Third-Party Involvement in Civil War: Causes and Consequences

Casper Sakstrup

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PhD Dissertation

Table of Contents

Preface

This report summarizes the PhD dissertation "Third-Party Involvement in Civil War: Causes and Consequences", written at the Department of Political Science, Aarhus University, from 1 December 2015 to 30 November 2018. In addition to this summary report, the dissertation consists of the following four self-contained papers:

- **Paper A**: "To Intervene or Not to Intervene? Democratic Constraints on Third-Party Support in Civil War", coauthored with Jakob Tolstrup, *under review*.
- **Paper B**: "Feeling for War? How Anger and Fear Regulate Casualty Responsiveness", coauthored with Kristina Jessen Hansen, *working paper*.
- **Paper C**: "What's going on Next Door? Irregular leader change in neighboring countries, uncertainty, and civil war", *invited for revise and resubmit in Journal of Peace Research*.
- **Paper D:** "When Strength Becomes Weakness: Precolonial State Development, Monopoly on Violence, and Civil War", *under review*.

The purpose of this summary report is to give an overview of the dissertation. The report motivates the overall questions that guide the research, positions the individual arguments and contributions in relation to each other and in relation to the broader literature, and outlines key theoretical concepts, methods, findings, and implications. For further details, please refer to the individual papers.

Acknowledgements

According to the dictionary, a PhD is "a degree awarded to people who have done advanced research into a particular subject" (Collins, 2019). However, a PhD is also a personal experience that stretches over several years. I have been fortunate that a lot of amazing people made my PhD experience truly great and rewarding, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of you.

First of all, thank you Jakob Tolstrup and Svend-Erik Skaaning for being great supervisors. You have both been welcoming and committed to supervising me, providing thorough and often challenging comments, pushing my work forward, as well as giving good advice on life in academia. I appreciate the honest and straightforward (some would maybe say blunt) atmosphere you both provide. It has been valuable that I could always discuss freely with you. As an additional bonus, it has been a pleasure spending time with either of you after office hours at various workshop dinners, parties, conferences in exotic places like Brussels and Baltimore, and, somewhat unexpectedly, even my 30th birthday. Jakob, thank you for also being a great coauthor.

It has been rewarding to be part of a strong research group, both in terms of getting inspiration, insightful feedback, and support in one's daily battles against annoying country codes and inconsistent arguments. Thank you for this Suthan, Fenja, Lasse R, Alexander TG, Jørgen M, Michael Bang, Jonathan, David, Mikkel S, Bertel, Tore, and Sirianne. A special thank you to Henrikas for meticulously reading, commenting, and discussing my work – it has been very valuable.

Since my research interests often lie somewhere between the fields of International Relations and Comparative Politics, I am happy that I have been a member of both the Comparative Politics (warm countries) section and the International Relations section. Thank you to both sections for being welcoming and for giving constructive as well as challenging comments on my work.

There are a number of people with whom I have spent a lot of time during my time as a PhD student; people I have learned a lot from, people I have enjoyed travelling with, people who have listened (somewhat politely) to my jokes and complaints, people I have played weekly football with, people I have had a lot of coffee with, people I have had a lot of beers with, and so on. Thank you for making these three years very enjoyable Suthan, David, Mikkel S, Mathilde Cecchini, Jonas Gejl, Julian, Niels Bjørn, Rasmus Skytte, Mathias O., Peter Langsæther, Thomas Ryan, Henrik, Nicolas, Jasper, Fenja, Frederik J, Lasse L, Alexander B, Jakob H, Matilde T, Ane, Vilde, Dani, Andreas A, Philipp, Rachel, Søren K, Mette B, Andreas K, and in particular Sadi, Mikkel, Morten, and Anne, for also being very nice office mates.

Thank you Ruth Ramm, Malene Poulsen, Birgit Kanstrup, Susanne Vang, Helle Bundgaard, Ida Warburg, and Lene Hjøllund, for the all the help and patience with administrative issues. Thank you Annette Bruun Andersen, Helle Hornemann Møller, and Anja Dalsgaard, for great language editing and for putting up with delayed deadlines. You have all been kind to me, which matters a lot in everyday work.

I would also like to thank the staff at the Department of Government at the University of Essex for being very friendly and welcoming to me in the spring of 2018. In particular, thank you Kristian Skrede Gleditsch for hosting me, discussing my research, and including me in the PhD workshops; Tobias Böhmelt and Robert Johns for great comments; The PhD group (Andres, Katariina, Marco, Malte, Jimena, Joash, Kostis, Ryan, Liz, David, Craig, Roman, Marina, Christine, Laura, Sayan, Alex, Agnes, Aziz, Karin, and Chris) for letting me be a part of your great group – I very much enjoyed your company; Ken and Max for going out in Wivenhoe and Colchester; and Kakia for being a nice officemate.

Finally, I would like to thank the people closest to me: Mom, dad, Sofie, the Jessen Hansen clan, and my friends, for always being there for me. To my grandparents, Johannes, Else, Nanna, and Erik, thank you for being a big part of my life and for your unlimited thrust and love. Two of you are not among us anymore and I miss you very much. I hope I will be able to carry some of your kindness with me. In the end, Kristina, without you this PhD would not have existed. Quite literally, since you sparked my interest in the PhD program in Aarhus with all the exciting stories you told about it, supported/tolerated me throughout the three years, and even co-authored one of the papers of the dissertation. But setting work aside, thank you for sharing your life with me, I cannot think of anything better in the world than spending time with you.

