissioned,[8] and this high policy relevance doubtlessly helps put this issue area high on the agenda for academic research as well.

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[7] Cochrane Feargal, *Ending Wars* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 32-35.

[8] Frank Klingberg, "Predicting the Termination of War: Battle Casualties and Population Losses," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 10, no. 2 (1966): 129-171.

It is unsurprising that the research on civils wars and conflict termination is not only ongoing but also voluminous. Even within the categories of civil wars and their subcomponents, there is great diversity in the relevant issues, tactics, and actors.[9] In addition to this variety, this issue area also has a high degree of complexity. There are many interrelated data generating processes to study and increasing amounts of collected data with which to do so. While early studies relied mostly on national measures to capture subnational processes, recent datasets are increasingly fine-grained and even georeferenced to small sublocalities.[10]

This influx of collected data is coming at an important time for this area of inquiry. There is reason to believe that trends in conflict termination are undergoing a substantial shift. Early work assumed that negotiated ends to conflicts were rare and seldom effective, yet recent work shows that the majority of conflicts undergo negotiation and that this often successfully halts the conflict.[11] The need to explain this change highlights the importance of studying contemporary conflict processes, trends across time, and the variation between conflict types.

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[9] While many tend to imagine guerilla-type insurgencies when they think of civil conflict, scholars have established a wide range of "technologies of rebellion" that account for diversity in these wars. See Stathis Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, "International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict," *The American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 415-429.

[10] Ralph Sunberg and Eric Malander, "Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 4 (2013): 523-532.

[11] Madhav Joshi and J. Michael Quinn, "Is the Sum Greater than the Parts? Terms of Civil War Peace Agreements and the Commitment Problem Revisited," *Negotiation Journal* 31, no. 3 (2015): 9.

Conflict Termination: The Civil War Focus

Much of the earliest literature on this topic was dedicated to establishing a separate study of intrastate conflict. While many of the insights from the vast literature on interstate conflict negotiation are certainly significant across all types of conflicts, scholars have established that inter- and intrastate conflicts differ in many key dynamics.[12] This underlines the importance of developing the intrastate conflict literature, as there is evidence of differing dynamics resulting from the nature of the parties, relationships between them, and the issues typically at stake in a civil war.

One of the major differences between interstate and intrastate wars that scholars have elaborated on is the fundamentally different nature of nonstate participants. Rebel groups do not rely upon maintaining territory for their existence and conflict success in the way that states do.[13] Rebel groups have the option of going underground if needed, and this contributes to a dynamic of uncertainty where endurance often trumps relative strength.[14] Furthermore, due to the nature of their objectives, rebel organizations typically have a strong incentive to be lean, which in turn may leave them lacking the capabilities and experience to negotiate as effectively as a state would.[15]

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[12] Phillip Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 5 (2013): 623-624.

[13] Christopher Butler and Scott Gates, "Asymmetry, Parity, and (Civil) War: Can International Theories of Power help us Understand Civil War?" *International Interactions* 35, no. 3 (2009): 330–340.

[14] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 624.

[15] I. William Zartman, "The Diplomacy of Conflict Management," in *Conflict Management in Divided Societies*, eds. Christina Yakinthou and Stefan Wolff (New York: Routledge, 2012), 95-96.

Civil war termination is also a useful separate study because, on top of the differing nature of the participants, civil conflict also adds relational uniqueness. The first major relational difference that is relevant to negotiation results from at least one side typically not recognizing the other as a legitimate political entity. Often the feeling is mutual. Mutual recognition of parties to a conflict is commonly seen as a vital basis for negotiation and, in contrast to most interstate conflicts, this is typically absent in civil war.[16]

This lack of mutual recognition is often not only an issue at the outset, but also one that remains throughout the conflict. States have a strong incentive to provide zero recognition to rebel groups to avoid legitimating both their grievances and their chosen mode of resolving them. The power of this incentive has been demonstrated empirically in studies showing that the central government will usually hold off on recognizing a rebel organization until it is capable of posing a substantial and credible threat to the state.[17]

This issue of nonrecognition is compounded by two other major differences in the relationship between the parties in intrastate conflict. One key issue is that the capabilities that matter for each participant are less comparable, due to the typically asymmetric nature of civil wars. This difficulty comparing relative power makes it harder for the parties to evaluate their chances of success, which in turn can push a party that would be

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[16] Navin Bapat, "Insurgency and the Opening of Peace Processes," *Journal of Peace Research* 42, no. 6 (2005): 699-717. See also: Robert Powell, "Bargaining Theory and International Conflict," *Annual Review of Political Science* 5, no. 1 (2002): 1-30; and James Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379-414.

[17] Bapat, "Insurgency and the Opening of Peace Processes," 699-717.

better off negotiating to continue fighting.[18] Furthermore, in contrast to most interstate wars, there is not necessarily a unifying standard of success. While both parties in an interstate war generally share an understanding of what it means to win a war, how it is signified, and what precisely constitutes defeat, this shared understanding is typically absent from intrastate conflicts,[19] particularly in the modern day.[20]

Finally, scholars have demonstrated that civil wars merit separate study due to the different nature of the issues over which these wars are typically fought. In civil wars, actors' goals are often incompatible and the stakes are indivisible. Furthermore, the struggle of the rebels is often existential. In modern interstate conflict, both parties can reasonably expect to survive the war. This is in stark contrast to intrastate conflicts, where both the rebels and the regime can usually anticipate that defeat would spell their total demise.[21] Furthermore, with the exception of rare cases of partition, the parties to a civil conflict must learn to coexist in the same borders after the fighting ceases.[22] These factors tremendously alter the basis of and opportunities for negotiation.

The early research that established the need for separate study of intrastate wars and their termination laid many important theoretical foundations and articulated key

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[18] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 624.

[19] Paul Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 29.

[20] Dominic Johnson, *Failing to Win: Perceptions of Victory and Defeat in International Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[21] Zartman, "The Diplomacy of Conflict Management," 95.

[22] Bill Kissane, "Introduction," in *After Civil War: Division, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Bill Kissane (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2015), 2.

assumptions for this subset of the political science literature. With this understanding of the uniqueness of these conflicts, a large set of scholars set out to explain the vital questions relating to conflict termination in civil wars.

Civil War Termination: Key Questions and Assumptions

The research into these questions is typically rooted in a rationalist understanding of armed conflict. While occasionally war is explained as a manifestation of an irrational violent streak in human nature or as a result of the powerful being able to totally displace costs in pursuit of greed or other gains, most scholars assume that wars are a result of actors that rationally pursue conflict actions which correspond with coherent preferences and objectives.[23] This rationalist approach seems to be bolstered by empirical research suggesting that rebellion is not necessarily pursued where the grievances are most severe, but rather in the places with conditions that foster insurgency as an effective strategy.[24] This approach to conflict corresponds with an understanding of negotiation as resulting from a preference-based decision making calculus by primarily rational actors.[25] Explaining negotiation thus becomes a project of understanding the costs and net benefits that actors weigh in their decisions to pursue and ultimately desist in pursuing their goals through armed conflict.

War is both very costly and a high-risk strategy.[26] Scholars must explain what

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[23] Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," 379.

[24] Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 75-90.

[25] Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process*, 8.

[26] Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," 379-414.

incentives drive the actors' initial and continued choice of this option in resolving a conflict. Scholars have argued that there are key defensive incentives such as self-preservation at play, but also offensive incentives such as ideological victory, spoils, and opportunities for corruption.[27] Scholars assuming a rationalist approach to conflict negotiation thus must work to demonstrate either a change of preferences or a change of strategic conditions, or both, when the negotiation option has been pursued.

Scholars have formed a variety of approaches to this and used them to address key questions about the duration of the conflict until negotiated termination, the utility of third party mediation, and the stability of negotiated agreements. The literature explaining these has primarily studied and articulated explanations at the conflict level. This conflict-level termination research has developed into three primary branches, which are described in the following subsection.

Primary Branches of Civil War Termination Theory:

Contemporary Explanations at the Conflict Level

Conflict Situation: Ripeness and Relative Power

Many scholars have argued that the emergence of negotiation is best explained by the dynamics in the conflict situation shifting to a configuration that makes agreement possible. One of the earliest and most famous articulations of this suggests that conflicts will reach a stage where they are "ripe for resolution" because the warring parties have reached a "mutually hurting stalemate," are cognizant of this fact, and now acknowledge

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[27] Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 780.

the existence of an alternative mechanism for addressing their dispute.[28]

While it is important to note that stalemate is often a key explanatory variable, this does not suggest that scholars believe it is a simple variable with a uniform effect across the conflict. Scholars have shown that conflicts are not just a linear movement toward resolution, and that the conflict being at a stalemate can have different effects depending on the stage that the peace process is in. Scholars have established that stalemate may encourage parties to move into negotiations, but actually seems to hinder the ultimate implementation of peace agreements.[29]

This need for more complex understanding of stalemate processes has led to detailed empirical examination of the effects of relative power. Scholars have shown for example that the presence of relatively weak rebel groups tends to lengthen the duration of conflict substantially. [30] Other studies have looked more closely at the effects of power parity at various stages of the conflict. One author has found that, in a feature somewhat unique to intrastate conflict, power parity tends to increase the likelihood of negotiated settlement.[31]

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[28] I. William Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, eds. Paul Stern and Daniel Druckman (Washington: National Academy Press, 2000), 226-245; and I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[29] Michael Findley, "Bargaining and the Interdependent Stages of Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 5 (2013): 905-932.

[30] David Cunningham, Kristian Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 570–597.

[31] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 623-634.

Conflict Information: Commitment and Bargaining

The second major branch of the civil war termination literature explains the pursuit and success of negotiation foremost with information processes. While the relative strength of parties and overall conflict situation is important, these scholars typically focus on the role of commitment problems, uncertainty, and informational asymmetry.

One of the most well-known theories of conflict termination in this group is credible commitment theory. Considered by some to be the dominant approach to conflict termination,[32] this theory developed by Barbara Walters suggests that the main obstacle that hinders conflict resolution is both parties struggling to make their commitment to settlement seem credible. This argument suggests the need to go beyond merely looking at the conflict situation or the issues over which the conflict was fought, to examine information and bargaining and see how credible commitments to peace can be made.[33]

A number of works have made arguments for how to facilitate credible commitment. The earliest articulation of this theory focused on the role of external, third-party involvement in the conflict. The author argues that outside assistance becomes key to prevent the actors from being overwhelmed by the many incentives to cheat and renege on their agreement.[34]

Other scholars have picked up and modified this argument about third parties

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[32] Joshi and Quinn, "Is the Sum Greater than the Parts? Terms of Civil War Peace Agreements and the Commitment Problem Revisited," 8.

[33] Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars.*

[34] Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*.

and there is a rich literature that looks at when external parties do or do not act in this beneficial manner.[35] While it is unlikely that anyone would argue that third-party intervention is always beneficial, many find it has empirically been overwhelmingly positive. Some have gone so far as to suggest that the recent increased success of resolving conflict is the result of third parties' mediation efforts and role in underlining the credibility and legal standing of agreements.[36] Although the findings are not necessarily uniform, major empirical studies have found evidence that international efforts such as peacekeeping are largely effective at rolling back civil conflict.[37]

Other scholars examining the credible commitment problem have looked to solutions beyond outside assistance. A growing body of work looks at the role of internal enforcement mechanisms such as monitoring in facilitating peace agreement formation and enforcement. Scholars have argued that these treaty mechanisms of internal enforcement are effective at reducing the uncertainty that exists in negotiation processes and even afterward.[38]

Another subset of the conflict information branch of the literature looks at the role

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[35] For example, a major recent study looks at the role of selfishly motivated third-party interventions, and finds that these lengthen civil wars due the acting additional veto player, and the third party experiencing few costs. See David Cunningham, "Blocking Resolution: How External States can Prolong Civil Wars," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 115-127.

[36] Christine Bell, "Peace Agreements: Their Nature and Legal Status," *American Journal of International Law* 100, no. 2 (2006): 373-412.

[37] See Doyle and Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," 779-801; and Veronia Fornta, "Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace after Civil War," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2004): 269-292.

[38] Michaele Mattes and Burcu Savun, "Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements," *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 2 (2010): 511-524.

of uncertainty, especially with a consideration of the number of parties in the conflict. Assuming that information processes are vital for conflict negotiation, adding multiple parties increases uncertainty, which may make rebels hesitant to commit to an agreement and unclear about when it would be strategic to do so. Empirical support has been found for the idea that multiple parties lead to longer civil wars by increasing uncertainty, reducing the number of acceptable agreements, and leading to shifting alliances that may incentivize a refusal to negotiate.[39]

However, the evidence on this issue is not necessarily uniform. Although other scholars agree that there is an impact of having multiple parties, they have argued that the effect is different depending on which stage the conflict is in. For example, a recent study found that multiparty conflicts are more likely to move into negotiation processes, but that having multiple parties becomes a severe hindrance when it comes to the implementation of agreements.[40]

Another major subset of this literature looks at the role of information asymmetries in the duration and termination of war. This explanation is compatible with a number of other theories of conflict resolution, but these scholars tend to focus on the role of representation, misrepresentation, and the analysis of information by conflict parties.

War provides powerful incentives for participants to overstate their commitment and posture in a way that exaggerates their capabilities.[41] Scholars have shown that

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[39] David Cunningham, "Veto Players and Civil War Duration," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (2006): 875-892.

