Civil Wars

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Introduction

Civil war is a widespread and destructive phenomenon. Between 1945 and 1999 over 16 million people died directly as a result of civil war, not to mention the many millions more who were wounded, displaced, and traumatized (Fearon & Laitin 2004). Although the last decade has seen the development of an impressive research agenda on civil war, it should be remembered that it is a phenomenon as old as civilization itself. Civil war has inspired a vast literature, from classic histories like Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* to canonical works of political philosophy such as Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. While some areas of consensus in the contemporary literature have emerged, the major findings remain highly diffuse and often contradictory. Furthermore, substantial gaps remain in our understanding of civil war, and many other themes continue to be highly contested. This review will outline the major findings in the literature and point readers to the topics in which promising research is ongoing or is yet to begin. While it aims to cover most of the major works here, it will also point readers to more comprehensive reviews of sub-topics within the study of civil war.

The review will proceed in four sections. In the first section we will begin with issues concerning the definition of civil war. Over the next three sections we will examine the contemporary literature on civil war, beginning with the causes of civil war onset, continuing with the processes within civil war, including recruitment, governance, and violence, and finishing with the outcomes of civil war, including termination, peacebuilding, and the memory of civil war.

What is Civil War?

One of the reasons for the lack of consensus in the study of civil war is disagreement over what exactly civil war means (Kalyvas 2003; Sambanis 2004b). Civil war is a *naturally* occurring

category. Conceptually, civil war overlaps with several other categories of armed conflict, in particular revolution, political violence, ethnic conflict, and terrorism. Distinguishing it from other types of conflict always involves some kind of ad-hoc or value-based judgment. Moreover, the term *civil war* carries with it important political implications. Labeling a conflict a *civil war* confers a degree of legitimacy on the party contesting governmental authority. To see the practical importance of this point, one need only consider the ongoing legal controversy over the classification of many fighters in Afghanistan as "unlawful combatants," removing from them all of the legal rights they would be afforded as regular soldiers under the Geneva Conventions.

However, these difficulties aside, we believe we know what civil war is when we see it. Many definitions of civil war are, of course, possible, but any definition should contain the following key elements: (1) the *goal* of armed entities in civil war is *power*, (2) the *entities* that participate in a civil war must be *organized*, (3) the *means* by which these goals are accomplished is *violence*, (4) the *context* in which a civil war takes place is the *sovereign nation state*, and (5) it is *implicit* in the definition that one of the participants is a *government*, although this final criterion is not necessary. A better term analytically for this phenomenon would be *internal war* (Eckstein 1965), but civil war is the expression that has become part of the everyday lexicon, and for better or worse, it is the one we are stuck with. Here, civil war is defined as *armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign unit between organized entities subject to a common authority at the outset of hostilities* (Kalyvas 2006).

Armed conflict has been a regular, if not constant, feature of human civilization (Keeley 1996). It is not surprising, therefore, that war, including civil war, featured prominently in the literature of ancient civilizations. Prominent examples include Appian's *The Civil Wars*, Livy's *The Early History of Rome*, and Xenophon's *Anabasis*. One of the earliest expressions of civil

war was the factional or ideological conflict within the Greek *polis* or city-state. Thucydides'

account in *The Peloponnesian Wars* (III.69-85) of the Corcyraean civil war, or *Stasis*, remains

one of the most insightful accounts of civil war we have today (Price 2001).

The modern world has been deeply shaped by civil war, in particular by the revolutionary

wars of the 17th and 18th centuries in England, France, and America. Although not all begun

consciously as revolutions, these events were seminal in the formation of the modern territorial

state and the democratic constitutions that remain largely in place to this day. The counter-

revolutionary war of the Vendée is often given a central place in the development of

contemporary nationalism in the guise of modern state institutions, in particular the citizen army

(Cobb 1987; Tilly 1964). These formative revolutions were also an essential precursor to the

class wars of late 19th century France (Gould 1995; Sewell 1980; Snyder & Tilly 1972), which in

turn provided the ideological foundations of Marxist civil wars in Russia (Pipes 1990) and

China.

In the post-World War II period, civil wars can be divided into three separate phases: (1)

the wars of decolonization, beginning with independence for India and Burma in the late 1940s

and followed by the many wars for independence elsewhere in Asia and Africa during the 1950s

and 1960s, (2) the *proxy wars* of the Cold War from the 1960s to the 1980s, and (3) the post-

Cold War conflicts in Eurasia and Africa following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Several researchers have argued that civil wars in the post-Cold War period are

qualitatively different from those of the Cold War period. This distinction between the first two

of these phases and the third phase is often framed in terms of the 'new' and 'old' wars debate.