Casper Sakstrup
February 2019
The Dolomites, Italy

Chapter 1:
Introduction

"War, to be abolished, must be understood.
To be understood, it must be studied."
(Deutsch 1970, 473)

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, two bloody and devastating civil wars[1] took place in the period 1996-2003 (Prunier 2009; UCDP 2018b). The first Congo War was an armed rebellion led by the Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo (AFDL) against the government forces of President Mobutu 1996-1997 (Prunier 2009, 113ff.; UCDP 2018b). The AFDL succeeded in toppling President Mobutu and installed a new government under President Laurent-Désiré Kabila in May 1997 (ibid.). But the new government's political power base quickly crumbled and armed conflict broke out again in August 1998, this time between pro-government forces of President Kabila and the newly aligned opposition groups in Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie and Mouvement de libération congolais (Prunier 2009, 181ff.; UCDP 2018b). Heavy fighting continued until late 2001, and a peace agreement was eventually reached in December 2002 (Prunier 2009, 277; UCDP 2018b). It is estimated that around 80,000 people died directly from the violence in these conflicts (UCDP 2018b), and several million died due to "disruption of health services, poor food security, deterioration of infrastructure and population displacement" (Coghlan et al. 2007, iii).

The conflicts in DR Congo not only illustrate the devastating nature of intrastate armed conflict; they also show that third-party involvement[2] by foreign states can play a major role in such conflicts. Several third-party countries were heavily involved in the AFDL-led rebellion against Mobutu in 1996-1997. Uganda and Rwanda backed the AFDL with large numbers of troops, weapons, and training (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011; Tamm 2016; UCDP 2018b). In addition, the AFDL received military support from Angola, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (ibid.). Even more third-party states became involved in the second conflict from 1998 to 2003. Chad, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Sudan supported the pro-government forces of President Kabila, while

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[1] The terms civil war, intrastate armed conflict, intrastate conflict, and civil conflict are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. See definition in Chapter 2.
[2] The terms third-party involvement, engagement, intervention, and support are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. See definition in Chapter 3.

Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda switched sides and supported the opposition forces (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011; Tamm 2016). The scale of involvement was even greater than in the first conflict and included large numbers of troops, heavy air support, weapons, logistics, funding, training, and more (ibid.).

Most authors agree that the third-party involvement in DR Congo was instrumental in fueling the violence, especially in the very bloody second conflict (e.g., Tamm 2016; Prunier 2009). The involvement also had consequences for the third-party states themselves, not least financially. For example, The World Bank estimated in 1999 that Zimbabwe was spending $27 million a month on its engagement in DR Congo – a number that kept rising until late in 2000 when the Zimbabwean economy could no longer sustain the costs (Prunier 2009, 239f.).

The civil war in Syria is another, more recent, example of such third-party involvement. Throughout the conflict, the Assad regime has been heavily supported by Iran and Russia while various opposition groups have been supported by the USA, France, Britain, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, among others (Friedman 2018; Laub 2017). On top of this, more than 20 countries have been militarily involved in Syria in connection with the fight against ISIL (U.S. Department of State 2017). As in the conflicts in DR Congo, most observers of the Syrian Civil War have noted that this third-party involvement has added fuel to the conflict and contributed to its protracted character (e.g., Friedman 2018; McDowall 2018; Phillips 2016). Again, the involvement has also been costly for the third parties. For example, it is estimated that the Russian air campaign starting in September 2015 alone cost $2.3 to $4 million per day, but the real numbers may be even larger as they are kept secret by the Russian government (Hobson 2015).

The conflicts in DR Congo and Syria thus illustrate that third-party involvement can play a major role in civil wars. And they are not unique in this regard. Research shows that third-party involvement is a widespread phenomenon. According to several independent data sources, third-party involvement by foreign states occurred in more than two-thirds of all intrastate armed conflicts in the post-WWII period (D. E. Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013; Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011; Regan 2002). Research also shows that third-party involvement systematically affects the course, outcome, and aftermath of intrastate armed conflicts. Besides increasing the probability of victory for the supported conflict actor (e.g., Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce 2008; B. T. Jones 2017; Gent 2008), studies show that third-party involvement prolongs and intensifies conflicts (e.g., Regan 2002; Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012) and even causes a worse post-conflict environment with a higher risk of conflict recurrence (Karlén 2017; Kim 2017).

1.1 Research questions

Extensive research has investigated why third-party states get involved in civil wars. These studies show that both transnational linkages (e.g., economic, ethnic, colonial, and security ties) and conflict characteristics (e.g., the risk of conflict contagion, the strength and structure of rebel groups, existence of natural resources, and the presence of other third-party states) are important drivers of third-party involvement (Bove, Gleditsch, and Sekeris 2016; Findley and Teo 2006; Kathman 2011; Koga 2011; Regan 1998; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011; Stojek and Chacha 2015). However, there is little systematic research on whether domestic factors such as political institutions affect countries' likelihood of involving themselves in civil wars abroad (for an exception, see, Koga 2011). This is surprising, since domestic factors in general, and in particular political institutions, have played a central role in explaining foreign policy behavior in interstate disputes and conflicts (e.g., Oneal and Russett 1999; Lake 1992; Dafoe, Oneal, and Russett 2013).