[40] Findley, "Bargaining and the Interdependent Stages of Conflict Resolution," 905-932.

misrepresentation stems not only from boastful exaggeration, but also from strictly practical considerations such as keeping the existence, size, and location of forces a secret.[42] However, there has been quite a bit of debate over the extent to which this misrepresentation is possible and practical in a typical civil war, [43] thus casting some doubt upon the explanatory power of this argument.

Empirical studies have found substantial evidence that resultant information asymmetries exist and matter, especially in determining outcomes in later stages of conflicts. [44] Scholars have also found evidence that suggests that these can get in the way of reaching a settlement,[45] and also possibly lead to the breakdown of peace.[46] Further research is likely needed to shed more light on the nuances of this argument, but information asymmetries and the number of parties seem to be important considerations for future studies in the explanation of civil war outcomes.

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[41] David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Spreading Fear: The Genesis of Transnational Conflict," in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation*, eds. David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 12.

[42] Barbara Walter, "Designing Transitions from Civil War," in *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention*, eds. Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 42.

[43] James Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 290.

[44] Walter, "Designing Transitions from Civil War: Demobilization, Democratization, and Commitments to Peace," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (1999): 127–55.

[45] Patrick Regan and Aysegul Aydin, "Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars*," Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 5 (2006): 736–56.

[46] Mattes and Savun, "Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements," 511-524.

Conflict Basis: Issues and Identity

The third major strand of conflict-level negotiation research uses explanations rooted in the issue-basis of the conflict. The overarching explanatory variable in this branch is the extent to which conflict stakes are indivisible. An important subset of this approach examines such conflicts where identity is the key issue at stake.

Scholars have argued that issue indivisibility tends to be a particularly powerful problem in intrastate conflict. They suggest that in most civil wars, "neither side can get most of what it wants without depriving the other of most of what it wants," rendering negotiation especially challenging.[47] If the parties' goals are so fully incompatible, there is little to bargain over, making it unlikely to ever be pursued in the first place.[48] A major positive feedback loop compounds this, because when issues are such that there is little to bargain over, societies are likely to experience zero or failed negotiations and thus further civil war. The subsequent events in the fighting tends to push moderates who might have driven the conflict towards negotiation into more extreme positions.[49] This suggests that the indivisibility of stakes in an important explanatory variable when it comes to negotiation, and can contribute to meaningful arguments about which conflicts are likely to be successfully negotiated.

The indivisibility of stakes approach is not without its critics. Some scholars have argued that reaching agreements over the issues in a conflict is actually usually not

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[47] Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process*, 24. See also Fred Ike, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 95.

[48] I. William Zartman, "The Unfinished Agenda," in *Stopping the Killing: How Wars End*, ed. Robert Licklidier (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 25-26.

[49] Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process*, 24.

exceptionally challenging, even after war has begun.[50] Further studies have shown that there are many cases where a bargain would have been uncomplicated to strike, were it not for the direct costs of the process of pursuing negotiation.[51]

Although technically a type of issue indivisibility, many scholars have studied the effects of identity conflict basis on civil war termination processes and outcomes separately. Scholars have demonstrated that conflict type is important for duration,[52] and have made various arguments for why identity has a particularly strong effect. While interstate conflicts may also have an identity component, intrastate conflict typically involves the fragmentation of multicomponent identities, which can be particularly damaging. [53]

However, in spite of the many arguments for why identity conflicts may be fought more with more ferocity and commitment, many have argued that theory suggests it much more strongly than the empirical evidence can actually support.[54] Some studies have found these conflicts are actually slightly more likely to end settlement, and others have found that ethnic based conflicts are neither more nor less likely to be resolved through settlement.[55] While it may be that identity basis is significant in some cases and

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[50] Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*, 2.

[51] Jeffery Kaplow, "The Negotiation Calculus: Why Parties to Civil Conflicts Refuse to Talk," *International Studies Quarterly* 12, no. 17 (2015), accessed February 28, 2016, http://isq.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/12/17/isq.sqv005.

[52] Fearon, "Why do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?" 275–301.

[53] Kissane, "Introduction," 1-3.

[54] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 629.

not others, a recent review of the literature suggests that based on the multitude of studies on this, there is simply no reason to believe identity has any kind of unambiguous effect at the conflict level.[56]

Current State of the Empirical Literature and New Directions

The rich literature that has developed from these approaches has provided many insights into conflict termination, but is somewhat lacking in consensus about key variables and has seen a great deal of mixed results.[57] Quality of data seems to be a major issue. As many have noted, this literature has a big problem with operationalization of concepts that leaves a substantial gap between theory and measurement.[58] Furthermore, some scholars have highlighted issues with civil war termination data receiving less attention and being collected with less precision than other civil war data.[59] One major issue in that vein has been the coding unclear cases, where data is missing or limited enough to complicate even basic selection criteria such as what constitutes a war.[60]

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[55] David Mason and Patrick Fett, "How Wars End: A Rational Choice Approach," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 4 (1996): 546-568.

[56] Dixon, "Emerging Consensus: Results from the Second Wave of Statistical Studies on Conflict Termination," 121-136.

[57] Dixon, "Emerging Consensus: Results from the Second Wave of Statistical Studies on Conflict Termination," 121-129.

[58] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 623.

[59] Joachim Kreutz, "How and When Armed Conflicts End: Introducing the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 243.

[60] Joachim Kreutz, "The War That Wasn't There: Managing Unclear Cases in Conflict Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 1 (2014): 120-124.

Another explanation for why the results are so mixed is that the theory in this area is somewhat underdeveloped, and that greater specification and refinement of theoretical concepts is needed to help clarify the mechanisms at play.

One possibility that could account for the contradictory findings is that conflict-level explanations may need to be supplemented with explanation at another level. The ability to research this possibility is increasingly an option as data that are more detailed become available. While some literature exists that looks at negotiation from the actor level, a gap remains for a study which examines the behavior of nonstate armed groups in a broad comparison across known cases using group-level variables.

Filling the Actor-Level Explanation Gap

The literature on actor-level explanations of conflict termination patterns remains relatively sparse, despite the fact that these explanations could be useful competing or complementary explanations to the typically discussed conflict-level theories outlined above. Existing literature that explains civil war conflict termination with nonstate participants has tended to either focus on actors as spoilers or, with one major exception, consists of individual case studies rather than broadly comparative work.

The literature on spoilers and related concepts of civil war actors functioning in one specific role has existed for a long time. The notion of the spoiler, introduced by Stephen Stedman, suggests that conflicts may have certain leaders or parties that "believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests."[61]

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[61] Stephen Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (1997): 5.

This suggests that a major obstacle in the pursuit of peace is finding strategies to control such parties.

Research that discusses spoilers has been criticized for facilitating a shallow understanding of nonstate armed groups and their negotiation behavior. Scholars have argued that this literature tends to start with the normative premise of spoiling being a bad behavior, and in doing so, lacks a deeper understanding of what goes into the behavior it is seeking to explain.[62] Other scholars have called for an understanding of nonstate armed groups as more than just spoilers, but rather as complex entities that are in many cases key to stability.[63]

Some existing work has looked at nonstate armed groups in a more nuanced fashion, typically in the form of individual or grouped case studies. Recent case study research has examined in depth the decision making processes leading to and occurring during the negotiations that ended conflicts such as the civil wars in El Salvador[64] and Sudan.[65] Notable groups of case studies on negotiation have also comparatively examined

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[62] Edward Newman, "'New Wars' and Spoilers," in *Challenges to Peacebuilding: Managing Spoilers During Conflict Resolution*, eds. Edward Newman and Oliver Richmond (New York City: United Nations University Press), 134-150.

[63] Sukanya Podder, "Non-State Armed Groups and Stability: Reconsidering Legitimacy and Inclusion," *Contemporary Security Policy* 34, no. 1 (2013): 16-39.

[64] Jeffery Pugh, "The Structure of Negotiation: Lessons from El Salvador for Contemporary Conflict Resolution," *Negotiation Journal* 23, no. 1 (2009): 83-105.

[65] Sharath Srinivasan, "Negotiating Violence: Sudan's Peacemakers and the War in Darfur," *African Affairs* 113, no. 450 (2014): 24-44. See also John Hilde, *Waging Peace in Sudan: The Inside Story of the Negotiations that Ended Africa's Longest Civil War* (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2011).

a few cases from around the world,[66] or within a single region.[67] These case studies provide many useful insights for scholars of conflict termination as they contain detailed explanations that elucidate causal mechanisms and limitations of broader theory. However, they do not undertake to provide a broader comparative understanding across conflicts worldwide.

To date, there is one major quantitative study of note which comparatively examines negotiation pursuit by insurgent groups in the Middle East and Africa. This study tests the effects of conflict level variables on the timing of negotiation pursuit using a game theoretic model to describe the distribution of negotiation and find when the peak timing of negotiation pursuit is.[68]

A gap in the literature remains for a study that looks at the effects of actor-level rather than conflict-level variables in the broadly comparative context of a large-N study. The as of yet unaccounted for mixed empirical findings and theoretical insights from existing work suggest that this is a fruitful avenue of exploration. This study aims to fill that gap using survival analysis to study the length of time different types of nonstate armed groups participate in a conflict before initially pursuing negotiation.

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[66] Raymond Saner and M. Varina Michalun, *Negotiations Between State Actors and Non-State Actors: Case Analyses from Different Parts of the World* (St. Louis: Republic of Letters, 2009).

[67] Alfred G. Nhema and Paul Zeleza, *The Resolution of African Conflicts: The Management of Conflict Resolution & Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008).

[68] Bapat, "Insurgency and the Opening of Peace Processes," 699-717.

CHAPTER 3

THEORY

To facilitate a better understanding of conflict termination, this study aims to develop an organizational identity theory of negotiation in intrastate conflict. This theory suggests that, while conflict-level variables certainly play an important role in triggering the pursuit of negotiation, rebel group characteristics are also important for understanding the selection and timing of negotiation pursuit. A nonstate armed group's framing of its struggle, allocation of resources to nonmilitary activities, and acceptance of outside assistance are all characteristics which are expected to affect the timing of negotiation pursuit. This theoretical section will first establish why an organizational-level theory is useful for improving our understanding of negotiation and of nonstate armed groups. It will then briefly outline the main components of this theory, discuss its foundational assumptions, and delineate the usage of key terms in this study. The next chapter will then explore these components more deeply in discussing the hypotheses that can be derived from the theory articulated here.

Theoretical Utility

An organizational-level theory can help us develop a more nuanced understanding of negotiation as a political behavior. As outlined in Chapter 2, theorizing at this level

might help us examine casual mechanisms that account for the unexplained variation and contradictory findings in studies of negotiation and conflict termination. First, this theory has the potential to capture some processes that simply do not occur at the conflict level. It could also help us develop an understanding of how conflict-system level pressures are translated into actions by the real-world actors. Finally, this theory can also aid in multilevel explanation, which empirical research suggests is key to adequately understanding internal conflict in which casual processes at all levels constantly interact.[69]

Theory development at this level is also important for furthering our understanding of nonstate armed groups in terms of their behavior, ideas, and unit hetero- or homogeneity. Empirical research of nonstate armed group decisions on modes of conflict resolution can deepen our knowledge of how these groups function as organizations at various stages of the conflict. Examining a broader range of their political behavior can also correct for what some suggest has been an excessive scholarly focus on military tactics and "the unconventional" at the cost of overlooking other dynamics of modern conflict.[70] Cooperative behavior by these groups may be, at least in part, determined by factors besides conflict structure and it may be possible to uncover patterns that hold for various subsets of the nonstate actor category. We may also simply be missing important casual processes by using models of conflict termination that

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[69] For a discussion, see: Querine Hanlon, *The Three Images of Ethnic War* (London: Praeger Security International, 2009).

[70] M.L.R. Smith, "Strategy in an Age of 'Low-Intensity' Warfare: Why Clausewitz is still more Relevant than his Critics," in *Rethinking the Nature of War*, eds. Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom (New York City: Frank Cass, 2005), 28-64.

assume, for example, that all parties in a nominally "ethnic conflict" are, in fact, all fighting for this. There are clear empirical cases that would violate this assumption that could be miscategorized in existing analysis.[71]

This closer look at the individual organizations can in turn shed light on the importance of ideas in these groups and modern warfare more broadly. Some have suggested that the ideological justifications in modern wars are often flimsy battlefield motivators,[72] or in a somewhat stronger formulation, are entirely devoid of meaning, with contemporary civil wars being "waged without stakes on either side…wars about nothing at all."[73] Other scholars insist that we take participant narratives seriously as a part of conflict analysis and avoid the myopia that may come from assuming that unfamiliar narratives and the resultant behavioral logics are trivial.[74] If organizational characteristics, including the way that nonstate armed groups frame and organize their struggle are good predictors, this suggests that rebel group ideologies and discourse are

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[71] For example, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army in the Second Sudanese War was fighting in a conflict that did in some sense break down along ethnic or pseudo-ethnic racial lines, but they decidedly rejected this interpretation, arguing that ethnicity was neither the basis of the conflict nor an appropriate basis for the struggle. See Pico Iyer, "Sudan "War is Better than a Bad Peace": Spouting a Nationalist Credo, Rebel Leader John Garang Fights on," *Time*, September 22, 1986, 56-58; Ann Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); and Taisier Ali and Robert Matthews, "Civil War and Failed Peace Efforts in Sudan," in *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution*, eds. Taisier Ali and Mohamed Ahmed (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999), 193-220.