Two main arguments have been put forward to justify this distinction. The first is that the

geopolitical equilibrium of the Cold War kept a lid on simmering tensions, especially ethnic

ones, across the world. With the collapse of the Soviet Union came a new anarchy in global politics with a resultant rise in the number civil wars (Kaplan 2000). However, following an initial spate of civil conflicts in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse, quantitative evidence suggests that on average there has been neither an overall rise or fall in the number of civil wars following the end of the Cold War (Hironaka 2005). The second argument is that civil wars have changed in type, even if the overall incidence of civil war has not (Kaldor 1999). Work initiated by economists at the World Bank in the late 1990s and early 2000s argued that the 'new' wars of the post-Cold War era were typified by economic motivations, or *greed*, and were different from the 'old', ideological wars of earlier generations, which were motivated by genuine political or social *grievances* (Berdal & Malone 2000; Collier & Hoeffler 2004). For example, the nationalist wars of decolonization, like those in Algeria (Horne 2006) or Angola (Kapuśčiński 1987), and the wars fought by Marxist and Maoist organizations during the Cold War in places as far flung as El Salvador (Byrne 1996; Wood 2003) and Burma (Lintner 1990; Smith 1991), were characterized as highly ideological. Although these wars were often brutal, as exemplified by the Salvadoran Army's infamous massacre of civilians at El Mozote in 1981 (Binford 1996; Danner 1994), the rebels, certainly in retrospect, are usually portrayed as having altruistic motivations. In contrast, early qualitative evidence from the 1990s seemed to suggest that the wars of the post-Cold War era were the result of ethnic hatred (Cohen 1993; Kaufman 2001), and psychopathic and greedy warlords (Cohen 1998), or both (Lieven 1998). The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a Liberian sponsored rebel army in Sierra Leone, which engaged in the widespread amputation of limbs, the systematic rape of women and girls, as well as horrific public executions, appeared to typify this new kind of amoral warlord/rebel group (Gberie 2005).

However, this dichotomous greed-grievance model has come under criticism in recent years (Ballentine & Sherman 2003; Kalyvas 2001). Most typologies of civil war, including this one, entail a determination of the goals or motivations of the actors. Although not redundant, this exercise is theoretically and empirically problematic (Kalyvas 2003). Consequently, some scholars have experimented with other criteria by which civil wars could be productively classified. Kalyvas (2005) categorizes civil wars by the predominant type of *warfare*, distinguishing between conventional, irregular, and symmetric non-conventional. He argues that civil wars of the Cold War era were predominantly irregular or guerrilla conflicts, while many of those of the post-Cold War period have been symmetric non-conventional in which both rebels and governments have endemically low military capacity. Prominent examples of the former include Vietnam (Elliott 2000; Karnow 1983) and El Salvador (Byrne 1996; Wood 2003), while Somalia (Laitin 1999) and Afghanistan (Rashid 2001) are typical of the latter.

The Causes of Civil War

Partly inspired by the perceived rash of ethnic conflicts and the qualitative literature that described its gory details, in the late 1990s, a number of research projects emerged simultaneously to search for more general trends, relying on large-N, cross-national quantitative analyses (for more comprehensive critiques of this literature see Blattman & Miguel 2009; Sambanis 2002). The best known of these are Fearon and Laitin (2004), Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and their derivatives. The most robust finding of the quantitative literature is that civil wars are more likely to occur in poor countries; the poorer the country, the higher the risk of civil war. However, there is still no consensus on the causal mechanism that underlies this relationship (Sambanis 2004a). A more contested finding is that the presence of natural resources such as oil and gemstones, as well as narcotic producing plantations, increase the risk of civil war onset

(Fearon & Laitin 2004). While the relationship between natural resources and civil war onset has been difficult to demonstrate, it seems clearer that they help to propagate conflicts once they have begun, primarily by sustaining rebel organizations (Fearon 2004; Ross 2004).

Another contested finding concerns the role of ethnicity. A host of single and comparative case studies on civil war point to the salience of ethnicity in both causing and prolonging such conflicts (e.g. Brown 2001; Deng 1995; Kapferer 1988; Kaufman 2001; Lieven 1998; McGarry & O'Leary 1995; Prunier 1995). Although early quantitative research found that ethnic diversity had no systematic effect on the risk of civil war (Collier & Hoeffler 2004; Fearon & Laitin 2004), later work has largely reversed this finding. Sambanis (2001) argues that it is a category mistake to "pool" ethnic and "non-ethnic" wars, and finds that for ethnic civil wars, ethnic fractionalization is a risk factor. Conflicting results are at least partly due to disagreement over the meaning of ethnicity and over how ethnicity should be operationalized (Chandra 2006; Chandra & Wilkinson 2008; Wimmer, Cederman, & Min 2009). Most quantitative models of ethnic conflict use the ethno linguistic fractionalization (ELF) index, which measures the number of distinct language groups within a polity. But ELF is unlikely to capture the relevant aspect of ethnicity for conflict. Because the argument runs that there is a higher likelihood of civil war when a large ethnic minority faces an ethnic majority (Montalvo & Reynal-Querol 2005), Chandra and Wilkinson (2008) measure ethnic *polarization*, which they find does increase the risk of civil war. Similarly, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min (2009) go beyond the use of a simplistic ethnic-non-ethnic dichotomy, distinguishing between several sub-types of ethnic war, and also find that the presence of certain ethnic cleavages, rather than ethnic diversity per se, increases the likelihood of civil war onset. This latest round of quantitative

literature thus seems to lend support to Horowitz's (1985) and Young's (1976) seminal contributions on ethnic conflict.