The case of Syria illustrates that domestic political processes concerning third-party involvement vary markedly between countries. In the US, during the summer of 2013, a large-scale military intervention in Syria was intensely debated in the media as well as in Congress (Ackerman 2013; Baker and Weisman 2013). One of the issues raised in this connection was the substantial lack of support in the US public for such an intervention (Dugan 2013; Page 2013; Steinhauser and Helton 2013). In fact, the proposed intervention in Syria had a lower level of public support than any other major US military operation proposed since the end of the Cold War (Dugan 2013). The Obama administration eventually decided not to go forward with the intervention. In Russia, this process looked very different. There was no public debate or discussions about public opinion preceding the Russian government's decision to launch a large-scale military intervention in Syria in September 2015. It seems likely that such domestic differences could matter for decisions about third-party involvement. However, as mentioned above, there is little systematic research on this issue. To address this research gap, the dissertation examines the following first research question:

> RQ 1: Do domestic-level factors affect the likelihood of third-party involvement in ongoing intrastate armed conflict?

Turning to the consequences of third-party involvement, extensive research shows that third-party involvement by foreign states crucially affects the course, outcome, and even aftermath of intrastate armed conflicts (see above). With such a substantial impact of current third-party involvement, it seems

plausible that past and potential third-party involvement could have important consequences as well. For example, in the cases of Syria and DR Congo, it was clear already before armed conflict broke out that several third-party states could get involved. The Assad regime in Syria had longstanding alliances with Iran and Russia (e.g., Goodarzi 2009; Gaub and Popescu 2013), while it had a history of diplomatic conflict with the US over the occupation of Lebanon, support to terrorism, and the development of weapons of mass destruction (e.g., U.S. Department of State 2018). Also in DR Congo, a whole range of crosscutting and ever-changing transnational alliances existed before each conflict (e.g., Tamm 2016). It seems likely that domestic actors will consider such potential third-party involvement, since it could substantially alter their bargaining power. How does this affect the likelihood of conflict, if at all? Only few studies have investigated this, and the results are mixed. Cunningham (2016) finds that potential third-party involvement decreases the risk of intrastate armed conflict, Gleditsch (2007) and Thyne (2006) find that potential third-party involvement increases the risk of intrastate armed conflict, while Cetinyan (2002) finds that potential third-party involvement does not affect the risk of intrastate armed conflict.

Research is even scarcer when it comes to the consequences of past third-party involvement, especially research that looks far back in time. To the best of my knowledge, no studies have systematically investigated whether past third-party involvement in the form of European colonization has affected present-day conditions for intrastate armed conflict. In fact, only very few studies have investigated whether deep historical factors affect contemporary intrastate armed conflicts in general (Fearon and Laitin 2014; Wig 2016). This is surprising, since a range of influential studies have demonstrated that deep historical factors such as early state development, colonization, and slave trade, have had long-term effects in other important areas including economic development and democratization (e.g., Hariri 2012; Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2002; Nunn 2008, 2008). Against this backdrop, the dissertation examines the following second research question:

> RQ2: Does past and potential third-party involvement affect the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict?

1.2 Overview of arguments and papers

In addressing the first research question, the dissertation argues that two interconnected domestic determinants affect the likelihood of third-party involvement by foreign states in civil war: political institutions and public opin-

ion (Paper A and Paper B). In Paper A, which is coauthored with Jakob Tolstrup, I argue that democratic countries are less likely than autocratic countries to get involved in intrastate armed conflicts due to three particular democratic characteristics: competitive elections, checks on the executive, and critical media. Together, these three characteristics raise the political cost of getting involved in intrastate armed conflict, which makes democratic leaders more cautious in pursuing such foreign policies. We find empirical support for this argument in analyses of all countries in the world in the period 1975-2009.

The constraining effect of competitive elections highlighted in Paper A builds on the assumption that electorates will punish political leaders for getting involved in costly conflicts. In Paper B, which is coauthored with Kristina Jessen Hansen, I dig deeper into this assumption by investigating citizens' responsiveness to the costs of armed conflict. Extant research shows that citizens are highly sensitive to the human costs of conflict in the form of casualties when deciding whether to support or oppose involvement in conflict (e.g., Gartner 2008; Johns and Davies 2017; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009; Mueller 1973), but only few studies have investigated under what conditions citizens are more or less willing to accept these costs (Gartner and Segura 2000; Kriner and Shen 2014). Building on insights from psychology, Paper B argues that the emotions of anger and fear moderate citizens' responsiveness to casualties. We find some initial empirical support for this argument in three survey experiments, all showing that citizens tend to respond more strongly to casualties when they are induced to feel fear in contrast to anger. Combined with Paper A, these findings indicate that democratic countries will be particularly unlikely to get involved in costly intrastate armed conflicts when emotions of fear are prevalent among the electorate, while they will be less cautious when emotions of anger are prevalent among the electorate.

Turning to the consequences of past and potential third-party involvement, I argue in Paper C that uncertainty is the key to understanding how potential third-party involvement affects the risk of intrastate armed conflict. Specifically, I propose that uncertainty about potential third-party involvement increases the risk of intrastate armed conflict, and that irregular leader change in neighboring countries is an important cause of such uncertainty. I find robust empirical support for this argument in a global sample of countries in the period 1946-2014.

Paper D demonstrates that past third-party involvement in the form of European colonization in conjuncture with strong precolonial states has had long-term consequences for the risk of intrastate armed conflict. I argue in Paper D that European colonization caused fragmented authority structures in countries outside Europe that had strong precolonial states. Such fragmented authority structures hindered the development of a state monopoly on

violence over time, resulting in a higher risk of intrastate armed conflict that persists today. I find robust empirical evidence in support of this argument using cross-sectional methods as well as instrument variable estimation in a sample of all countries outside Europe.