[72] Mueller, John, *The Remnants of War (*Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[73] Hans Enzenberger, *Civil War: From L.A. to Bosnia* (London: Granata Books, 1994), 30.

[74] Bøås, Morten. "African Guerilla Politics: Raging Against the Machine?" in *African Guerillas: Raging Against the Machine*, eds. Morten Bøås and Kevin Dunn (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 9-38.

worth examining, and for policy practitioners, potentially worth engaging.

Finally, this theory can help us understand how meaningful a category the "nonstate armed group" even is. These groups' uniting characteristics may be limited to exactly the characteristics in the name. Alternatively, these groups may be comparable enough that, even with the diversity, distinct patterns of behavior would still emerge. This will help guide future scholarship in whether conflict analysis can completely "black box" the rebel group as many scholars in International Relations have done for the state, should search to find patterns among subtypes, or if these units are so heterogeneous that nuances of each units' characteristics are vital for explanations.

Key Components

The key components of this theory are threefold. First, despite these organizations often being composed of disparate elements, this theory proposes that nonstate armed groups still develop an organizational character. It may be very weak and loosely defined, however, a core still forms around which the broader group coalesces. This even tiny amount of organizational cohesion develops a "character" in the sense that the organization formulates at least some minimal amount of agreement about the nature of the conflict and the group's struggle. This organizational character may not penetrate down to each individual member, and where it does, would not necessarily do so in a unitary fashion. However, the organization as a whole maintains this character and fills it with a variety of content including objectives, perceptions, and normative beliefs.

Second, this theory posits that this organizational character, especially the group's perceptions of what it is fighting for and how the organization it relates to its

environment, will affect the group's behavior in conflict. Rebel groups' goals may thus exceed short term and strictly military objectives. Even groups which seem to have little or no ideology will still have some sort of political frame for their military struggle, and this self-regarding frame will shape their strategies and decision making. Thus, this theory suggests that these groups' perception, and especially their self-perception, matters in their decision-making processes.

This leads to the third component, which suggests that a group's organizational character will shape its decisions regarding settlement and accelerated conflict termination. Conflict system pressures have a powerful effect, but this theory posits that these pressures are filtered through the organizational character, which may modify their effect. Thus, groups may vary in the extent to which political considerations, including feelings of cultural representation, civilian political organization, and ties to outside parties, may modify or even transcend what would otherwise be the military-strategic calculation of negotiation pursuit.

Assumptions

This theory makes a number of assumptions about nonstate armed groups and conflict termination. The first set of assumptions relates to the nonstate armed group as a useful object of study. First, it is assumed that the nonstate armed group can be meaningfully treated as a unitary actor, in the sense of acting in an organized fashion, having some degree of group cohesion, and making decisions for itself. This does not suggest that individual characteristics are unimportant or that the group is homogenous,

indeed, these organizations are typically "umbrellas" for a wide array of interests.[75] However, this theory assumes that the organizational level of analysis is still useful due to the decision-making capacity of the organization itself, which goes beyond its constituent members and leadership.

Relatedly, it is assumed that these organizations have a relatively stable purpose at their inception. While this theory does not bar the possibility of organizational evolution, it is assumes that the organization is formed to serve some purpose, and that this purpose does not fluctuate suddenly or randomly at conflict outset.

The third main assumption is that these organizations possess at least a minimal degree of rationality in the sense that the organization predominantly acts in accordance with a set of preferences. This is not a strict assumption of rationality, and these organizations are making choices in information-poor environments with some limitations on their information processing. However, some goal and agenda is believed to dominate decision-making.

Key Terms

Defining Civil War

This paper will adopt the threshold criteria used in the Upsalla/Prio Armed Conflict Dataset for defining an armed conflict.[76] Per this definition, an armed conflict is considered to be occurring in a year when "an incompatibility that concerns government

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[75] John Darby, "Overview of Political Violence," in *The Ashgate Companion to Political Violence*, ed. Marie Breen-Smyth (New York: Routledge 2016), 24.

[76] Kristian Gleditsch et al., "Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no 5 (2002): 615-631.

or territory or both where the use of armed force between two parties results in at least 25 battle-related deaths," and in which at least one party is an internationally recognized state.[77] Using this smaller casualty threshold has the advantage of limiting the inclusion to serious violent disturbances, while avoiding the problem of systematically excluding smaller states where the other common threshold of 1,000 battle deaths is far less likely to be met.[78]

Furthermore, to meet the standard of a civil war for this study, at least one party must be the state in which the majority of the fighting has occurred and the primary opponent at the initiation of the episode must be internal to this state.[79] However, if an internal conflict becomes internationalized through another state or states' intervention, it is not removed from the dataset. Intervention is a common occurrence that is not believed to fundamentally alter the internal nature of the conflict that exists between the state and rebel group. If a broader interstate war transmutes into an internal conflict, the start of the civil strife where at least one internal rebel group becomes militarily active is measured as the beginning of the conflict episode. Colonial wars of independence are not excluded from the definition adopted here, as the imperial power is understood to be the state in its colonial territory up to the point at which the colonized state has declared independence and is recognized by a simple majority of the international community.

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[77] Gleditsch et al. "Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset," 617.

[78] Gates, Scott, and Håvard Strand, "Modeling the Duration of Civil Wars: Measurement and Estimation Issues" (paper presented at Meeting of the Standing Group on International Relations, September 9-11, 2004).

[79] This is a divergence from the Upsalla/Prio Armed Conflict Dataset terminology, which reserves the term "war" for events with over 1,000 battle deaths. In this study, all conflicts with over 25 battle deaths are referred to as "civil wars."

The start of the conflict dyad episode is measured with the date of the first battle fatality of the conflict episode in which a given rebel group was active. This is used rather than the date on which the conflict met the threshold of 25 battle deaths, in order to capture early rebel activity. This activity may be relatively low intensity, however, the fact that the rebels will have already engaged the government in battle demonstrates that the organization has taken clear measures to pursue their goals militarily and has directly challenged the state.

For the survival analysis used in this study, the end date of interest is not necessarily the termination of the conflict overall or even the conflict episode. Rather, the end date reflects the duration of ongoing fighting without any negotiation or victory. As outlined below, the primary risk of interest in this study is initial negotiation pursuit. If this occurred, this is coded as the end of the nonnegotiated period of the conflict and this episode has experienced the risk of interest, regardless of whether the fighting resumes after negotiation pursuit. If either side has defeated the other before the nonstate armed group has pursued any negotiation, then this is coded as victory and modelled as a competing risk. If the conflict fades below the threshold of 25 battle deaths in a calendar year, otherwise stops without a negotiation or victory on either side, or is ongoing at the end of the time period studied, this conflict is considered unterminated and is modelled as a right censored event in the survival analysis.[80] If a new rebel group is formed over the course of the conflict, through for example the splintering of an existing group, the

[80] The only exception to this which is made in this study is if the conflict episode fell below the 25 deaths threshold without a victory but a negotiated settlement was formally signed within 21 days after this status change. If neither side has won and a peace agreement is signed within three weeks of the violence fading out, it is assumed that both parties had been moving towards this outcome and the negotiation pursuit is implied.

beginning of their activity becomes a new conflict dyad episode. Finally, if there is a lull of more than 5 years, in which the conflict does not meet the threshold of 25 battle deaths but ultimately resumes with the same parties in a dyad, it is always coded as a new conflict episode. It is assumed that even if the same parties are at war, such a substantial length of time between the fighting has led to sufficient changes in the conflict system and composition of the participants to warrant being coded separately.

Defining Nonstate Armed Group

To be included in this study as a nonstate armed group, the organization must meet four criteria. First, the group must have a reasonable degree of coherence, in the sense that the group has the logistical ability to act in a unified fashion.[81] Second, while the leadership structure may be more or less formalized, the organization must have leadership that is distinct from other nonstate groups,[82] and their organization must be acting outside any capacity of a state's government apparatus.[83] Although the distinction between state and nonstate actors is becoming increasingly blurred with various processes of globalization, this study adopts the standard articulated in others that, while there may be intense ties, nonstate groups are those that can be shown to be "in principle, autonomous from the structure and machinery of the state."[84]

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[81] Peter Thompson, *Armed Groups: The 21st Century Threat* (Blue Ridge Summit: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 3-4.

[82] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 570–597.

[83] For example, if officers of the state's military staged a coup, they would be still be considered to be part of a nonstate armed group because they were acting outside of their official capacity, even if their efforts were based within a state-based organization.

Finally, to be considered a nonstate armed group, the organizations must have used force or the direct threat of force to pursue their objectives.[85] The sample here is further restricted to nonstate armed groups which were known to have been active during the civil wars studied here and which actively participated in at least some political violence.[86] Groups which did not participate in any kind of fighting during the episode would not have been expected to participate in negotiation or be victorious or defeated, and thus would not make sense to model with groups that did.

The inclusion of groups had no restrictions based on the size of their membership or the degree of formalization. For example, groups which staged a coup were included as long as the members acted in a coherent enough fashion to be considered a group, even if the participants were only a small handful of military officers and they did not formally organize under any given name.

Defining Negotiation and Negotiation Pursuit

Negotiation is understood to be the pursuit of discussion which is at least nominally concerned with at least one of the following: discussing an issue at least one conflict party considers to be a cause of the conflict,[87] accelerating the timeline of the

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[84] Chris Alden, Monika Thakur, and Matthew Arnold, *Militias and the Challenges of Post-Conflict Peace: Silencing the Guns* (London: Zed Books, 2011), 3.

[85] Thompson, *Armed Groups: The 21st Century Threat*, 3-4.

[86] Due to the restricted focus on nonstate armed groups in civil wars, the terms rebel group and nonstate armed group are used interchangeably in this paper. The list of these groups is drawn from: Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 570–597.

[87] There are many cases where the parties fundamentally disagree on what the conflict is over and outright reject the other party's interpretation. This may continue for the duration of the

ending of hostilities, or agreeing to halt the use of violence for any length of time. This does not necessarily mean that both parties are there with any intent or to compromise or that negotiation pursuit indicates that settlement is their preferred mode of conflict resolution.[88]

Empirically, the event of interest here is the initial pursuit of negotiation by a nonstate armed group in a given conflict episode. In this study, initial negotiation pursuit is operationalized as whichever of the following the occurs first: 1) rebel implementation of a mutual or rebel-only ceasefire, 2) the attendance of the first day of mediated peace talks with at least one representative of the state, 3) the date of signing a formal peace treaty with the state as at least one of the parties,[89] 4) the cessation of hostilities based on a peace agreement reached by any other means.[90] For the purposes of this study, any of the above listed events are considered negotiation pursuit by the nonstate armed group, as

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conflict and even into negotiation. For example, many scholars have argued that the government in Khartoum categorically rejected the categorization of the Sudanese Civil War as civil war, and even in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, there seemed to be no consensus between the parties on what the war had been about. See Ali and Matthews, "Civil War and Failed Peace Efforts in Sudan," 196; and Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 96.

[88] Mohammed Maundi, *Getting In: Mediator's Entry into the Settlement of Armed Conflicts* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2006), 5.

[89] There are instances in conflicts with many rebel groups where competing nonstate armed groups which may have also fought each other will reach a peace agreement amongst themselves, for example the agreement between Liwa al-Tawhid, the Salafist Ahrar al-Sham, the Idlib-based Soqour al-Sham, the Homs-based al-Haq Brigades, Ansar al-Sham, Army of Islam, and the Kurdish Islamic Front in Syria in late 2013. Such agreements are not included.

[90] This is meant to capture peace agreements which were the result of informal or completely unpublicized talks for which there is no clear first day of talks or signing of the agreement. The date of implementation is used here in part out of necessity in some cases where no other date is available, but also in order to capture a meaningful pursuit of negotiation rather than the many claims by groups that they desire peace as they make no effort to pursue it.

long as the organization has participated, regardless of whether it was initiated by them, the state, or any third party.

Although these events vary somewhat in their character, each represents a form of pursuing a nonviolent or at least negotiated settlement. Ceasefires are included although these may have no deeper discussion beyond a temporary laying down of arms. However, the act of implementing a ceasefire when neither party has won establishes a space for resolving the conflict by other means even if neither party ultimately follows through with doing so. Furthermore, ceasefires also create by implication a broader, albeit temporary, settlement of issues such as halting frontlines freezing the spatial distribution of controlled territory.[91] Attending mediated peace talks is probably the clearest form of negotiation, as the groups at least initially agree explicitly to participate and, by attending, have their desire for at least an attempt at a nonviolent settlement known somewhat publicly. If a group refused to attend formal talks or no mediation was offered, the third and fourth forms of negotiation capture a clear willingness to pursue a negotiated end to the conflict in the entering of a formal agreement or the implementation of an informal one.