However, as Posner (2005) has argued the salience of ethnicity varies from one context to the next, and that macro measures of ethnic diversity are probably too crude a tool to capture the relevant dynamics. Roger Petersen (2002) contends that the peculiarity of ethnic conflict lies in group-level psychological responses to changes in the stratification of ethnic communities. Others have argued that ethnic conflict is a result of the failure of collective bargaining between ethnic groups (Lake & Rothchild 1998; Posen 1993; Walter 2009). Finally, it is worth noting that ethnicity may be more important to the dynamics of civil wars once they have begun, rather than to the risk of civil war onset. Mueller (2000) points out that even in the commonly cited case of Yugoslavia, seemingly ethnic conflicts were more due to the actions of a small number of thugs, than to collective ethnic animosity. Thus, civil wars, which appear to have been caused by ethnic rivalry in retrospect, are often the cause of those very ethnic rivalries (Wood 2008). Ultimately, more work needs to be done on the nature of ethnicity and conflict before general conclusions can be drawn.

International Dimensions of Civil War

As yet, there is no adequate treatment of international politics in aggregate models of civil war, yet intuitively we believe that they must have some kind of important impact (note the discussions in Brown 1996; Midlarsky 1992; Walter & Snyder 1999). One need only go back to Thucydides again to see the potential importance of a great power international rivalry in promoting and sustaining a civil war. That impact may be *positive,* in the sense of facilitating civil wars, or *negative*, in the sense of impeding civil wars. The impact may also be direct or indirect. A direct involvement means that foreign soldiers actually intervene in, or initiate, the

conflict, as the US has done in Iraq since 2003. An indirect intervention implies supplying anything from arms and advice to ideological support. The latter kind of intervention is far more common and was a major feature of the Cold War. It is impossible to imagine that the contours of anti-colonial resistance and the subsequent contests over the social order would have been the same were it not for the Bolshevik victory in Russia and the activity of the Comintern. Ho Chi Minh's activity in various socialist and communist movements in France, Russia, and China for three decades before he returned to Vietnam to lead the independence movement represents a microcosm of the international dynamics of revolutionary politics in the mid-20th century (Duiker 2000). Marxist revolutionary politics had an inherently international flavor as aspiring leaders were brought to Russia, China, and Cuba where they were trained and financed to bring about socialist revolutions in their own countries.

The international dimension of civil wars could also be geopolitical in another sense. In a recent paper, Wimmer and Min (2006) adopt a novel approach, arguing that peaks and troughs in the global incidence of civil war can be explained by the macro processes of state formation and state collapse, which in turn, are intimately connected to the rise and fall of empires. Alternatively, the international dimension of civil wars may also refer to local diffusion of conflict (Lake & Rothchild 1998). It is a well-known empirical finding that some regions are particularly conflict prone due to the so-called bad neighborhood effect. Rebels have often exploited the poorly policed border regions of Central Africa, with civil wars breaking out in the 1990s in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and Chad. Indeed, the promotion of disorder in Liberia's neighboring states by has even been called "the Charles Taylor effect," after the notorious leader of National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) (Ellis 2006). More generally, this regional effect may be due to refugee flows, the cross-border trade

flows of illicit goods and weapons, or simple emulation. Full testing of the processes behind this observation remains to be done (Gleditsch 2007; Salehyan & Gleditsch 2006).

Causality in the Analysis of Civil Wars

Ultimately, although useful for suggesting general associations and patterns in the data (Sambanis 2004a), large-N econometric analyses of civil war suffer from a number of problems. They are unable to distinguish between several observationally equivalent causal pathways (Humphreys 2005; Kalyvas 2006; Sambanis 2004a); the main findings are highly sensitive to coding and measurement procedures, in particular the threshold of violence required for a conflict to count as a civil war (Gates & Strand 2004; Hegre & Sambanis 2006; Montalvo & Reynal-Querol 2005; Sambanis 2004b); data quality is often poor, especially during the conflict itself (Kalyvas 2007); there is considerable distance between the theoretical constructs and the variables used to proxy for them (Cederman & Gerardin 2007; Fearon, Kasara, & Laitin 2007); they suffer from endogeneity (Miguel, Satyanath, & Sergenti 2004); they lack clear microfoundations or are based on erroneous ones (Cramer 2007; Gutiérrez Sanin 2008; Kalyvas & Kocher 2007) and they are subject to narrow and undertheorized scope conditions (Wimmer & Min 2006).

In contrast, there exists a rich case study literature on civil war that provides a great deal of insight into the particular processes and mechanisms entailed in civil war onset. This case study literature suggests that onset is characterized by multiple pathways. It also generally supports the theoretical proposition of sociologists of collective action who argue that contentious politics are better understood as a series of interrelated mechanisms and processes, rather than discrete, separable events (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly 2001; Tilly 1978, 2003). For example, this means that onset is not easily pinpointed to a single moment in time; rather it is a

process. However, while descriptive accounts are hugely valuable, the case study literature is also troubled by some serious methodological weaknesses. First, inductive theorization on causes from single cases rely on implicit counterfactuals that are not always adequately theorized (Fearon 1991). Second, journalistic and historical work, because of its focus on controversial and well-known events suffers from selection bias (Geddes 1990). Finally, case studies provide an enormously complex, and typically contradictory, set of narratives for the same events. Thus, it is not clear how one should assign values to conflicting explanations. That said, in the following section, we point to some influential case study research that is illustrative of more general processes.