In sum, this PhD dissertation contributes new knowledge about third-party involvement in ongoing intrastate armed conflict by demonstrating that domestic-level factors, specifically political institutions and public opinion, affect countries' likelihood of getting involved in intrastate armed conflicts abroad. Furthermore, the dissertation contributes new knowledge about countries' likelihood of having intrastate armed conflicts in the first place by uncovering that uncertainty about potential third-party involvement and European colonization in conjuncture with precolonial state development both increase the risk of intrastate armed conflict.

Figure 1. Overview of papers in the dissertation

Armed intrastate conflict

Uncertainty **Paper C**

Authority structure **Paper D**

Future expectations

European colonization

Third-party involvement

Political institutions **Paper A**

Public opinion **Paper B**

Competitive elections
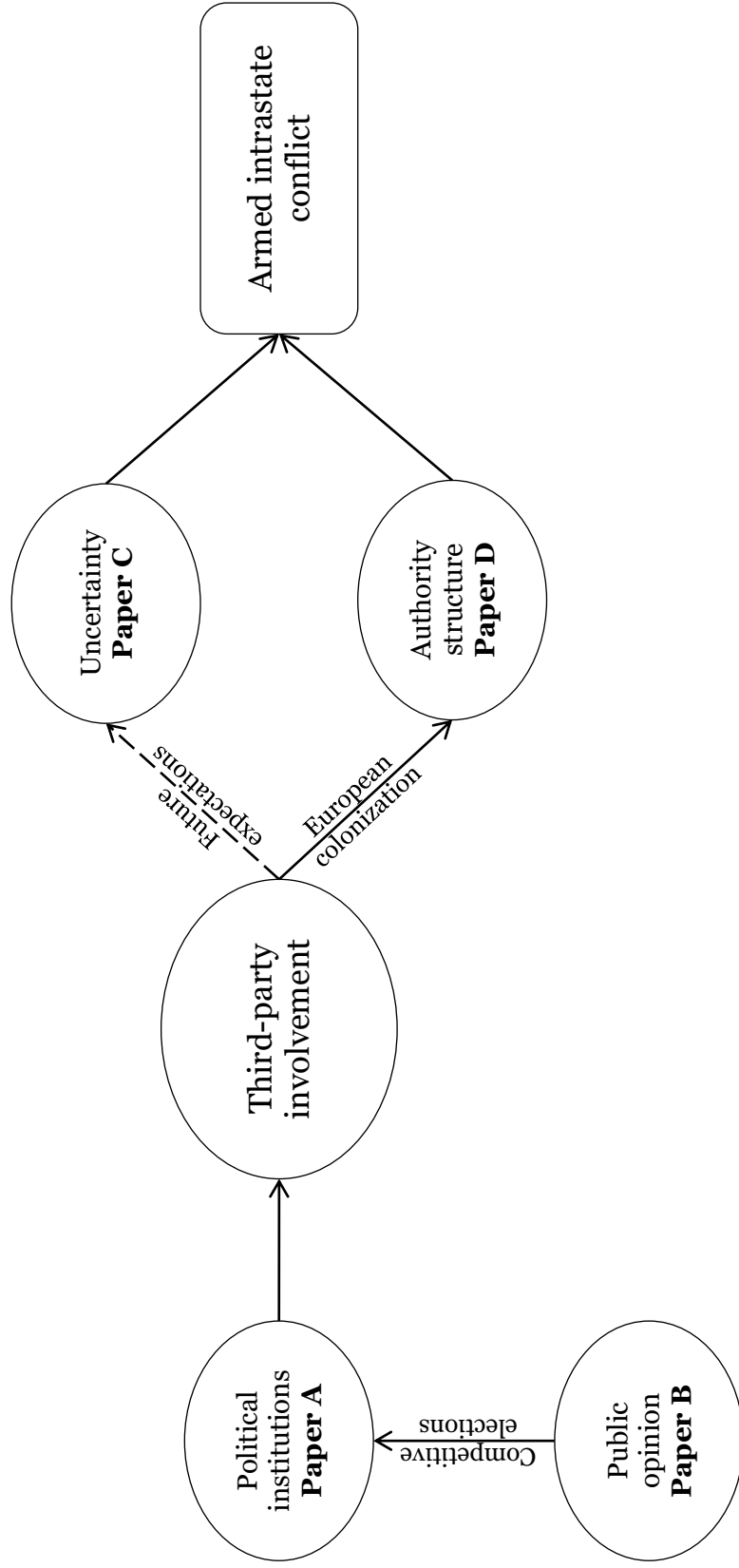
1.3 Structure of summary report

This summary report is structured in six main chapters. Chapter 2 defines civil war and presents extant research on the covariates of civil war. Chapter 3 introduces the topic of third-party involvement and outlines the dissertation's core theoretical arguments. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the data and methods used to test these arguments empirically, and Chapter 5 presents the main findings. Finally, Chapter 6 briefly summarizes the dissertations' key contributions and lays out some potential avenues for future research.

Chapter 2:
Civil war

2.1 Definition

The terms civil war, civil conflict, and intrastate armed conflict broadly refer to a subgroup of armed conflicts that take place between the government of a state and an internal opposition group (e.g., Sambanis 2004).[3] Such conflicts are typically distinguished from interstate conflicts, which take place between states, and colonial conflicts, which take place between a state and a non-state entity outside of the state's core territory (ibid.).