For the purposes of this study, there is no "success" requirement for any of these, and indeed, in the majority of the cases studied here, the initial negotiation pursuit did not end the conflict in any meaningful way. A ceasefire or mediated peace talks may dissolve on the first day. When agreements are signed, these may vary in their depth. Even supposedly "comprehensive peace agreements" may skirt the deeper issues of the conflict, in effect only negotiating an end to outright fighting and serving as little more

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[91] Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process*, 18.

than a glorified ceasefire. [92]

Indeed, regardless of how the conflict episode ends, residual violence will often plague the supposedly postconflict society for long after the war episode is nominally over. [93] This violence may range from a spree of apolitical crimes that arise in the arms-saturated and disordered society, [94] to what is essentially outright continuation of violence with the intent of strategic gain by remnants of the parties,[95] what one study has called a "war after the war." [96] In between these, there is also a spectrum of violence that is varying degrees of political, such as robberies meant to harass returning refugees or sporadic but targeted violence across ethnic lines. [97] The pursuit of negotiation is studied not because it is believed to be a desirable form of conflict termination, or because it is necessarily a form of conflict termination at all, but rather because the pursuit of negotiation is seen as a significant political act regardless of the outcome.

The time to negotiation pursuit is a useful aspect of this behavior to study for a

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[92] Berdal, *Building Peace After War*, 54.

[93] See Berdal, *Building Peace After War*, 50; and Small Arms Survey, Geneva, "Armed Violence in Burundi: Conflict and Post-Conflict Bujumbara," in *Small Arms Survey 2007: Guns and the City*, eds. Small Arms Survey Geneva (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 221.

[94] Political motivations seem limited here, but clearly politics remains significant. For a discussion, see: Berdal, *Building Peace After War*.

[95] Michael Boyle, "Explaining Strategic Violence after Wars," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 1 (2009), 211-212.

[96] Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War, 1936-1939* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2002), 423-425.

[97] For examples of both, Bosnia is a relevant case. See: Marcus Cox, "Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Limits of Liberal Imperialism," in *Building States to Build Peace*, eds. Charles Call and Vanessa Wyeth (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2008), 249-270.

number of reasons. Duration is well established as an object of study in the literature on armed conflict and for good reason. This metric has a number of advantages in the fact that it is one of the few which can be measured precisely in a variety of conflict settings, and captures useful information every time. It is also a measure of something that would likely be extremely important to parties of a conflict, which have other long-term goals and experience less uncertainty with a shortened time horizon. Furthermore, as will be outlined below, duration is somewhat counterintuitively a better indicator of endurance and the extent of fighting than other measures of rebel strength or conflict casualties.

On the surface, the number of days a conflict has worn on would seem like it is of less general interest than the amount of human destruction it has wrought. One might furthermore expect the parties to the conflict to be less concerned with the passing of time rather than the number of casualties of their own, their opponents, and the general population. However, there are a number of reasons for why, even if data problems could be overcome, the relationship between casualties and conflict decision making would mostly likely be anything but clear or consistent.

One could reasonably expect that casualties would be likely to act as an intervening variable between rebel characteristics and negotiation pursuit. However, the theoretical expectations for the effect of casualties on armed conflict diverge widely, so it is not necessarily clear what this relationship might be. [98] On the one hand, casualties tend to create a positive feedback loop. As grievances accumulate on each side, each party increasingly sees itself as victims.[99] A logic of retribution pushes them both to increased

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[98] Shanna Kirschner, *Trust and Fear in Civil Wars* (New York: Lexington Books, 2015), 3-4.

violence. [100] However, this could either make them more eager to negotiate out of fear, [101] or it could just make them more eager to keep fighting as each side starts to view their actions through the lens of punishment of the other side. [102] Alternatively, high casualty conflicts might simply be so draining that neither side has the resources and energy to continue, and negotiation becomes almost unavoidable.[103] It is likely that these various mechanisms might be in play across and even within conflicts at different stages, making this a very difficult relationship to study.

This is further complicated by extremely problematic data availability issues. Casualty data are notoriously difficult to collect and verify. Even relatively recent and well-documented conflict events may not have clear numbers. For example, even estimates from widely accepted sources on the Rwandan Genocide death toll have a range of nearly 500,000, in spite of that country's relatively recent census prior to the event. [104] The data on civil war casualties are often so poor that scholars do not risk attempting to include it in otherwise relevant datasets.[105] Even where numbers are

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[99] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars*.

[100] Marc Ross, *The Management of Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[101] Kirschner, *Trust and Fear in Civil Wars*, 4.

[102] Dean Pruitt and Paul Olczak, "Beyond Hope: Approaches to Resolving Seemingly Intractable Conflict," in *Conflict, Cooperation, and Justice*, eds. Bunker Barbara and Rubin Jeffrey (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 59-92.

[103] See Dylan Balch-Lindsay, Andrew Enterline, and Kyle Joyce, "Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process," *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 3 (2008): 345-363; and Fearon "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others," 275-301.

[104] For a discussion of the issues with casualty measurement, see: Marijke Verpoorten, "The Death Toll of the Rwandan Genocide: A Detailed Analysis for Gikongoro Province," *Population* 60, no. 4 (2005): 332.

available, major interpretive challenges remain regarding how stringently to set requirements for how directly related to the conflict the casualties must be.[106] Furthermore, there is strong reason to believe that perceptions of casualties matter much more than magnitude,[107] complicating this relationship further.

Even a closer study of only rebel casualties would likely still not necessarily tell a clear story about the endurance of rebel groups or the intensity of the conflict. Rebel groups in particular are difficult to study with usual metrics of strength or success. Troop size may be irrelevant to their ability to carry out attacks, and groups may be able to compensate for an inability to carry out large-scale attacks by using exceptional brutality or harnessing the horror of sheer randomness. [108] Furthermore, while people tend to imagine that rebel organizations would be cautious with the presumably few recruits they can muster and would thus be very resistant to casualties, empirically this has not been the case. Forced "recruiting"[109] of children allows even smaller groups to fill in their ranks under any circumstances, and these children are often considered so expendable that they are marched unarmed toward the enemy for the sole purpose of absorbing

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[105] Scott Gates, and Håvard Strand, "Modeling the Duration of Civil Wars: Measurement and Estimation Issues" (paper presented at the Joint Session of Workshops of the ECPR, Uppsala, 2004).

[106] Bethnay Lacina and Nils Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21, no. 3 (2005): 145-166.

[107] Johnson, *Failing to Win: Perceptions of Victory and Defeat in International Politics*.

[108] Though examples of this abound, the Lord's Resistance Army is especially known for this. See Bøås, "African Guerilla Politics: Raging Against the Machine?" 9-38.

[109] The term "recruiting" is used here very loosely. Many are simply abducted and even those that nominally give consent are under extreme duress and of an age where their ability to meaningfully do is questionable. See: Peter Singer, *Children at War* (New York: Partheon Books, 2005).

ammunition.[110] While rebel groups are certainly unlikely to be completely indifferent to casualties within their ranks, it is doubtful that they have an impact on decision making in a linear or predictable categorical fashion.

Time, on the other hand, is likely to matter with relative consistency across conflicts, due to the added risks associated with a longer time horizon. No rebel group or state is immune to this. Finally, although the levels may vary, wars are constantly creating some degree of human, material, political, and economic destruction across time. This cumulative destruction is very troubling, and as many new wars are breaking out, trends of termination and timing are especially important to understand.[111]

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[110] Singer, *Children at War*, 106-107.

[111] Havard Hegre, "The Duration and Termination of Civil Wars," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 243.

CHAPTER 4

HYPOTHESES

Introduction

A number of testable arguments can be derived from a theory that treats the organizational character of rebel groups as a driver of their conflict behavior. Clearly discernable patterns should emerge depending on the traits that dominate these organizations' identity. A cursory examination of contemporary rebel groups shows a number of prominent traits which recur in the narratives and activities of these organizations, including cultural identity claims, civilian political activities, resource extraction, and third-party ties. Gaining a better understanding of groups that possess these is an important exercise, regardless of whether this theory ultimately succeeds at helping to predict negotiation behavior.

This chapter will outline four key hypotheses on various subtypes of nonstate armed groups by developing an argument related to the nature of a trait and then drawing on the existing literature to present theoretical reasons that speak for and against it. Each subsection will then conclude with a more detailed description of the operationalization of the concept in the empirical section. The next chapter will describe the data and survival analysis method that will be used to test each hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Cultural Identity Groups

Identity-based conflict has in many ways come to dominate the contemporary political consciousness. While there is much debate about the actual role of identity in these conflicts, many groups that are framing their struggle in terms of the protection of a cultural group have come to the fore. While scholars and analysts may dispute the extent to which these groups' claims are accurate, the fact that a number of active nonstate armed groups have distinguished themselves by framing their struggle this way raises an interesting question about whether these groups are different. There are plenty of compelling reasons why groups which state their struggle as one of advancing or protecting a cultural, kinship or religious group would behave differently with regards to negotiation pursuit. Because these groups are likely to have an easier time inspiring and sustaining rebellion, and a harder time backing down from this position of revolt, we can posit *Hypothesis 1: Rebel groups which claim the defense or representation of a cultural identity group as a key purpose will negotiate later than groups which make no such claims.*

The first major reason to expect earlier negotiation from these groups relates to their ability to tap a relatively uncomplicated and sustainable source of group cohesion. Claiming to represent a group gives them a relatively uncomplicated narrative to draw on to unite their participants.[112] It will presumably also give them access the longer origin story and powerful symbols of the group they claim to represent. Drawing on existing groups gives them the benefit of the dense personal networks, powerful emotions, and

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[112] Francisco Sanin and Elisabeth Wood, "Ideology in Civil War: Instrumental Adoption and Beyond," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (2014): 213-226.

patterns of repeated interaction which cultural and kinship groups provide.[113] Empirically, ethnic groups especially have shown an enhanced power to mobilize. [114] Mobilization around this cause is also likely to be durable, as the grievances commonly experienced by cultural groups are likely to increase the group's solidarity as well as the cost tolerance of individual members.[115] The ability of these groups to effectively organize and build momentum may give them the strength to keep fighting and be effective enough that returning to nonviolent attempts to address their grievances, which probably failed them in the past, is a far less attractive option.

The power of cultural identity may go beyond just an increased ability to build and maintain these organizations, to directly affecting the types of activities these organizations choose. The concept of defending a broader cultural group may lead these organizations to pursue and feel justified in actions that transcend strategic logics of war and politics.[116] Ethnic groups in particular are likely to have deeper grievances against the central government,[117] and this feeling may inspire a sense of righteousness in costly action that fundamentally shifts the decision-making calculus on continuation of the conflict. A feeling of legitimacy and a narrative of representation may not only give these

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[113] This is a common theme in the literature on ethnicity and nationalism, but was very famously argued by Robert Putnam. See: Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[114] Elaine Denny and Barbara Walter, "Ethnicity and Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (2014): 199-212.

[115] Julian Wucherpfennig et al., "Ethnicity, the State, and the Duration of Civil War," *World Politics* 64, no. 1 (2012): 79.

[116] Sanin and Wood, "Ideology in Civil War: Instrumental Adoption and Beyond," 213-226.

[117] Denny and Walter, "Ethnicity and Civil War," 199-212.

groups the energy to keep fighting, but may also give them a belief not only in their cause but also in the righteousness of armed struggle itself.

Another powerful motivator for cultural identity-based nonstate armed groups especially to keep fighting is their somewhat unique vulnerability to retribution. For ethnic and other such groups, fears of broader postconflict punishment are likely to be sharpened because cultural makers would make targets easier to identify.[118] Furthermore, a rebel group which makes claims to representation may give the government enhanced justification for broader punishment, making the prospect of giving up the fighting a potentially existential question for not just the organization but also a greater swath of the population. While losing the struggle is obviously dangerous, laying down arms or showing a willingness to do so in the future by agreeing to talks could easily open up the broader group to punishment that leaves them in a potentially worse situation than the one that inspired the fighting.

A further reason why identity-based organizations are likely to choose fighting over talking is the difficulty of depoliticizing identity once this has occurred. While multiethnic societies may not be especially at risk of conflict, once ethnic fractionalization has a high salience, these societies do seem to be more at risk of war.[119] Once politics breaks down along ethnic lines, it is generally extremely hard to backtrack. The differences which form the basis of these groups are fundamental and inherited, making compromise a difficult sell.[120] Furthermore, groups which have utilized cultural

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[118] Kirschner, *Trust and Fear in Civil Wars,* 62.

[119] Tim Wegenast and Matthias Basedau, "Ethnic Fractionalization, Natural Resources and Armed Conflict," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 31, no. 4 (2014): 432-457.

identity to mobilize are likely to have a harder time credibly committing to negotiation due to the inflexibility of their chosen identification.[121] The challenge of walking back identity politics may keep these groups and their respective states away from the negotiation table due to the challenge of selling this strategy to their individual members, the broader group, and the other party, or simply due to pessimism about even pursuing it in the first place.

However, although a number of arguments suggest that these groups will pursue negotiation later, if at all, there are also a number of reasons why these groups might negotiate earlier instead. The first possibility is that these groups will have an increased imperative to negotiate sooner from heartfelt or instrumental loyalty to the local population. Some such organizations may have legitimate feelings of loyalty to the cultural groups they represent, making them experience losses in a way that makes them unwilling to see the suffering of the group prolonged with protracted conflict. Even if these groups have a high tolerance for casualties, they may also have a harder time demonstrating why an extremely long conflict is in the interest of the group they claim to represent. Organizations which claim this representation may also face a different kind of audience cost if they market themselves as having the interest of the group at heart while pursuing conflict over negotiation.