The Processes of Civil War

These limitations of both the quantitative and case study approaches have led to the emergence of a new research program on the microfoundations of civil war (Kalyvas 2008), that attempts to marry the rigor of social scientific approaches with the contextual richness of journalistic and historical work. In particular, it takes as its unit of analysis the discrete processes within civil war and has been primarily directed to issues of participation in rebellion (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008; Humphreys & Weinstein 2008; Peters & Richards 1998; Petersen 2001; Weinstein 2007; Wood 2003) and violence (Kalyvas 2006; Weinstein 2007; Wood 2006). This body of work has yielded some important findings, which we will detail below. However, it is still in its early stages, and there are many aspects of civil war which have yet to be subjected to research at the microfoundational level. It should also be noted that this kind of analysis is not a panacea (Kalyvas 2008). The best research combines multiple levels of analysis, is aware of history, and is characterized by serious theoretical depth.

Armed Actors

Cross-national large-N research on civil wars tends to take armed actors as homogenous units with little consideration of variability at this level. However, a vast case study literature points to the internal heterogeneity of many armed organizations (e.g. Rashid 2001; Richards 1996). One of the best studied cases in the literature is post-1969 Northern Ireland, in which Republicans renewed the century old civil war against British and later, Northern Irish, security and paramilitary forces. Although the Irish Republican Army (IRA) remained a highly secretive organization throughout its 30 year campaign, the successful peace process of the last decade has led to the emergence of a well-informed historical literature of the war from the inside perspective of its most notorious armed group (Alonso 2007). There is substantial evidence of the protracted internal battle for power within the Republican movement (Bean 2007; Moloney 2002), while Eamon Collins, a former IRA member, gives in his autobiography an insightful account of the mechanisms of control within an underground rebel army (Collins & McGovern 1997). These observations point in more general terms to the need to understand the internal dynamics of armed organizations, rather than simply the interactions they have with the *enemy*.

Comparative research at the organizational level is still in its embryonic stage, but it is likely that this will be a rich field of study in the future (Gurr 2000). Many questions at the organizational level remain relatively unexplored: How do armed organizations come to exist (Horowitz 1985; McAdam et al. 2001)? What form do these organizations take on (Sinno 2008)? That is: are they organized hierarchically, like regular armies, (e.g. the Rwandan Patriotic Front) or do they utilize a decentralized, network structure (e.g. Al Qaeda), or something in between (e.g. IRA)? Why do some armed organizations stay together while others are prone to fission?

What is the significance of the interaction of state and rebel forces with different types of organizational properties (Lyall & Wilson 2009)?

Recruitment

There are several prominent theoretical models of participation in civil war. Early models of rebellion postulated that once societies crossed an aggregate threshold of dissatisfaction or resentment, then armed resistance would occur (Davies 1962; Gurr 1970). In these social mobilization theories, individuals join rebellions because they are aggrieved. Grievances could take many forms, whether the perception of economic inequality or religious persecution. However, these models over-predict rebellion. Injustice and grievance are much more widespread phenomena than are rebellions (Scott 1976). In a subsequent phase of research, scholars modified these models of rebellion by incorporating *opportunity* (Jenkins 1983; McAdam 1986). The logic behind this modification is that while any number of individuals may be dissatisfied with the current shape of society, if there is an *opportunity* to achieve redress peacefully, this option may be preferable. However, when the space for armed resistance opens up, for example, with the state's security apparatus weakening because of external war or a shift in ideology, then rebellion becomes a feasible option (Skocpol 1979).

Nonetheless, these models still fail to explain how those with grievances come to launch a rebellion. Rationalist models assume that because the benefits of a rebellion (if successful) will accrue to everyone, it does not pay to take the risk to rebel. But this kind of logic under-predicts the actual incidence of rebellion. Thus, we have to consider how interested individuals and groups manage to overcome the collective action problem and become organized for action (Tilly 1978). One possibility is that rebel organizations must offer some *selective incentives* to participants (Hechter 1987). That is, individuals must be induced to take the extra step of joining

a rebellion by the prospect of gaining disproportionately either during or after the war. This is the logic that underpins the *greedy* rebel model of civil war. However, rebels who join an armed organization may also benefit from non-material selective incentives. Partly based on research on gang membership, scholars suggest that individuals who join armed groups are primarily attracted by the promise of non-material rewards, delivered exclusively to combatants at the time of enlistment, during the war, or at the end of it (Wood 2003). These include local prestige, security, or in process benefits, such as the dignity of physically attempting to redress one's grievances. However, individuals may not be aware of many of these in-process benefits at the time of joining. Moreover, empirically it seems that individuals display a wide variety of motivations for joining a rebellion (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008; Viterna 2006).

Joining or Recruitment?

The problem with most models and empirical studies of recruitment is that they fail to adequately consider the *social context* of civil war. Let us elaborate: Individuals are embedded in their social context, whether the village, the factory, the urban slum, or simply the family. The decision to join or not join a rebel organization may not be as *individual* as it is assumed in the majority of economists' or political scientists' models of rebellion. A small body of research, drawing heavily on sociological network analysis, has begun to address this issue. In a study of resistance and rebellion in wartime Eastern Europe, Petersen (2001) argues that cohesive communities made up of networks of interacting individuals solve collective action problems and produce mobilization. Similarly Roger Gould found that artisan guilds and neighborhood networks were a more important than class as a source of recruitment to violent social action in the Paris Commune revolts of 1948-1971 (Gould 1995).