The specific definition and operationalization of intrastate, interstate, and colonial armed conflict that guide this dissertation come from the UCDP/ PRIO[4] Armed Conflict Dataset (N. P. Gleditsch et al. 2002). Armed conflict is defined as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year" (UCDP 2018a; see also, N. P. Gleditsch et al. 2002, 618f.). If the government of a state is fighting an internal opposition group (or groups), the conflict is characterized as an intrastate armed conflict (ibid.). If the government of a state is fighting the government of another state, the conflict is characterized as an interstate conflict, and if the government of a state is fighting a non-state group outside its own territory, the conflict is classified as an extrasystemic (colonial) conflict (ibid.).

Based on these definitions, Figure 2 illustrates the prevalence of armed conflicts in the world since the end of WWII. The figure clearly shows that intrastate armed conflict has been the dominant type of conflict in this period. Especially since the beginning of the 1960s, the world has witnessed a high number of intrastate armed conflicts each year, peaking at fifty-one active intrastate armed conflicts in 2015 and 2016. In contrast, interstate armed conflicts have been relatively rare throughout the period with a maximum of five active interstate conflicts in one year (1967, 1969, and 1987), while colonial conflicts ceased to exist after the last big wave of decolonization ended in the

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[3] Some scholars reserve the term civil war for conflicts that are particularly violent (e.g., Blattman and Miguel 2010, 3). As mentioned earlier, this dissertation uses the terms interchangeably.

[4] Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

1970s. At the latest count covering 2017, there were forty-eight ongoing intrastate armed conflicts and one ongoing interstate armed conflict in the world (Pettersson and Eck 2018). As illustrated by the map in Figure 3, intrastate armed conflicts have taken place in most parts of the world. More than half of all countries have experienced one year or more of intrastate armed conflict since the end of WWII, and no regions have been able to completely avoid intrastate armed conflict. However, some regions have had substantially more of these conflicts than others; in particular Central Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia.

Figure 2. Annual number of active armed conflicts stacked by type 1946-2017
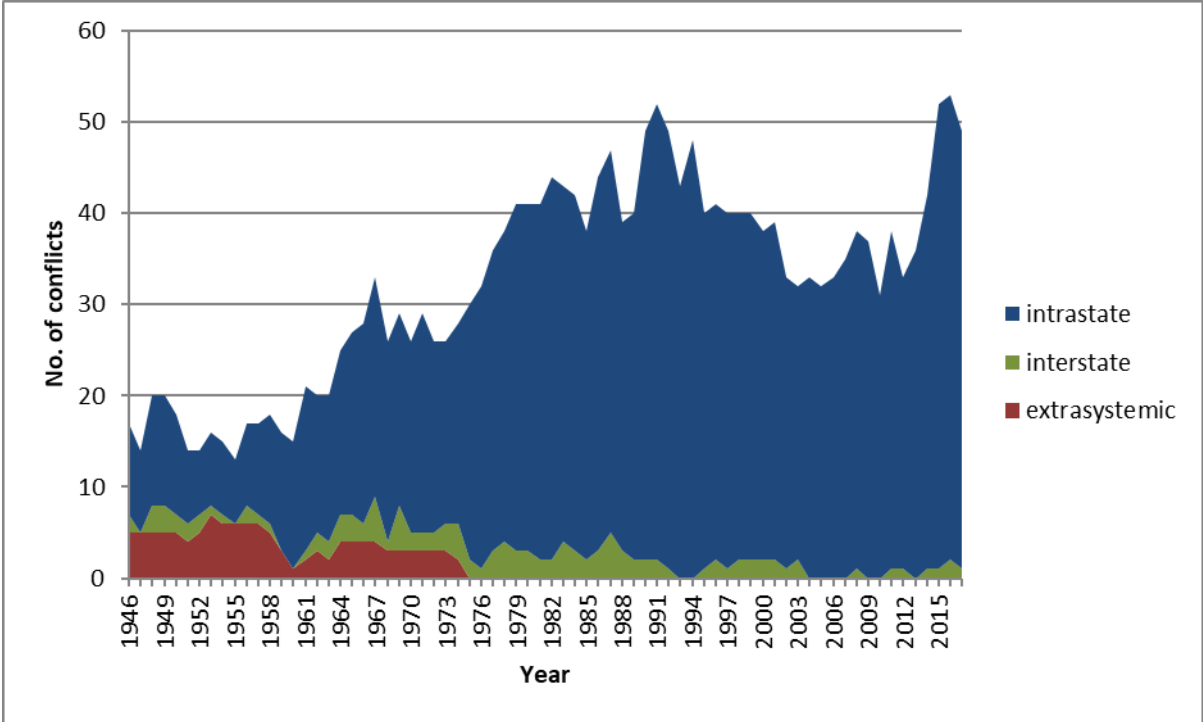
Note: Based on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.18.1 (N. P. Gleditsch et al. 2002; Pettersson and Eck 2018).