Another possibility is that these nonstate armed groups are likely to fight conflicts that are more formidable and the fear of losing and retribution will work the other way to push them to negotiate. There is some empirical evidence that rebels are less likely to win

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[120] Wucherpfennig et al., "Ethnicity, the State, and the Duration of Civil War," 79.

[121] Denny and Walter, "Ethnicity and Civil War," 199-212.

wars that break down along ethnic lines.[122] If these groups are less likely to win, and are able to calculate their chances of success with reasonable accuracy, they might choose negotiation knowing their high risk of defeat. If these groups fear retribution, it might also make sense for them to try to get themselves a favorable deal through peace talks and do so relatively early so it is harder for the government to use a long list of crimes to deny them. Furthermore, these groups might have a stronger incentive to purse negotiation so that they can negotiate for the long-term safety of their group in the agreement. In addition to securing favorable terms, negotiating a formal peace agreement may involve the international community, whose attention to an ongoing peace process may give their representative group further security against government vengeance.

There are a number of reasons why testing the effects of cultural identity at the organizational level may answer many questions which the conflict level has left unclear. Early work would often classify conflicts as ethnic and nonethnic,[123] which essentially overlooked the existence of nonethnically organized rebel groups in these conflicts. Taking a closer look at the groups will get closer to measuring the salience of ethnicity in politics, rather than making the mistake of assuming that its presence is significant,[124] and taking the important step of studying how ethnicity is actually built into politics.[125]

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[122] Karl DeRouen Jr. and David Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome," Journal of Peace Research 41, no. 3 (2004): 303-320.

[123] See for example, Kirschner, *Trust and Fear in Civil Wars*, 36.

[124] Wegenast and Basedau, "Ethnic Fractionalization, Natural Resources and Armed Conflict," 432-457.

[125] Wucherpfennig et al., "Ethnicity, the State, and the Duration of Civil War," 79.

The concept of cultural identity group representativeness will be operationalized as existing in groups that define both themselves and a dominant portion of their cause in terms of the cultural representation of one or multiple explicitly articulated cultural groups.[126] Most of the groups studied here do so in terms of an ethnic group, but organizations which represent a religious group are also included. Organizations which fight for an ethnonationalist cause are also included, while civic nationalist organizations which fight for the goal of a nonethnic based secular state are not. Such groups would not be expected to have access to the same mechanisms outlined above.

Groups were coded dichotomously for this characteristic, based on whether representation was an explicit tenet of their political program. The organization was coded according to their representation of their cause, even in cases where scholars have argued otherwise. Heavily recruiting from a single ethnicity or cultural group was insufficient for positive coding unless they explicitly articulated this as part of their strategy and purpose. Furthermore, even if the conflict had largely broken down along religious, ethnic, or racial lines, groups were not assumed to be structured this way by default or by proclamation of their opponents. Finally, the definition of cultural identity-based groups was fairly wide. As long as the group had a clear narrative of shared culture and either a notion of implied kinship or of shared religion, it was included. Subethnic groups that met these criteria, such as tribes or clans, were not excluded.

The coding was done dichotomously. No attempt was made to deem the

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[126] A differentiation is made for organizations fighting for multiple, named ethnic/religious/cultural groups versus those organizations which are fighting for ethnic plurality as a general principle. Organizations fighting generally for a multiethnic state are not seen to be defending a specific group or set of groups, and indeed many of these groups make statements indicating that they actively reject sectarian politics.

authenticity or extent of the affiliation. Many groups listed this as one of many motives, often in a way that would make it extremely challenging to divorce it from their other political goals. The purpose was to capture the groups which included this as a major objective rather than to make any determination about whether the organization had the true interests of the group at heart.

A minimum of two sources were used to code each case. These sources were typically secondary, but were supplemented with primary sources when possible. A small number of cases had to be dropped from the study due to ambiguity about their motives and/or a lack of available information. This included the Popular Front for National Resistance because almost no information on their political platform was available. Another group which had to be excluded was the Union of Resistance Forces in Chad. This organization was the only studied group that was such a loose coalition of various smaller groups that it was impossible to discern any sort of unifying organizational character.

Hypothesis 2: Civilian Political Efforts

Another notable way in which nonstate armed groups differ from each other is the extent to which they engage in nonmilitary political activity. While all the groups studied here at least nominally articulate some kind of political goal, some organizations dedicate resources to directly organizing this cause by building a political wing into their organization. While it is obviously far from unheard of that a military group or individual takes over ruling a country after civil war, organizations which have formed a political wing before or during the fighting are expected to behave somewhat differently than

those which essentially limit themselves to military activity. Such organizations are expected to not only potentially see but also be actively working towards a role for themselves as a political organization in postwar politics. The undertaking of activities that are at least loosely related to the provision of public goods is also expected to change the time horizon for these groups, put them in different kind of relationship with the local population, and potentially also lead them to recruit and retain a different type of participant. These groups are likely to be more ambitious and capable when it comes to political organization broadly, and more aware of the costs of pursuing deadly conflict resolution strategies among a population they hope to participate in the governance of. The formation of a political wing thus leads us to expect these groups to think of themselves as a more complex political organization that is likely to be more capable, willing, and drawn to negotiation. Thus we can formulate the following *Hypothesis 2: Rebel groups which have a political wing or established ties to a civilian political organization will negotiate earlier than organizations which do not.*

The first major reason why groups with a political wing or strong ties to an existing political organization would be expected to negotiate earlier is due to their presumed anticipation of needing some loyalty for a ruling bargain. Even extremely repressive authoritarian regimes do not rule by oppression alone.[127] Regardless of the political system the group envisions, some minimal cooperation from at least part of the local population will likely be important to these groups. Pursuing a strategy of endless war is unlikely to win the group friends, and thus we would expect these organizations to

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[127] Raj M. Desai, Anders Olofsgard, and Tarik Yousef, "The Logic of Authoritarian Bargains," *Economics and Politics* 21, no. 1 (2009): 93-125.

be sure to express some desire to pursue negotiations, no matter how shallow.

First, reducing the time of the conflict the local population experiences by negotiating is likely to be a popular policy because of the direct costs the population is spared. There are also likely to be high audience costs to a rebel group that is seen to be drawing out civil conflict longer than absolutely necessary. It is also probable that negotiation is a way for these groups to demonstrate their viability as postwar civilian politicians by showing competence in nonviolent conflict resolution and rapid problem solving. Finally, pursuing negotiation probably would also help these groups to underline their legitimacy as political players during the war, making it harder for the central government to dismiss them as mere criminals or bandits. Rebel groups with political wings are likely to be more sensitive to all three of these advantages due to their motivations and the more immediate time frame for their political activities.

In addition to the various domestic audience cost logics outlined above, groups with a political wing are expected to also negotiate sooner to win the approval of parties outside the conflict. Groups which have a political wing are likely to desire a major role for their organization within the political process. Whether they seek to control the entire state, or seize territory to form their own, they are likely to be seeking some degree of legitimacy in the eyes of the outside world. There is clear evidence that rebel groups are sensitive to international audience costs,[128] and any group which aspires to external sovereignty or at least some measure of respect is likely to pursue negotiation earlier to make them seem like a reasonable party to the conflict, and avoid looking like they are

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[128] Hyrean Jo, *Compliant Rebels: Rebel Groups and International Law in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

extending it more than is necessary for personal gain.

In addition to the need for domestic and international legitimacy, it is possible that nonstate armed groups that have a political wing have somewhat higher levels of integrative complexity than those that do not. First, groups that form a political and military wing are probably already more predisposed to seeing the conflict issues as more complex because they have recognized the need for a multifaceted solution. Such groups are likely to further draw in individual members with higher personal integrative complexity, as the groups' nuanced picture of the conflict attracts similarly minded people. The differentiation of roles within the organization may also help this, as the variety of positions and the different perspectives that come with them can mitigate myopia in decision-making.

Higher integrative complexity is expected to make these groups more likely to pursue negotiation than those that view or at least have organized themselves militarily. Higher integrative complexity is associated with a complex but generally positive relationship with the peaceful resolution for crises at the interstate level,[129] and a similar effect is expected for nonstate armed groups that have established a political wing.

However, it is also perfectly possible that the organizations which form such wings are less likely to pursue negotiation on account of their own advanced ambitions or the conflicts that they find themselves in. While theory tells us that identity-based

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[129] See: Theodore Raphael, "Integrative Complexity Theory and Forecasting International Crises: Berlin 1946-1962," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 26, no. 3 (1982): 423-450; Peter Suedfeld and Phillip Tetlock, "War, Peace, and Integrative Complexity: UN Speeches on the Middle East Problem, 1947-1976," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 21, no. 3 (1977): 427-442; and David Winter, "The Role of Motivation, Responsibility, and Integrative Complexity in Crisis Escalation: Comparative Studies of War and Peace Crises," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no 5. (2007): 920-937.

conflicts should be harder to resolve than those about other political issues, the findings are decidedly mixed.[130] It is possible that groups where broader political issues are at stake are likely to face especially troublesome conflicts or be fighting for greater political change since they saw the need to organize in this way. Furthermore, the groups which have the resources to devote to civilian politics may be generally more ambitious, and thus also more committed to fighting their cause through to the end. Having the resources to delegate to broader functions may be indicative of a broader competence, suggesting that they may have a better chance of just winning outright and will thus delay negotiation. Furthermore, the fact that they are organizing themselves as a more solid political alternative to the status quo may make them less willing to work within any confines of the existing system or with existing players, generally both prerequisites to negotiation.

The civilian political ambitions of these groups is operationalized here to include only groups which have established a political wing or set up strong, unambiguous ties to an existing civilian political organization. While this has the slight drawback of lumping groups that would establish a political wing if they could with those that have no interest,[131] having some sort of material indicator of the organizational character is important for two reasons. The first reason is that many of the proposed causal

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[130] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 629.

[131] Also unfortunate, but unavoidable here is the possibility that some rebel groups have a political wing but it is so secretive that they leave behind no trace. For most groups studied here, there is a decent amount of information from multiple sources which hopefully indicates that these groups from past conflicts are well studied enough that this is unlikely, but unfortunately it cannot be ruled out.

mechanisms hinge on changes in the behavior resulting from the processes generated by the actual activities the group undertakes.

The second main reason is that there are clear instances of groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, the Revolutionary United Front, and the Mai Mai, which articulate political goals but make abundantly clear through their actions that they have no intent of seizing the state or ruling the territory they control in any meaningful political way.[132] The extent of the gap between these groups' nominal political goals and the realty of their organization cannot be overstated. While the Lord's Resistance Army puts out manifestos and detailed agendas,[133] most experts agree that any political goals this organization has exist purely on paper.[134] Every group studied here sees themselves as important for civilian politics, and articulates some political vision, but the important operation here is separating out the groups that actively pursue this during the conflict from those that do not.

This does not suggest that groups without a political wing are totally apolitical. Indeed, the political vision of groups may simply be inextricably militarized or otherwise extremely outside of the hegemonic political order of today, with one observer noting that even rebel groups committed to roaming through the bush "engage in producing an alternative world based on narratives of betrayal and exile reinforced the by their

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[132] Bøås, "African Guerilla Politics: Raging Against the Machine?" 23-24.

[133] Sverker Finnstrom, *Living with Bad Surroundings: War, History, and Everyday Moments in the Northern Uganda* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

[134] See International Crisis Group, "Northern Uganda: Understanding and Solving the Conflict," *ICG Africa Report* No. 77 (2004); and Frank van Acker, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered," *African Affairs* 103, no. 412 (2004): 335-357.

existence in such an enclave formation."[135] This is another reason why the more limited operationalization here is useful, because it limits the variable to groups with a relatively comparable form of political vision and organization in the sense of fitting enough within mainstream politics to be recognizable as such.

Groups are coded as having a political wing if they have a differentiated set of roles within the organization for some sort of civilian political agenda or if they have established, unambiguous ties to an existing political organization. These roles may be filled by military personnel, however the functions of the role must be distinct. This variable is coded dichotomously to indicate whether the wing or ties were present during the majority of the fighting. There was no judgement made as to the effectiveness of the political wing, nor to its size. The data used in this variable were taken directly from the coding in "Non-State Actor Data" of Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (v-2013).[136]

Hypothesis 3: Lootable and Outside Resources

A third major factor in the organizational character of a rebel group is based on their financing. The funding aspect of rebel organizations and civil war more broadly are well established as important factors in the literature on modern conflict. The availability of certain funding sources, especially in the form of lootable resources or outside

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[135]Morten Bøås, "Marginalized Youth" in *African Guerillas: Raging Against the Machine*, eds. Morten Bøås and Kevin Dunn (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 42. See also: Morten Bøås, "Africa's Young Guerillas: Rebels with a Cause?" *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs* 103, no. 673 (2004): 212.