Most studies of recruitment, especially those that rely on economic models of industrial organization tend to assume that rebellion is risky (Gates 2002). But risk should not automatically be assumed to be high. For example, we know that many young men and women join urban gangs in the US not out of aggression but for protection; that is, they feel safer inside the gang than out (Joe & Chesney-Lind 1995). Kalyvas and Kocher (2007) have analyzed data on the Vietnam War and found that non-combatant civilians faced an equal and possibly greater risk of death than members of the Vietcong. If the risk of joining, and indeed, being a member of a rebel organization is not very high, then many of the current models of recruitment may be fundamentally flawed. Finally, as an extension, the level of control exercised by armed groups in a particular territory may encourage people to join those groups. It may be that "*who* rules?" in a given territory has a lot of explanatory power in predicting *whom* one joins (Arjona 2008). When rebel organizations are the de facto state in a given territory, individuals may not perceive it to be risky or disloyal to the government to join them. Rather, their *civic duty* is fulfilled by membership in the *rebel* organization. As described in Jonathan Falla's (1990) outstanding ethnography, The Karen National Union (KNU), which has been fighting for autonomy against the Burmese government since 1948, operated for decades as a state within a state, providing healthcare and education to its constituents, and in turn demanding both taxation and military service.

It also has to be born in mind that recruitment to rebel organizations is not always voluntary. Several effective rebel armies have relied extensively on coercive recruitment to achieve their military and political objectives, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, being perhaps the most prominent (Behrend 1999). Coercive recruitment can itself be considered along a continuum. On the one hand there is *routinized* coercive recruitment. Often, in the

context of an irregular war, guerrilla armies will institute a one family-one child policy. Just like the draft that national armies have, families have little choice about whether to give their son or daughter to the recruiters, but often, civilians will perceive recruitment to be part of their social, ethnic, or religious duty. On the other hand, coercive recruitment can take the form of violent abduction. This is commonly what is thought of when child soldiers are considered (Singer 2005). In this case, rebels, militias, and even state armies will abduct usually young boys, but also men, as soldiers, and young girls as sex slaves or "wives."

However, even though recruitment is likely to be a prominent subject of research in the coming years, it may be that recruitment is not the problem it is often assumed to be for insurgent organizations. It does not require a large force to wage a credible insurgency. Since its restructuring in the 1970s, the IRA was a thorn in the side of the British and Northern Irish Governments for over 30 years with no more than 300 active volunteers. Like other rebel organizations, the IRA was not lacking in volunteers to fight and join; rather it could be highly selective in its recruitment practices (Collins & McGovern 1997). Similarly, for the KNU, the intensity of resistance is limited not by the number of volunteers but by the number of weapons and bullets at its disposal. In reality, recruitment is usually mixed, with aspects of voluntarism and coercion at play simultaneously.

Rebel Governance

Perhaps more important than recruitment of active *fighters* is the relationship rebels maintain with civilians. Guerrillas live among the civilian population; or to use Mao's famous dictum, the people are to guerrillas as water is to fish (Mao 1978). The problem of irregular war is one of asymmetric information. Rebels typically have an informational advantage. They are often members of the communities in which they are residing and operating, or at the very least, they

are intimate with the local cultures and customs. Often, the national government, and even more so an occupying power, does not possess this kind of local information (Petersen 2001). In Vietnam many "rebels" were peasant farmers by day and militiamen by night, while American and South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) troops were often unable to identify the enemy. Sometimes the civilian population may not know who the insurgents really are, or, much more commonly, civilians refrain from identifying the insurgent combatants who hide among them, because of a diverse set motivations, including sympathy and fear. This phenomenon is known as *non-betrayal* and is a crucial process to be understood in the context of irregular war. Recent work has begun to focus on the local patterns of order and control as a way to disaggregate and better understand the great variety of governance that exists both within and across civil wars (Arjona 2008).

Violence

Civil wars are interesting to researchers and policymakers primarily because they are violent events. Civil wars cause deaths, displacement, and usually tremendous economic disruption. But civil wars are not uniformly violent. Some, like the civil war in Cote d' Ivoire (2002-2007) resulted in relatively few casualties. At the other end of the scale in terms of intensity are the civil wars and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda and Sudan (Straus 2006). The civil war and genocide in Rwanda (1994) resulted in the deaths of around 800,000 people in as little as three months (Fujii 2009; Gourevitch 2004; Prunier 1995). However, genocide is correctly distinguished from civil war in general, because in the latter case, rival factions intend to control rather than eliminate the enemy's constituency from the existing or new state (Kiernan 2007). Moreover, prominent recent cases notwithstanding, ethnic cleansing has been the exception rather than the rule in civil war. Yet these cases do suggest how violence can escalate unpredictably in the midst

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of a civil war, where collective identities become polarized, and elites manipulate a fearful public into perpetrating mass violence (Deng 1995; Fujii 2009; Mamdani 2001; Prunier 1995; Valentino 2004). Not only is there great variation in the magnitude of violence in civil wars, but also in the type of violence perpetrated. In some civil wars, like the American civil war, the victims of violence are mostly members of the armed forces, who receive their injuries in battle (McPherson 1988). But civil wars often include forms of violence other than shootings or bombings; beatings, torture, and rape are all too common occurrences. Explaining why some civil wars are characterized by particular repertoires of violence is an ongoing task. Why, for example, amputations were so common in the civil war in Sierra Leone, but virtually unknown in most of the civil wars in post-Cold War Europe is still an open question. We are just now coming to appreciate the significant role of strategic sexual violence in war (Wood 2006, 2009). Rape, it seems, is not just an act perpetrated by sadistic opportunists, but can be a strategic tool. Not only does rape have detrimental effects on the social structure of the enemy, but it may also develop cohesion among the perpetrators, especially if it is gang rape (Cohen 2009).