Naturally, there are other definitions and operationalizations of intrastate armed conflict than the one provided by the UCDP/PRIO, for example from the Correlates of War Project (Sarkees and Wayman 2010). However, UCDP/PRIO's definition and operationalization are by far the most used in quantitative conflict research (Dixon 2009, 723 note 12).[5] Hence, employing

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[5] Based on a literature review in 2009, Dixon finds that 40 % of the reviewed studies use the UCDP/PRIO dataset, which makes it the most widely used dataset. The second most used dataset is the Correlates of War data, used by 16 % of the reviewed studies. Based on Google Scholar citations as of 17 October 2018, the UCDP/PRIO dataset is still the most widely used today with 3342 citations since 2001 on the main

this definition and operationalization ensures that the dissertation's results are comparable with the majority of studies in the field. A separate advantage of the UCDP/PRIO definition's high popularity is that many other key data sources in conflict research are directly compatible with it, which further increases comparability across studies in the discipline.

Figure 3. Map of all countries color graded by the number of years with intrastate armed conflict 1946-2017
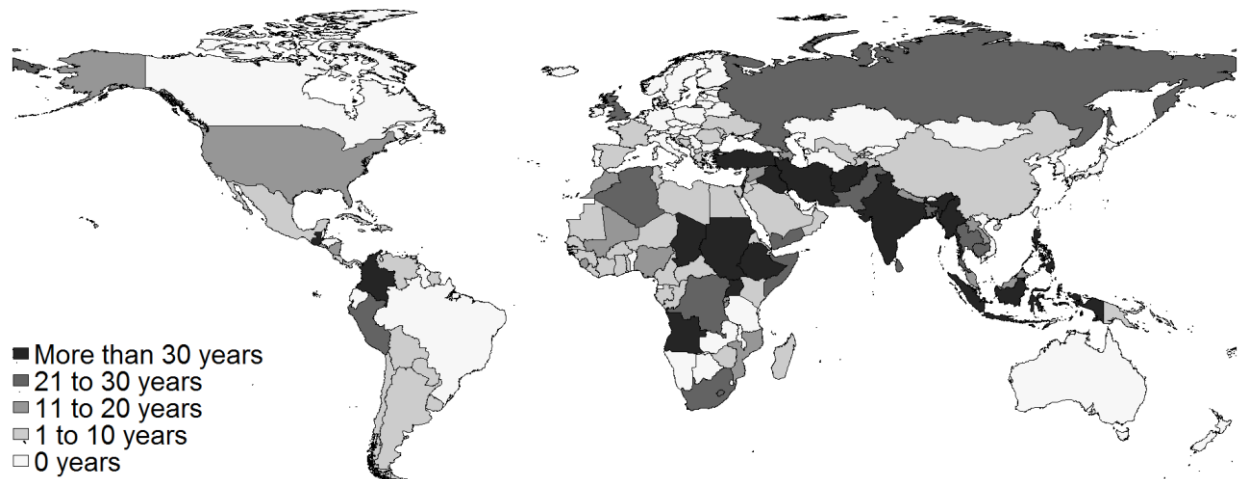

Note: Based on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v18.1 (N. P. Gleditsch et al. 2002; Pettersson and Eck 2018). Countries not included in the dataset are not shown on the map.

Even though UCDP/PRIO's definition and operationalization of intrastate armed conflict are the most widely used, they are not without flaws. One downside is that the strict coding rules employed in the data collection produce a few odd cases, which seem qualitatively different from other cases in the dataset. The most notable example is the intrastate armed conflict between the US government and al-Qaida after the 9/11 terror attacks. This conflict fulfills the criteria of an intrastate armed conflict, but it seems different from most other intrastate armed conflicts in the dataset, not least because most of the fighting took place outside US territory in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UCDP 2018d). To reduce the risk that such odd cases affect the results of the empirical analyses, I conduct a number of robustness checks in each paper. These checks include removing influential observations and removing whole regions of countries from the analyses.[6]

reference (N. P. Gleditsch et al. 2002), while the two main references for the Correlates of War data since 2000 have a total of 1397 citations (Sarkees and Schafer 2000; Sarkees and Wayman 2010).

[6] In Paper C and Paper D there are no signs that any single country or group of countries has a disproportionate effect on the results. However, in Paper A, the intrastate armed conflicts related to the 9/11 terror attacks do affect the main results because

2.2 The correlates of civil war

Some countries are more likely than others to experience intrastate armed conflicts. Extant research has explained this variation by pointing to a range of primarily structural factors that affect either the *opportunities* for organizing intrastate armed conflicts or the *grievances* motivating intrastate armed conflicts (for extensive reviews, see Dixon 2009; Cederman and Vogt 2017). Factors that increase opportunities for armed rebellion include low state capacity, which makes states less able to detect and deter rebellions; rugged terrain, which is better suited for guerilla warfare; poverty, because it lowers the alternative costs to fighting; and lootable natural resources, which can be a source of rebel finance (e.g., Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Hegre and Sambanis 2006). Factors that increase grievances and thus motivate intrastate armed conflicts include inequalities between groups in society, most notably the political and economic exclusion of ethnic groups (see e.g. Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010; Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011).

In addition to these well-established structural determinants of intrastate armed conflict, it is still debated in the literature whether certain political regime types, or certain political institutions, affect the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict. Some studies have found that anocracies (also called semi-democracies or hybrid regimes) are more prone to intrastate armed conflict than autocracies and democracies (Hegre 2001), but other studies have refuted this finding (Vreeland 2008). Recent studies using improved methods and data show a more nuanced relationship (e.g., Z. M. Jones and Lupu 2018; Bartusevičius and Skaaning 2018). Another debated issue is whether different climate phenomena such as droughts, floods, heat waves, etc., affect the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict. A range of studies have found evidence that out-of-the-normal precipitation and temperatures increase the risk of intrastate armed conflict (e.g., Hsiang, Burke, and Miguel 2013; Hsiang, Meng, and Cane 2011; O'Loughlin et al. 2012), but other studies have questioned the empirical robustness and theoretical underpinnings of these findings (e.g., Buhaug 2016; Buhaug et al. 2014; Theisen, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013).