[136] David Cunningham, Kristian Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, "Non-State Actor Data," (2013), accessed May 2, 2016, http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/eacd.html.

assistance, is known to affect rebel conflict decision making and behavior.[137] While there are some reasons for groups with access to lootable resources or outside support to negotiate sooner, theoretical expectations weigh heavily in favor of these organizations negotiating later in the conflict. These groups are expected to have an easier time organizing a sustained campaign, have multiple incentives to avoid ending the conflict at all, and be less concerned with the material and human costs incurred by lengthy fighting. Thus, we can formulate the following *Hypothesis 3: Rebel groups that receive support from an outside party and/or are fighting in a conflict area with lootable resources are likely to negotiate later in the conflict than groups that do not.*

The first major set of reasons why these groups are expected to negotiate later is the strengthening effects of these resources on fighting and recruiting. Having access to these reliable resources is likely to comparatively extend the abilities of the group due to their increased ability to purchase weapons and supplies. Furthermore, it is expected to improve their recruitment, as financial gain offers an uncomplicated argument for joining the movement,[138] and one that is likely to hold out in the face of considerable risk on the battlefield, unlike ideas or other intrinsic motivations.[139] In addition to this rather direct transactional effect on the rebel groups' strength, there is evidence that resources can

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[137] See: Paul Collier, "Rebellion as a Quasi-Criminal Activity," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 1 (2000): 839-853; Fearon, "Why do some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others," 275-301; Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 175-190; Michael Ross, "What do we know about Natural Resources and Civil War?," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 337-365; and Michael Ross, "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9, (2006): 265-300.

[138] Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 6-7.

[139] Mueller, *The Remnants of War*, 5-19.

magnify the effects of social cleavages, resulting in more conflictual politics.[140] This magnification, whether related to feelings of relative deprivation or other indirect effects, could also make it easier to find and maintain recruits. A group which is thus able to mount a powerful challenge to the government and also sustain this is expected to be less drawn to the negotiation table.

This may build into a second scenario, where the availability of resources for extraction gives the war an essentially new purpose of resource accumulation. Personal economic gains may be strong enough to motivate these organizations to continue fighting or even pursue new conflicts. [141] Even organizations that began fighting with political intent may essentially abandon it and pursue the control of territory and population with economic rather than political or even military gains in mind.[142] In this scenario, it is possible that not even victory, but rather continuation of the conflict becomes the goal in order to protect and further entrench conflict-based profit structures.[143]

This resource accumulation may also introduce another motivation for continuing the conflict, beyond pure profit. The high likelihood of illegal activity associated with the

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[140] Wegenast and Basedau, "Ethnic Fractionalization, Natural Resources and Armed Conflict." 432-457.

[141] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," Research Working Paper 2355 (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2000), 26-27.

[142] Cynthia Arnson, "The Political Economy of War: Situating the Debate," *in Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed*, eds. Cynthia Arnson and I. William Zartman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 2005), 4.

[143] David Keen, "Incentives and Disincentives for Violence," in *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, eds. Mats Berdal and David Malone (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

profit generating activities nonstate armed groups introduces a new logic of conflict extension in the fear of prosecution.[144] This is expected to encourage nonstate armed groups to keep fighting and avoid any kind of termination, even if the profit motive wanes.

Finally, a third possibility for why these groups are expected to put off negotiation is their diminished concern with audience costs. Domestically, groups with outside or lootable resources are likely to be relatively unconcerned with the continuing civilian casualties that come with protracted war, because they do not rely on the support of the local population.[145] Furthermore, the support from a third party during the war suggests that the outside party does not categorically object to the rebels' choice of violent political strategy. While continuing to wage war and refusing to negotiate may gain them the opprobrium of the wider international community, with one or a few strong supporters on the outside, rebels may be unfazed and their supporters unconcerned.

Although there are a number of clear causal mechanisms to explain these groups' pursuit of continued conflict, there are some possible reasons why this effect may be weak or even go in the opposite direction. First, many scholars have argued that the idea of rebellion devolving into a purely economic enterprise is overly simplistic or downright inaccurate. Many argue that economic explanations for insurgency tend to be overly unidimensional and massively understate the continued political nature of these groups.[146] Some question the utility of trying to separate out economic motives from the

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[144] Mueller, *The Remnants of War*, 22.

[145] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence.*

[146] Bøås, "African Guerilla Politics: Raging Against the Machine?" 9-38.

political struggle they are intertwined in,[147] suggesting that even in resource rich environments, powerful drivers for negotiation may persist.

Furthermore, it is possible that the criminal activities and resource accumulation might push such organizations to negotiate sooner in an attempt to secure some type of amnesty. Many well-known conflict peace agreements, such as the Lomé Agreement, [148] include clauses that give rebels access to a less punitive form of justice or outright immunity from prosecution. Rather than prolonging the conflict, rebel groups who have been engaging in looting or using outside resources to wage war may be especially interested in negotiating relatively early in the conflict while they have a good amount of bargaining power in order to secure legal protection.

While earlier studies were forced to measure this at the conflict level, often even relying on proxies measures for outside assistance such as whether the Cold War was ongoing or not,[149] data about outside assistance are now available at the group level. Furthermore, thanks to the research of Pävi Lujala, data on lootable resources are much more fine-grained, reflecting the availability of lootable resources such as hydrocarbon, diamonds, oil, and natural gas reserves not only nationwide, but within the specific area of conflict.[150] The latter provides a much better sense of whether rebels actually have the possibility of seizing the resources, moving the operationalization much closer to the

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[147] See Mats Berdal, "How 'New' are 'New Wars'? Global Economic Change and the Study of Civil War," *Global Governance* 9, no. 4 (2003).

[148] Berdal, *Building Peace After War*, 35.

[149] Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars.*

[150] Pävi Lujala, "The Spoils of Nature: Armed Civil Conflict and Rebel Access to Natural Resources," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 1 (2010): 15-28.

targeted concept.

This variable was coded dichotomously to indicate whether or not the group was receiving assistance from a third party and/or fighting in an area of the country with lootable natural resources. For the former, the coding is taken directly from the Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salyehyan "Non-State Actor Data" (v-2013).[151] For the handful of instances where a group was only strongly suspected of having received outside aid from a known party, this was coded as a positive case. It is assumed that if there were strong enough suspicions of ties to this group, that there was likely to be either an existing relationship, or one which rebels could count on activating in the future if they needed it. The data for the lootable resources variable are created from the information in a Lujala replication set,[152] combing the information he provides on each resource and conflict episode into a single dichotomous indicator for each case.

While this operationalization has the benefit of studying resource availability far more directly than a conflict-level measure would, there are some limitations. As with the political wing, some groups may have had a very strong incentive to keep any outside sponsorship a secret. Furthermore, with the lootable resource variable, due to the lack of available data, there is no way to differentiate between groups which took advantage of the lootable resources from those that did not. Even among groups which did take advantage of the resources, there was presumably some variation in their effectiveness at doing so. However, in his research of armed conflict intensity, Lujala does find that with

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[151] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "Non-State Actor Data."

[152] Lujala, "The Spoils of Nature: Armed Civil Conflict and Rebel Access to Natural Resources," 15-28.

at least some of the major natural resources, their sheer existence in the region did impact conflict intensity, regardless of whether they were extracted or not.[153] Thus, it is hoped that this particular limitation on the data is not too grave.

Hypothesis 4: External Linkage

Organizations which have strong support connections to the outside world may also be different for reasons beyond the direct transfer of resources. Having the backing of an outside group, even if the actual impacts on group strength are minimal, may serve to reduce uncertainty for the rebel groups, thus encouraging them to keep fighting. Having at least one partner across the border, plus the probable increased international attention which comes with this, is likely to protect the rebels from the risk of a policy of total annihilation postconflict. In addition to somewhat reducing risk for the rebels, having outside support may also delay negotiation by complicating the situation with the addition of another potential veto player, and one that is likely to have a strong grudge against the state considering the cost and risk of retaliation incurred by backing a rebel movement.[154] This possibility of outside connections being important regardless of the resources can be tested by seeing if having an outside backer matters even with a statistical control for the strength of the rebel group. We can formulate the following *Hypothesis 4: Rebel groups which receive support from an outside party later negotiate*

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[153] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "Non-State Actor Data."

[154] There are numerous instances of states backing an insurgency in another state in retaliation for that state having done the same. See for example the Mengitsu Regime's involvement in backing the SPLA/SPLM in the Second Sudanese War in retaliation for the Khartoum government's backing Eritrean separatists. See Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 358.

in the conflict than groups which do not.

The intervention of a third party on behalf of one or more parties in a civil war is an extremely common phenomenon, [155] and one that seems particularly important for the conflict's duration[156] and prospects for ultimate termination through settlement. [157] This indicates that there is a good chance that outside support will also affect the initial pursuit of negotiation, especially by the rebel groups. As these groups are typically smaller and more fragile than the state, they will likely be especially sensitive to the reduction in uncertainty that comes with outside backing. Even if material support during the war is minimal, having this as a possibility may make these groups more confident in continuing to fight despite setbacks and uncertainty.

The existence of an outside backer to the rebel groups may also delay negotiation pursuit due to the addition of a veto player. This can be especially problematic for the prospects of peace because it is likely that this third party has a reduced incentive to see the conflict negotiated as it is probably not paying much of the direct costs of the ongoing war.[158] Settlement may be less likely to succeed due to this additional complication, and

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[155] Idean Salehyan, Kristian Gelditsch, and David Cunningham, "Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups," *International Organization* 65, no. 4 (2011): 709-744.

[156] See: Patrick Regan, "Third Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 55-73; and Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom, "On the Duration of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no.3 (2004): 253-273.

[157] DeRouen Jr. and Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 303-320.

[158] Although it is possible that this might change with increased spillover effects with growing globalization, existing literature suggests this is still an important factor. See: Cunningham, "Blocking Resolution: How External States can Prolong Civil Wars," 115-127.

thus be less likely to be pursued out of cynicism. [159]

However, there are certainly counterarguments that would suggest that the presence of a third party could facilitate earlier negotiation. One straightforward possibility is that this party could actually assist the negotiation process by serving or helping to secure a mediator.[160] There is also the potential for the decreased uncertainty the rebel group faces with outside support to push it toward earlier negotiation. Having an outsider backer might make the rebel group less worried about the government reneging on a peace agreement, thus reducing or avoiding a major commitment problem. This is both because the outside party could serve as a guarantor, and in some cases, because internationalized conflicts may attract more international attention, putting pressure on the state to comply with the agreement. Furthermore, as others have argued, in the pursuit of negotiation, nonstate armed groups are likely to be concerned with not only the probability of a return to war but also with the relative costs associated with it.[161] In addition to potentially reducing the probability of the outcome, an outside backer may reduce rebel concerns that in the event of the peace deal collapsing, the rebels will pay the vast majority of the costs.

Another possibility is that connections to an outside backer could alternatively serve as a type of linkage[162] to encourage rebels to negotiate sooner in order to send a

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[159] Cunningham, "Blocking Resolution: How External States can Prolong Civil Wars," 115-127.

[160] J. Michael Greig, and Patrick Regan, ''When Do They Say Yes? An Analysis of the Willingness to Offer and Accept Mediation in Civil Wars.'' *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (2008): 759-81.

[161] Kirschner, *Trust and Fear in Civil Wars*, 4.

positive signal to the rest of the world about themselves, to protect the reputation of their partner, or to adhere more closely to the norms their partner follows. Rebel groups do seem to be sensitive to issues of reputation, and there is strong evidence that they may shift their behavior away from militarily strategic[163] but widely condemned practices such as child soldiering as a result.[164]

The potential theoretical arguments outlined above suggest that it is particularly important not only to study whether a third party has gotten involved in the conflict generally, but also whether a specific nonstate armed group has been a direct beneficiary. Studies of conflict duration overall have shown that military interventions on the side of the rebels may lead to faster conflict termination, [165] suggesting that rebel group assistance may have a similar effect, especially with regards to negotiation pursuit. Thus, the operationalization of third party assistance is based on a binary variable constructed from the information in Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (v-2013) that indicates whether a group was known or strongly suspected to have received assistance from a third party to the conflict.

For the testing of this hypothesis, a statistical control for rebel strength will be introduced into the model. This is meant to test whether the availability of outside

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[162] This concept is loosely adopted from Steven Levitsky and Lucian Way's concept of linkage versus leverage with regards to the role of international ties and regime change. See: Steven Levitsky and Lucian Way, "Linkage versus Leverage: Rethinking the International Dimension of Regime Change," *Comparative Politics* 38, no. 4 (2006): 379-400.

[163] Roos Haer, "The Impact of Child Soldiers on Rebel Groups' Fighting Capacities," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33, no. 2 (2016): 153-173.

[164] Jo, *Compliant Rebels: Rebel Groups and International Law in World Politics*.

[165] Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom, "On the Duration of Civil War," 253-273.

support matters for reasons beyond the material facilitation of the rebel movement, which is assumed to be captured in the resultant strength of the rebel movement.

Rebel strength is defined for this study as a nonstate armed group's ability "effectively engage the army militarily and win major battles, posing a credible challenge to the state" and the coding is adopted directly from the dataset by Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (v-2013). It is coded on a five point categorical scale, indicating whether the groups are much weaker, weaker, near parity, stronger or much stronger than the state. This combined measure has the advantage of considering context and taking multiple pathways to success into account, as opposed to relying on a single metric such as troop size or territory controlled to indicate the groups' success.[166]

[166] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 581.

CHAPTER 5

DATA AND METHOD

Method and Approach

In order to assess the potential relationship between the variables outlined above and the timing of initial negotiation pursuit, a method that models the effects of covariates on duration is needed. Survival analysis offers this opportunity by accounting for time variant and invariant factors. Modelling at the organizational level allows us to study how susceptible or resistant to negotiation various groups are over time.