Much of the sophisticated work on violence within civil wars has focused on violence against civilians (Kalyvas 2006; Weinstein 2007). While we would expect, and even tolerate, casualties among government soldiers and armed rebels, the victimization of non-combatants is another matter. Civilians have always gotten caught up in wars, whether they are between or within states. However, in wars between states, civilian casualties are claimed to be collateral damage. Of course, the fire bombings of German and Japanese cities during World War II were deliberately designed to kill civilians, but in general, interstate wars have been concerned with destroying the armed forces of the enemy. In the case of civil wars, in contrast, civilians are often the primary victims and primary targets of violence.

Here we will consider two general intuitions behind the logic of violence against civilians in civil war: the first focuses on interactions between armed groups and civilians, and the second one on interactions taking place within armed groups themselves. In *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars*, Kalyvas (2006) argues that violence against civilians follows a predictable logic that depends on territorial control. Informational asymmetries form the causal link between civil war, on the one hand, and both the barbaric and intimate dimensions of its violence, on the other hand. Violence is perpetrated by rebels against civilians in order to ensure their compliance, or at least the non-betrayal of rebel forces to the government. From the government side, violence is intended to deter civilian support of the rebels. Violence is predicted to be lowest in the territories in which either the rebels or the state have total control, and highest in the territories in which control is only partial. Interestingly, because information is provided to armed organizations at the local level, the patterns of violence often reflect local dynamics of enmity rather than the master cleavage that defines the war itself. Petty conflicts, over land or even personal relationships get brought into the war in this way, linking the micro-level to the macro-level (see also Hart 2003).

In *Inside Rebellion*, Weinstein (2007) argues that violence against civilians is a result of indiscipline rather than a deliberate strategy. Variation in violence against civilians is a product of the relative endowments of rebel organizations. All rebel organizations need resources to survive. Some rebel organizations are resource rich – whether from access to funding from foreign governments or from trade in contraband – while other organizations are resource poor. Rich organizations do not rely on civilian support to maintain their organizations in the same way that resource poor organizations do. Because of this dichotomy in dependence on civilian support, it is predicted that rich organizations are free to engage in more indiscriminate violence

against civilians. Weinstein puts forward well-marshaled support for his thesis from cases in

Peru, Mozambique, and Uganda. However, Weinstein (2007) neglects the strategic component of

violence against civilians, on the one hand brushing over any potential agency on the behalf of

civilians, even though extensive anecdotal evidence suggests that civilians have a range of

strategic options within the constraints of wartime (Lubkemann 2008), while on the other hand,

ignoring the interaction between rebels and the state.

The Outcomes of Civil War

Although the rising number of ongoing civil wars in the second half of the 20th century was due,

not to a substantial increase in the number of new wars, but the steady accumulation of

unresolved civil wars over time (Hironaka 2005), the processes civil war outcome and

termination have received relatively less academic attention. We begin this section by reviewing

the literature on duration before moving to some recent efforts to explain civil war termination.

Finally, we will consider the consequences of particular types of civil war outcome, whether

victory or settlement, on the prospects for sustained peace.

Duration

In a cross-national study, Collier et al. (2004) attempt to establish the preexisting macro-

structural conditions most common to enduring or short civil wars. As with civil war onset, for

Collier et al. (2004), civil war duration is primarily explained by economic factors. Conditions

that favor rebel financing make for enduring civil wars. Ross (2004) provides some support for

the observation that civil wars are longer where natural resources, especially oil, are present,

while one of the more robust findings in the literature is that third party intervention increases the

duration of civil wars (Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, & Joyce 2008; Cunningham 2006; Hironaka

2005; Regan 2002). Walter (2004) finds that poverty is generally associated with longer civil

wars. However, the view of rebel motivation that pertains in much of this work is overly-reductionist and does not accord with the findings from micro-level and case study research (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008; Wood 2003). Other scholars who have sought to explain civil war duration by the pre-conflict characteristics of the state include Balch-Lindsay and Enterline (2000) (ethnic divisions) and de Rouen and Sobek (2004) (weak state capacity).

While it makes sense to look for pre-conflict characteristics at the level of the state to explain the conditions under which civil war onset is most likely to occur, this logic does not work well for civil war duration. Since Thucydides (1998), it has been apparent that conflicts, once begun, take on a logic that may be more or less independent of their initial causes (Kalyvas 2006). A number of scholars have borrowed Fearon's (1995) bargaining framework to suggest that war duration is explained by each side's desire to signal its resolve (Cunningham 2006; Filson & Werner 2002). However, as Iklé (1991, 16) wrote in one of the earliest expositions of the topic, "…fighting often continues long past the point where a "rational" calculation would indicate that the war should be ended – ended, perhaps, even at the price of major concessions". Alternatively, some analysts argue that civil wars tend to persist because the warring sides, especially the government, cannot commit not to renege on a negotiated settlement (Fearon 2004; Glassmyer & Sambanis 2008; Licklider 1993; Walter 2002, 2004). Yet hazard models suggest that the longer civil wars last, the more likely they are to end (Mason & Fett 1996). A third story relates to the presence of indivisible goods (Toft 2003). The argument here is that some goals in civil war imply an all-or-nothing outcome. For example, because the holy city of Jerusalem cannot easily be divided between Israelis and Palestinians, settlement of the conflict is rendered more difficult (Pappé 2004). Such irresolvable land conflicts are often known as "sons of the soil" conflicts (Weiner 1978). The problem with this logic is that most goods (even land)