2.3 Purely a domestic phenomenon?

Most research investigating the determinants of intrastate armed conflict, such as the studies reviewed above, tend to view intrastate armed conflict as the result of primarily domestic conditions and processes. However, ample

a large number of third-party states supported the US government in this conflict. We discuss this further in Paper A.

evidence from other areas of conflict research shows that intrastate armed conflicts have crucial international aspects as well. One such important aspect is third-party involvement, which is the focus of this dissertation. However, before I turn to third-party involvement in the following chapter, it is important to note that other international aspects of intrastate armed conflict exist as well. One important aspect to mention here is diffusion, which is the tendency of intrastate armed conflicts to spread in space across national borders (for an extensive review, see Forsberg 2014). Diffusion effects are often divided into direct and indirect effects (Forsberg 2014, 193; Saideman 2012, 714f.). Direct diffusion happens when intrastate armed conflicts spread from a conflict country into neighboring countries directly via flows of combatants, refugees, and weapons (ibid.). Indirect diffusion, also called demonstration effects, happens when intrastate armed conflicts spread via ideas, tactics, and strategies, from a conflict country into other countries (Forsberg 2014, 193f.; Saideman 2012, 715). An example is the spread of the Arab uprisings in 2011 (e.g., Saideman 2012).

Chapter 3:
Third-party involvement

3.1 Definition

Third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflict is a broad phenomenon. There are many different types of third-party actors, and there are many different ways in which they get involved in intrastate armed conflicts. Third-party actors can include foreign states, NGOs, terror groups, private companies, international organizations, and regional organizations. These actors can get involved in conflicts in different ways such as by supplying conflict parties with troops, weapons, funds, intelligence, etc., acting as a mediator between conflict parties, or deploying peacekeeping troops to protect civilians.

The existing literature typically focuses on one of the following four broad categories of third-party involvement. First, support from foreign states to one or more conflict parties, most often in the form of military or economic support. This type of involvement is the dissertations' main focus (see more below). Second, deployment of peacekeeping troops with various objectives, most often under a UN mandate (see e.g. Fortna 2004; Eck and Hultman 2007). Third, peace mediation between conflict parties undertaken by foreign states, the UN, or regional organizations (see e.g. Beardsley 2008; Svensson 2009). Fourth, sanctions imposed on one or more of the conflict parties by foreign states, the EU, the UN, or regional organizations (see e.g. Lektzian and Regan 2016; Hultman and Peksen 2017).

This PhD dissertation focuses on third-party involvement by foreign states. Specifically, in addressing the first research question concerning the domestic determinants of third-party involvement, Paper A and Paper B investigate third-party involvement in the form of a foreign state directly supporting one or more of the warring parties fighting in an ongoing intrastate armed conflict. In Paper A, we use the UCDP External Support Dataset to identify third-party involvement (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011). This data allows us to analyze combat-intensive types of support from foreign states including troops and weapons, as well as less combat-intensive types of support such as funds, intelligence material, expertise, training, access to military and intelligence infrastructure, and access to territory useful as sanctuary. In Paper B, we focus only on the first type of involvement, combat-intensive support with troops.

In addressing the second research question concerning the consequences of past and potential third-party involvement, Paper C and Paper D also focus on third-party involvement by foreign states. Paper C investigates *potential* third-party involvement by foreign states, that is, expectations about support from a foreign state to one or more conflict actors in case of a future intrastate armed conflict. Paper D investigates *past* third-party involvement in the form of European colonization, that is, European countries partly or fully settling and controlling societies across the globe starting from around 1500 AD.

3.2 Third-party involvement in ongoing intrastate armed conflict

3.2.1 Prevalence

According to several independent data sources, more than two-thirds of all intrastate armed conflicts since WWII have had one or more third-party states involved directly with support to one or more of the warring parties (D. E. Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013; Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011; Regan 2002). For example, Regan finds state-sponsored military or economic intervention in 101 out of 150 civil wars (67 %) in the period 1945-1999 (Regan 2002). Cunningham et al. find that rebel groups, governments, or both, received explicit external support in 142 out of 204 intrastate armed conflicts (70 %) in the period 1946-2011 (D. E. Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013),[7] and the UCDP External Support Dataset identifies third-party support from one or more foreign states to one or more conflict parties in 103 out of 145 intrastate armed conflicts (71 %) in the period 1975-2009.

As illustrated by the map in Figure 4, third-party involvement happens in conflicts across the world, and there is substantial variation in the number of third-party states involved in each conflict country. For example, seventeen different third-party states were involved in the intrastate armed conflicts in Sudan, while only one third-party state (the US) was involved in the conflicts in Colombia (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011).

In addition to being widespread, third-party involvement by foreign states is also the most common type of third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflicts. Foreign states account for 85.9 % of all observations (dyad-years) of external support to warring parties in intrastate armed conflicts in the period

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[7] The Non-State Actor Data version 3.4.