However, in the selection of a method, there is a need to consider that there are not just the two possibilities that the conflict either ends with negotiation or continues. Victory or defeat are an obvious competing risk that these organizations face. Competing risks survival analysis can model this phenomenon with these alternatives in mind. This offers a clear advantage over other types of survival analysis, which assume that censoring, in this case usually nonterminated conflicts continuing past the observed period, is independent.[167] Assuming that conflicts that continued past the end of the analysis are representative of the others in the broader risk set is problematic, as many of

[167] Marlies Noordzij et al., "When do we need competing risks methods for survival analysis in nephrology?" *Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation* (2013), Accessed March 4, 2016, http://ndt.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/08/23/ndt.gft355.full#cited-by.

these are likely to be unique conflicts that last an abnormally long amount of time.

The phenomenon studied here fits neatly into competing risks analysis because, while some conflicts may ultimately experience negotiation and victory, only one of these can come first and there are clear multiple pathways out of the risk set. The semiparametric competing risks regression model developed by Jason Fine and Robert Gray (1999)[168] allows for the modelling of an overall cumulative incidence function that corresponds directly with the specific subhazard of the event of interest and is believed to be the best choice for meeting all these criteria.

Data and Sources

The hypotheses proposed above will be tested using a dataset that builds upon a combination of data from existing civil war, nonstate armed group and conflict termination datasets with further secondary and primary source research. The set of actors examined is taken from Cunningham, Gledisch and Salehyan's "Non-State Actor Data" (v-2013), which contains a list of all nonstate armed groups known to have participated in civil wars during 1946-2011. In order to construct the dependent variable for each case, information from the UCDP/Prio Armed Conflict Dataset (v.2-2015),[169] the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset (v.2-2015),[170] and the UCDP Peace Agreement

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[168] Jason Fine and Robert Gray, "A Proportional Hazards Model for the Subdistribution of a Competing Risk," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 94, no. 446 (1999): 496-509.

[169] Therése Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946-2014," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 4 (2015): 536-550.

[170] Kreutz "How and When Armed Conflicts End: Introducing the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset," 243-250.

Dataset (v.2-2015) [171] was combined with online archival research in the United Nations Peacemaker Peace Agreements Database[172] and the occasional use of reference sources.[173]

In order to construct the dependent variable of cultural identity representation, secondary sources including history books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and encyclopedias were consulted. [174] The case notes on the nonstate armed groups in the Cunngham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan dataset were also referred to in order to verify consistency.[175] For the political wing binary variable and outside support for the rebel

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[171] Högbladh, "Peace Agreements 1975-2011 - Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset."

[172] United Nations Peacemaker, "Peace Agreements Database Search," Accessed May 31, 2016, http://peacemaker.un.org/document-search.

[173] This included various articles in *Encyclopedia Britannica 2015*; Gordon Martel, *Twentieth Century War and Conflict: A Concise Encyclopedia*, (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2015); Nigel Young, The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Lester Kurtz, Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict, (Burlington: Elsevier Science, 2008); and Arnold Guy, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1999).

[174] Reference sources included various articles in *Encyclopedia Britannica 2015*; Gordon Martel, *Twentieth Century War and Conflict: A Concise Encyclopedia*, (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2015); Nigel Young, The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Lester Kurtz, Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict, (Burlington: Elsevier Science, 2008); Arnold Guy, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1999); and the Central Intelligence Agency, *The CIA World Factbook 2015*, (New York: Skyhourse Publishing, 2015). Secondary sources included: J.D. Fage and William Tordoff, *A History of Africa* (London: Routledge, 2002); Linda Heywood, "Unita and Ethnic Nationalism in Angola," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 27, no.1 (1989):47-66; Mehran Kamvara, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History Since the First World War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 20011); Diana Kapieki and Alexander Kazan, *Encyclopedia of Latin American Politics* (London: Oryx Press, 2002); Theresa Meade, *A History of Modern Latin America: 1800 to the Present* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2016); Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*; Robert Scheina, Latin America's Wars, Vol. II, (Washington D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003); Svatopluk Soucek, A *History of Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Shelby Tucker, *Burma: The Curse of Independence* (London: Pluto Press, 2001).

group, the coding and data were adopted directly from Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (v-2013). The data on lootable resources was taken from replication data made available for Lujala's article, "The Spoils of Nature: Armed Civil Conflict and Rebel Access to Natural Resources" (2010).[176]

[175] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "Non-State Actor Data."

[176] Lujala, "The Spoils of Nature: Armed Civil Conflict and Rebel Access to Natural Resources," 15-28.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and General Trends

In order to test the hypotheses above, data analysis was conducted with information on the actions of the militarily active nonstate armed groups in 565 conflict episode dyads between 1946 and 2011.[177] As summarized in Table 1, among this population of organizations, there was a great deal of variation in their values in the independent variables.

Despite the seeming salience of ethnic conflict during this period, over half of the groups studied did not frame their purpose in terms of the protection or interests of a subnational cultural kinship or religious identity group. In terms of civilian political activities, groups with a political wing or political ties were slightly more common than strictly military organizations, but the distribution was still relatively close to even between them.

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[177] The following nine rebel groups included in the dataset by Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (2013) had to be dropped from the data analysis due to missing data on one or more key variables: Popular Front (Burkina Faso, 10/85); Sudan Liberation Movement (Ethiopia, 4/83-12/83); Kuki National Front (India, 7/97-12/91); Amal (Lebanon, 1/83-12/83) Ejercito Popular Revlucionaria (Mexico,6/96-12/96) Kachin Independence Organization (Myanmar, 1/61-12/92) PNDF Myanmar (11/49-4/50), Shan State Army South (Myanmar, 1/96-12/11) Democratic Revivial Front (Niger, 7/95-12/95).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Independent Variables.

	Count	Percent
Cultural Identity Group		
Identity Group	271	48.1%
Nonidentity Group	293	51.9%
Political Wing or Ties		
Political Wing or Ties	320	56.7%
Strictly Military	244	43.26%
Resources/Support		
Outside Support	255	45.2%
Lootable Resources	412	73.1%
Neither	85	15.01%

Source Information: Data compiled from sources listed in footnote 175, pg. 70.

Just under half of the rebel groups studied were receiving support from a third party. A strong majority of groups had access to lootable resources. Only 15% of the rebel groups studied were operating without the support of either.

In terms of their behavior related to negotiation, there was a fair amount of variation. Episode duration to negotiation or termination varied from zero to 15,461 days. Even extremely lengthy wars did not preclude the pursuit of negotiation, with several instances of conflict episodes having fighting that lasted well over 10,000 days before any kind of negotiation was pursued. In 263 of 564 of the studied episodes, the rebel group did pursue negotiation before any other form of conflict termination was reached.

Competing Risks Survival Analysis Results

The same data was run through three models, the results of which are summarized in Table 2. Model 1, the most basic model, included the binary variables of cultural identity representation, political wings or ties, and outside support. Model 2 included the same plus a categorical variable representing the relative strength of the rebels. This statistical control may help identify how ideas about the purpose of the struggle may have an effect on negotiation behavior that goes beyond mere strategic calculation. It could also highlight how cultural identification and a political wing that might go beyond merely enhancing the rebel group's ability to materially strengthen their movement.

Finally, Model 3 zeros in on the effect of the studied variables relative to resource accumulation through looting and outside support.[178] This can help shed more light on the

[178] This model does not control for relative strength of the rebels, with the assumption that much of the effect of natural resources is based in the strength of the rebel movement.

Table 2

Competing Risks Regression Results, Models 1-3.

	Subhazard Ratio	Robust Standard Error	Z	p>|z|
Model 1 (Base Model)				
Cultural Identity	1.352*	0.196	2.080	0.037
Political Wing	0.852	0.121	0.261	0.261
Outside Support	1.400*	0.198	0.017	0.017
Model 2 (Base Model with Control for Rebel Strength)				
Cultural Identity	1.598*	0.240	3.120	0.002
Political Wing	0.910	0.132	-0.650	0.518
Outside Support	1.390*	0.202	2.270	0.023
Model 3 (Resources Model)				
Cultural Identity	1.303	0.187	1.84	0.065
Political Wing	0.907	0.129	-0.690	0.490
Resources (Outside and/or Lootable)	0.592*	0.100	-3.10	0.002

Source Information: Data compiled from sources listed in footnote 174, pg. 79. Note: The Wald Chi^2 probability for each of the three models was<0.02 | * indicates a p<0.05

relative importance of resources in this calculation, and also raises interesting questions for further research about the importance of organizational character relative to material processes.

The first thing the data analysis has made apparent is that no clear conclusion can be drawn about the role of a political wing or strong ties to one in the timing of negotiation pursuit. While the data here suggest a modest positive effect on the propensity for earlier negotiation, unfortunately the test statistic for the estimated subhazard ratio is very far from being statistically significant. Thus, no definitive conclusion can be drawn about the second hypothesis that nonstate armed groups which are organized without a political wing or strong political ties will negotiate later. It is possible that there is a relationship that is too nuanced to be captured in this type of model, or that the binary data are insufficient for the targeted concept of civilian political activity.

In contrast to this, a modest amount of evidence is found relating to each of the other hypotheses, although not necessarily in confirmation of them. Based on the estimated subhazard ratio, nonstate armed groups having a cultural identity organizational character is associated with a higher incidence of negotiation pursuit. The divergence in these groups' cumulative incidence functions becomes more pronounced as the analysis time is extended, as depicted in the graphed cumulative incidence functions in Figure 1.

There are a number of reasons why these groups might be drawn to earlier negotiation. It is possible that their ability to draw on cultural connections to mount a strong resistance may give them more confidence in their ability to demand concessions.

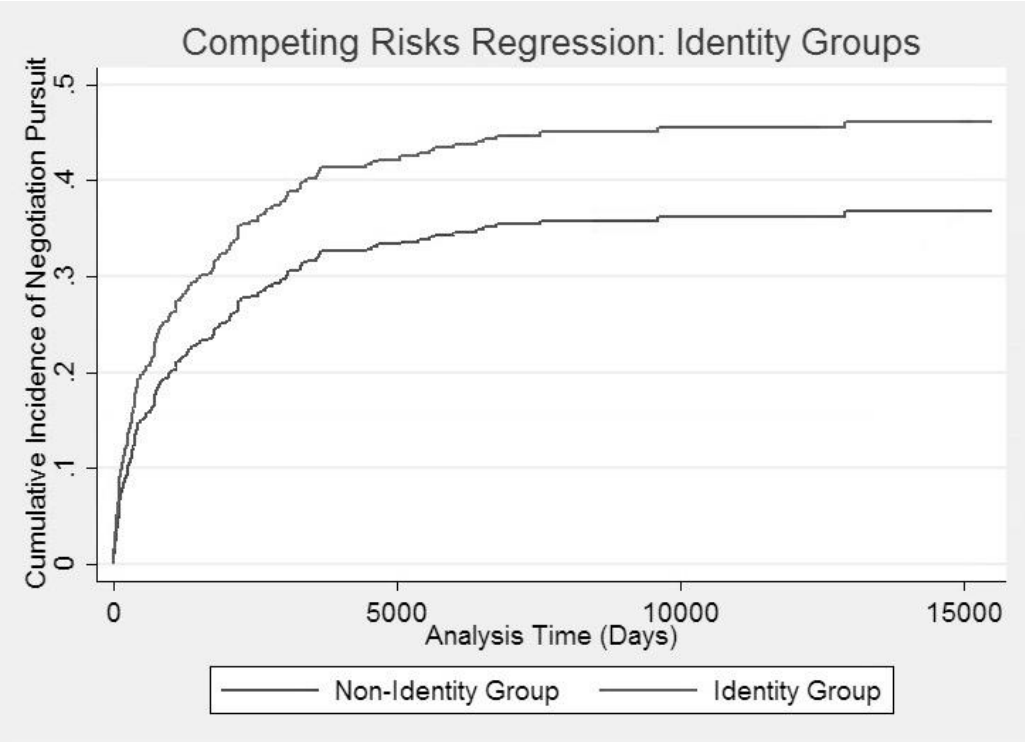

Figure 1: Model 2 Cumulative incidence functions for cultural kinship or religious identity and nonidentity based groups.

However, it is worth noting that the effect size implied by the subhazard ratio is slightly increased in the model that controls for rebel strength. This suggests that cultural identity representation in rebel groups' agendas may affect propensity for negotiation regardless of the relative strength of the party. It could thus be the case that the indivisibility of stakes may work in favor of negotiation. Short of pursuing total genocide or partition, the ultimate negotiation of some political coexistence may be the only realistic option for these countries and it is possible that both parties to the conflict recognize this, and thus do not hold out on talks for as long. Finally, it is worth noting that the statistical significance of the effect of cultural identity representation slips just above the 0.05 alpha level when the availability of lootable resources are added to the model. This suggests that there is a need to better research the potential relationship between resources, identity, and movement strength.

Regarding the fourth hypothesis, the effect of outside support is statistically significant in both the model in which rebel strength is controlled for and that in which it is not. The estimated subhazard ratio suggests that an organization having a third-party supporter is associated with a higher incidence of negotiation, even when rebel strength is statistically controlled for. This relationship over time is illustrated in the cumulative incidence functions for each group in Figure 2.