are theoretically divisible. Even a diamond mine can be divided by the introduction of side payments. Thus, the introduction of indivisible goods as an explanatory variable is typically ad hoc. The fourth theory relies on endogenous dynamics. This explanation goes back to the logic Thucydides identified in the Corcyraean civil war. That is, once a civil war has begun, for whatever reason, a new set of dynamics emerges as a consequence of the war, which in turn tends to perpetuate it. This may be because of the development of new rivalries and enmities (including ethnic ones) as a result of the conflict, or because actors with a specific set of skills – making war – emerged over the course of the conflict. The endogenous dynamics of civil war are intuitively appealing as an explanation of duration, but the question then arises as to why the warring parties eventually stop fighting.

Termination

Although we lack an accepted explanation of duration, some recent work has begun to shed light on civil war termination. Rather than asking why civil wars end, these explanations focus on *how* they end? There are two main types of outcome: the first is negotiated settlement, in which neither side admits defeat, and the sides come to some agreement that is mutually acceptable (even if unequally so). We will consider this category in more detail in the following section; the second is military victory, which can either be for the government side or for the rebels.

Military Victory

Although it has an uncomfortably anti-liberal feel for many, because negotiations have had such a mixed record of success, in the late 1990s some scholars began to revive the view that military victory might be a preferable outcome to negotiation. In a seminal article in *Foreign Affairs*, Luttwak (1999) argued that we should "Give war a chance." He argues that with one side defeated, the loser should be less likely to have capacity to restart war. The policy prescription is

that because wars ended by military victory are more likely to stay settled than ones that end by negotiation, it is better to "let it burn" than to intervene. James Fearon (2007) recently made the case that the US should pull out of Iraq, letting the rival sides fight each other to an equilibrium, whether that meant a three-state solution or not.

Within the set of outcomes we consider to be victories, there are two possibilities: government victory and rebel victory. During the nineteenth century, states routinely defeated insurgent foes. Over the twentieth century, however, this pattern reversed itself, with states increasingly less likely to defeat insurgents or avoid meeting at least some of their demands. Rebel victories have actually been much more common in the post-World War II period than one might expect given the typical disparity of force capability of rebels and governments. But how can we predict the conditions under which either side will win? Arreguín-Toft (2005) argues that it best thought of as a strategic interaction game in which governments' success in counterinsurgency depends on the appropriateness of their tactics, which may be direct or indirect, vis-à-vis the rebels' tactics. Lyall and Wilson (2009) argue that victory and defeat is explained by the mechanization of modern armies. The mechanization of government forces has resulted in reduced capability to fight irregular wars, which rely on information and being close to the ground. This is evidenced in the US experiences in Iraq and Vietnam, where overly mechanized occupation forces are too distant from civilians to effectively run a counterinsurgency operation (on counterinsurgency see CROSS-REFERENCE).

However, it is still not clear what exactly military victory means on a conceptual or theoretical level (Martel 2007). Moreover, to measure victory empirically, we would need to know the pre-war goals of the actors and the post-war outcomes. But it is well known from case studies of civil war that the goals of armed actors in civil wars change over the course of the war

(e.g. Bean 2007; Richards 1996). Furthermore, actors have incentives to misrepresent goals, particularly, to over claim at the start of the war in order to construct a favorable bargaining position at the negotiating table. Finally, there is the difficulty of determining when a war is over. Some conflicts have a remarkable tendency to recur, even after long periods of recess (Gates & Strand 2004). The question then arises as to whether these are the same war or a different ones.

Negotiated Settlements

Another set of research addresses the conditions under which civil wars are terminated via negotiations (Licklider 1993, 1995). In explaining the democratic transitions in El Salvador and South Africa, Wood (2000) points to the strategic interaction between an insurgent counter-elite and a ruling elite that is divided between economic and political factions. Extending the bargaining logic outlined above, Walter (2002, 2004), for example, argues that it is the inability for rival sides to credibly commit to a settlement in the absence of a third party guarantor that leads to recurrent conflict. The irresolvable claims of ethnically defined actors (Toft 2003), due both to the logic of the security dilemma (Posen 1993) and the endogenous polarization of ethnic identity leads Kaufmann (1996a, 1996b) to advocate partition as a solution. In contrast, Sambanis (2000) argues that partition simply replaces intra-state conflict with inter-state conflict.

Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping refers to a number of related tasks, beginning with separating warring factions, and demobilizing fighters, but extending to the monitoring of human rights, monitoring and running elections, training of security forces, providing humanitarian assistance, assisting in the rebuilding of judicial institutions, and occasionally including reconstruction of essential physical infrastructure. There has been a veritable boom in studies on post-conflict peacebuilding and

peacekeeping since the mid-1990s. In part, this reflects the fact that peacekeeping in practice is essentially a post-Cold War phenomenon. There were as many interventions in the five-year period from 1988 as there were in the previous 40 years. As Forna and Howard (2008) describe in a comprehensive review of the peacekeeping literature, there have been several waves of research on peacekeeping. The earliest research was relatively unsystematic, focusing on case studies of particular interventions. A second wave of research sprung out of a more interventionist United Nations in the wake of the end of the Cold War. Early UN optimism was typified by Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace*, which called for a much more wide ranging program of interventions and activities than had previously existed. However, this optimism quickly faded with the practical failures of Somalia, Rwanda, Angola, and Bosnia, which were well documented in a number of prominent works (Cassidy 2004; Fleitz 2002; Jett 2000). In the most recent wave of research, the main finding is generally optimistic, with intervention typically reducing the likelihood of a return to conflict (Doyle & Sambanis 2000, 2006; Fortna 2004, 2008; Hartzell, Hoddie, & Rothchild 2003; Walter 2002).

Justice and Memory

There are two critical issues in post-civil war contexts: justice and memory. How do post-civil war societies deal with crimes committed during the war? And how do post-civil war societies deal with the memory of civil wars?

Transitional Justice

Transitional justice is an issue both in the case of regime transitions (dictatorship to democracy) and in conflict transitions (civil war to peace). Transitional justice includes both formal and informal procedures implemented by a group or institution of accepted legitimacy around the time of a transition out of an oppressive or violent social order, for rendering justice to

perpetrators and their collaborators, as well as to their victims (Kaminski, Nalepa, & O'Neill 2006). It can either be endogenous (administered from inside) or exogenous (administered from outside) (Elster 2004). It excludes, however, "victor's justice" and revenge "mob" actions, in which members and supporters of the losing side in the civil war are purged. There is a full range of options between forgiveness and full-scale retribution. While justice might demand the punishment of every person who participated in an atrocity during a civil war, this kind of strategy may prevent the attainment of a sustainable peace (Gibson 2004). Thus, in some cases, war criminals are offered amnesty in return for abdication from their positions. After the precedent set by the Nuremburg trials of Nazi war criminals, international tribunality has emerged as a popular solution to dealing with post-war transitional justice. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has become involved in a number of high profile cases including Bosnia and Liberia. Transitions from civil war do not always require legal trials. A truth commission or truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) is a body tasked with discovering and revealing past wrongdoing by either government or insurgents, in the hope of resolving conflict left over from the past. Although not a form of justice, TRCs have become popular in the transition process (e.g. El Salvador). They are also a valuable source of information on the processes of civil war.

Memory

Perhaps even more important than how civil wars are terminated formally is how divided societies remember their past. Collective memory is a frequently used but misleading term (Pennebaker, Paez, & Rimé 1997). A commonly held narrative about the past is necessary for the formation of group identity and the maintenance of group solidarity (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1992). This is the case for all kinds of social formations; e.g. families, villages, political parties, religions, or nations. Individuals become socialized as citizens in large part though schools,

where they are taught their nation's official history (Weber 1976). How official school textbooks describe particular wars has been a major issue in attempting to overcome conflicts in Japan-China-Korea and Israel-Palestine to name just two examples. Histories and memories of civil wars are much more complicated than histories and memories of international conflicts. The reason for this is simple: the former enemy is part of the community rather than a foreign entity; its perspective cannot be easily expunged from the historical narrative. Four collective memory regimes exist to manage the construction of a post-war narrative. The first is exclusion. This is the well known phenomenon in which "History is written by the winners." The second regime is silence, in which case the parties to a civil war, or their successors, may agree to "forget" it in a kind of collective amnesia. The third regime is inclusion. In this case, an artificially consensual history is created through the selective reconstruction of the past so as to include in it (almost) everyone. The final regime is contestation. In this case, a transition takes place from consensus to a regime of contestation or divided memory, as the past becomes unsettled, taboos are broken, private memories become public, and hitherto forgotten acts of violence come to the surface.

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Links to Data

Minorities at Risk, http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/. The Minorities at Risk Project monitors and analyzes the status and conflicts of politically-active communal groups in all countries with a current population of at least 500,000. The project is designed to provide information in a standardized format that aids comparative research and contributes to the understanding of conflicts involving relevant groups.

Nicholas Sambanis, List of Civil Wars, 1945-1999,

http://pantheon.yale.edu/~ns237/index/research.html#Data. Sambanis provides extensive discussion of coding rules on civil wars for quantitative analysis.

UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, v4 2008, http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/. This dataset contains information on both internal and external conflicts, in the period 1946 to the present. It contains data on both large scale and small scale events. This dataset is primarily intended for academic use in statistical and macrolevel research.

Virginia Page Fortna, Cease-Fires Dataset, http://www.columbia.edu/~vpf4/research.htm. Fortna provides a dataset specifically geared to the analysis of ceasefires and peacebuilding.

James Fearon and David Laitin, Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War Dataset, http://www.stanford.edu/group/ethnic/publicdata/publicdata.html. This is the most widely used cross national dataset on civil wars.

UN Truth Commissions Digital Collection, http://www.usip.org/library/truth.html. The Truth Commissions Digital Collection contains decrees establishing truth commissions and similar bodies of inquiry worldwide, and the reports issued by such groups. These reports have rich details on a number of prominent civil wars.

Key Words

Civil war, violence, recruitment, rebellion, peacekeeping, insurgency, counterinsurgency, ethnic conflict

Mini-Bios

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