These findings, contra the expectation outlined in the fourth hypothesis, suggest that the relationship between outside supporters may facilitate earlier negotiation pursuit. The fact that this relationship holds regardless of the relative strength of the rebel group suggests the possibility that outside involvement may be important regardless of the material support offered by a third party backer. It might be worth exploring whether

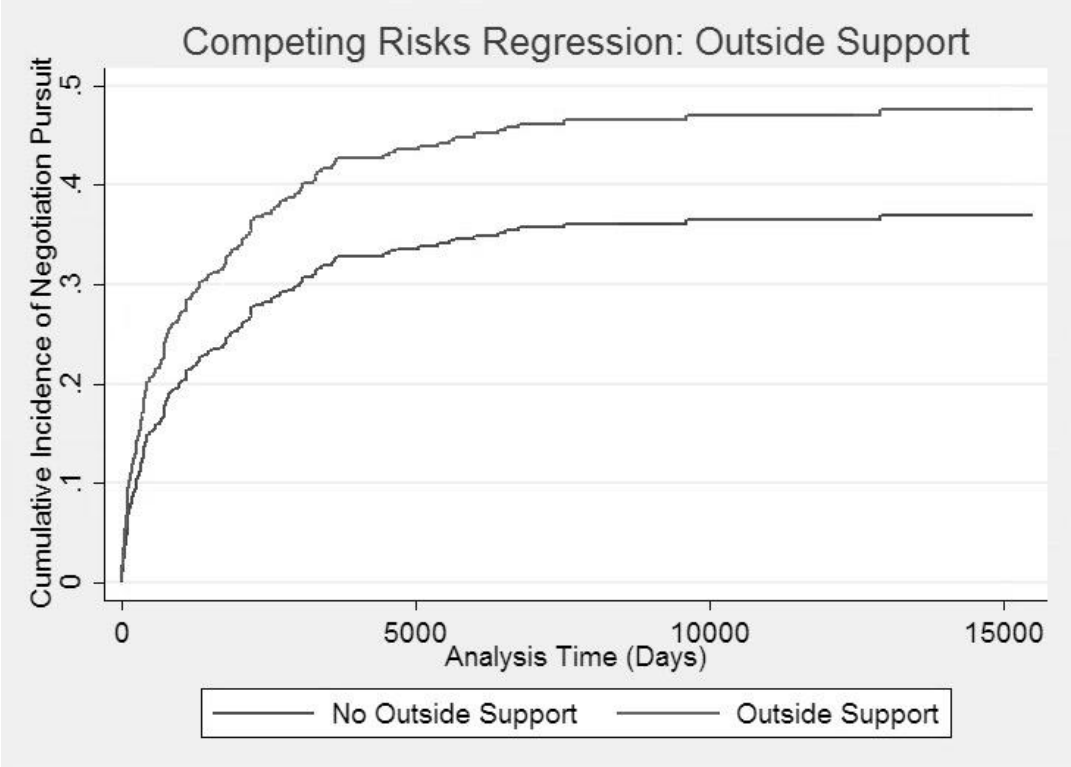

Figure 2: Model 2 Cumulative incidence functions for groups with and without outside support.

these entities which choose to support rebel groups are, in fact, experiencing more negative externalities from the conflict than expected based on the analysis in Chapter 4.

Finally, relatively strong support is found for the possibility articulated in Hypothesis 3, that groups with either lootable resources or an outside backer will negotiate later. The estimated subhazard ratio in Model 3 suggests that having lootable resources in the conflict area or an outside supporter is associated with a diminished propensity to negotiate earlier in the conflict. The gap is considerable and holds across time, as demonstrated in the cumulative incidence function graph in Figure 3. This is somewhat unsurprising, and consistent with the strong findings in a great deal of the literature that, while civil wars are not purely economic enterprises, material processes and resources are tremendously important for the conflict trajectory.

This evidence supports the possibility that resource-rich groups are far less likely to negotiate. While this does not shed light on whether the economic incentives or the resultant political strength of the group is driving later negotiation, it does highlight the importance of studying the role of resources not only in war, but in peacemaking as well. The results of this model show that while the conflict environment does not seem to wipe out the effects of nonmaterial characteristics, it does demonstrate that the resource question remains tremendously important, regardless of what type of rebel group is being studied. Future research can hopefully shed light on the interplay between ideas and material processes in negotiation pursuit.

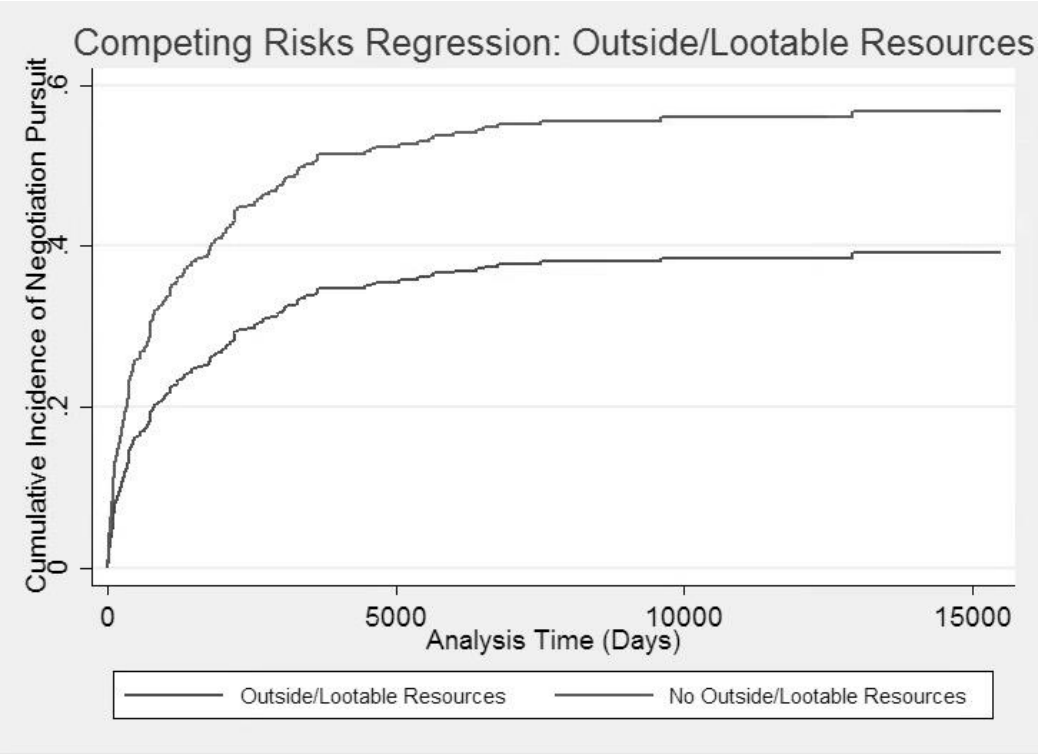

Figure 3: Model 3 Cumulative incidence functions for groups with outside and/or lootable resources, and those without.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

Significance of Findings

The findings here suggest that nonstate armed groups vary considerably in their organizational characteristics and in their conflict termination behavior. The associations found here with cultural identity representation, third party support, and resources suggest that they may be shaping patterns in the varied timing of negotiation pursuit. The findings further suggest that there is a good chance that organizational character of these groups is not extraneous to their decision making, as the associations between characteristics hold even with basic statistical controls for material processes. Whether or not the narratives the rebels present about their cause and their organizations are objectively accurate, this research suggests there is something to be learned in studying the self-perception and framing of these groups.

This has clear implications for future research and potentially also for policymakers. It suggests that paying attention to the groups' message may better help others understand their behavior. It also suggests more broadly the continued need for research that studies the role of ideas in modern war, particularly when it comes to group cohesion and decision making. Finally, it implies that more research is needed to understand what elements of nonstate armed groups are more responsive to factors

related to the conflict situation, versus internal factors and motivators.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the findings here have illuminated the effects of some important nonstate armed group characteristics, there are some important limitations to the project carried out here, which hopefully future research may overcome. The first is the fact that this model does very little to take the state's role in the conflict and negotiation pursuit into account.[179] While the rebel strength measure included in Model 2 is relative, thus capturing state strength indirectly, increased military strength of the state does not directly increase the state's ability to win.[180] Other factors may be important, not only for the military strength of the state in conflict, but in its decision making process more broadly. Future research can hopefully study the effects of the state's characteristics and of interplay between the state and rebel traits when it comes to negotiation pursuit.

In addition to incorporating the state into the model, future research may hopefully help us better understand the role of individual level characteristics in civil war negotiation. As one scholar has noted, analyses of modern conflict will often underestimate the extent to which civil wars are about "fundamentally personal and local (as opposed to national) causes."[181] It is possible that the same is true of not only war

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[179] Credit and thanks for this observation go to Professor Samuel Handlin at the University of Utah.

[180] DeRouen Jr. and Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 303-320.

[181] Susan Woodward, "Do the Root Causes of Civil War Matter?: On Using Knowledge to Improve Peacebuilding Interventions," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 1, no. 2 (2007): 156.

making but also the pursuit of peace.

The effect of individuals can be powerful. A single person's personality can help push a recalcitrant group to the table, for example, with the political credibility and personal conviction of William Deng getting a part of the SANU to the negotiating table.[182] One individual may also massively hinder negotiations, as scholars have argued for example about Jonas Savimbi. His "messianic sense of destiny"[183] and that he was of the "deep conviction that he was fated to rule the whole of Angola" seemed to sustain the fighting, while an easy and stable ceasefire was secured almost immediately after his death.[184] However, it is important to remember that contemporary political violence always exists with some group context,[185] so an approach which is able to synthesize effects at both levels is likely to be fruitful.

Finally, hopefully, future research can improve on the project started here by utilizing a more nuanced understanding of rebel strength that accounts for the various ways in which a rebel group can be powerful and studies the interaction between ideas and strength better. Strong rebel groups tend fight shorter wars,[186] have the option of

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[182] For a discussion of the negotiation processes and the role of William Deng, see: Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce*, 34; Kuyok Abol Kuyok, *South Sudan: The Notable Firsts* (London: AuthorHouse UK, 2015); and Robert Collins, *Civil Wars and Revolution in the Sudan: Essays on Sudan, Southern Sudan and Darfur 1908-2004* (Los Angeles: Tsehai Publishers, 2005), 220.

[183] Tony Hodges, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 18.

[184] Berdal, "How 'New' are 'New Wars'? Global Economic Change and the Study of Civil War," 491.

[185] Jeff Victoroff and Janice Adelman, "Why do Individuals Resort to Political Violence? Approaches to the Psychology of Terrorism," in *The Ashgate Companion to Political Violence*, eds. Marie Breen-Smyth (New York: Routledge, 2016), 139.

pushing the sate into negotiation sooner if they so desire,[187] and have better odds of reaching a settlement once they do. [188] While there is no doubt that rebel strength matters, further research is needed to better understand how the various components of rebel strength come together, and how this interacts with their goal-setting and strategic pursuits. Future research could ideally account for the various configurations of characteristics that build both latent rebel strength and the successful exercise of power. Some work looking at battle victories and spatial distribution is starting to do this, [189] and hopefully future research with more detailed data can take a similarly nuanced approach while also considering nonmaterial factors. Future work may also be able to model the interactions of these and other variables with a more sophisticated representation of interactions. [190]

Conclusions

Even when its prospects of success are limited, the decision of parties who have taken up arms to pursue negotiation is an intriguing behavior. It is easy to be cynical

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[186] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," 570–597.

[187] Govinda Clayton, "Relative Rebel Strength and the Onset and Outcome of Civil War Mediation," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 5 (2013): 609-622.

[188] Hultquist, "Power Parity and Peace? The Role of Relative Power in Civil War Settlement," 623-634.

[189] J. Michael Greig, "Nipping them in the Bud: The Onset of Mediation in Low-intensity Civil Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 2 (2015): 336-361.

[190] For a discussion of the possible interaction effects, see: I. William Zartman, "Need, Creed, and Greed in Civil War," in *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed*, eds. Cynthia Arnson and I. William Zartman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 256.

about negotiation processes. However, while victory may be more stable in the short term, a longer time horizon can reveal many unseen benefits in terms of better governance, reduced inequality, and otherwise diminished reentrenchment of the warpath in a nation's political landscape.[191]

Our understanding of contemporary war and peace is also incomplete without a nuanced understanding of the nonstate armed group. The organizational character of these groups vary greatly, and research is needed to study the significance or lack thereof of their various characteristics when it comes to the decision-making calculus of conflict termination.

The study here has made a modest contribution to this with the development of an organizational character theory of nonstate armed groups and empirical research indicating the importance of cultural identity group identification and outside support to these groups' propensity to pursue negotiation earlier in the conflict. That these relationships hold regardless of the military strength of the rebel group suggests a complex causal process that may transcend material factors may exist. Based on the findings here, these groups also seem to face a countervailing pressure away from early negotiation that results from lootable resources and outside support. Future research should help the academic community better understand the complex relationship between resources, identity strength, and community support.

While future research with more refined data can hopefully solidify our understanding of these relationships, the research here does indicate that nonstate armed

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[191] Darby, "Overview of Political Violence."

groups are far from a homogenous set of entities, and that some patterns do emerge when studying them. A better theoretical and empirical understanding of organizational character will hopefully deepen our understanding of these groups' behavior in the highly unusual but also increasingly common political setting of intrastate conflict.

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