1975-2009 identified in the UCDP External Support Dataset (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011), while non-state actors account for the remaining 14.1 % of the observations.[8]

Figure 4. Map of countries with intrastate armed conflict color graded by the number of third-party states involved 1975-2009

- 10 or more third-party states
- 7, 8, or 9 third-party states
- 4, 5, or 6 third-party states
- 1, 2, or 3 third-party states
- No third-party states
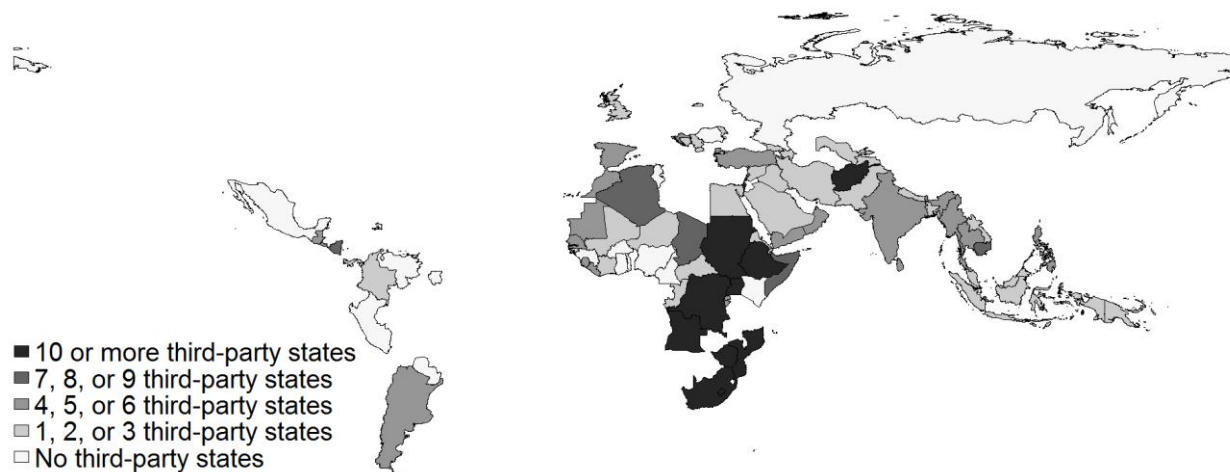
Note: Based on the UCDP External Support Dataset v.1.0 (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011). The intrastate armed conflicts related to the 9/11 terror attacks in the US are not shown. Countries that did not have an intrastate armed conflict in the period 1975-2009 are not shown.

3.2.2 Effects on conflict course and outcome

Ample evidence shows that third-party involvement by foreign states in ongoing armed intrastate conflicts substantially affects the course, outcome, and even aftermath, of the conflicts. Third-party involvement can affect the outcome of conflicts by altering the balance of power between the warring parties. Studies show that third-party support to rebel groups substantially increases the probability of a rebel-favorable outcome (Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce 2008; Gent 2008; Sullivan and Karreth 2015). For example, the rebel forces in Libya received substantive military support from a large group of Western and Middle Eastern countries in 2011 (e.g., Kuperman 2015). At the time of the intervention, rebel forces were clearly in the defensive against the

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[8] The non-state category includes cases such as the Algerian diaspora supporting the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria (GIA) with funds in the 1990s; the Kurdish diaspora supporting the PKK (Kurdistan's Workers Party) in Turkey with funds; and Charles Taylor's rebel group the National Patriotic Front of Liberia providing weapons, training, logistics, and access to territory, to the rebels in the Revolutionary United Front in neighboring Sierra Leone in the 1990s (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011).

forces of the Gaddafi regime, but the heavy military support provided by the third-party states, especially from the air, changed the picture, and the rebels prevailed (e.g., Kuperman 2015, 71).

The results regarding pro-government support are more mixed. Gent (2008) shows that third-party intervention on behalf of a government in an intrastate armed conflict does not make a government victory more likely. In contrast, Balch-Lindsay et al. (2008) find that interventions on the government side shorten the time until a government victory. Likewise, Akcinaroglu (2012) shows that pro-government intervention decreases the likelihood of rebel victory, and Sullivan and Karreth (2015) show that pro-government interventions increase the likelihood of government victory, provided that the government is lacking conventional fighting capacity vis-à-vis the rebels. Finally, a recent study by B. T. Jones (2017) finds that the effectiveness of both pro-government interventions and pro-rebel interventions depends on how long the conflict has been running and the strategy of the intervention (indirect, direct-conventional, or direct-unconventional).

Third-party involvement by foreign states also affects the course of intrastate armed conflicts. Most notably, third-party involvement can complicate and fuel conflicts, making them longer and more violent. Several studies have found that intrastate armed conflicts with third-party involvement are longer (Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce 2008; Elbadawi 2000; Regan 2002; Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012), in particular when several third parties intervene on opposing sides in the conflict (Aydin and Regan 2012). Furthermore, studies show that intrastate armed conflicts with third-party involvement have more civilian casualties (Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012) and a worse post-conflict environment with a higher likelihood of conflict recurrence (Karlén 2017; Kim 2017). The conflicts in DR Congo and Syria discussed in the introduction chapter clearly illustrate these negative effects of third-party involvement.

3.3 Domestic determinants of third-party involvement

Why do foreign states get involved in civil wars? These involvements often end up being very costly both in terms of human costs, economic costs, and sometimes reputational costs. A large research effort has uncovered several factors that affect countries' likelihood of getting involved in intrastate armed conflicts. These studies show that transnational ties between countries, such as alliance and security ties, ethnic ties, economic ties, colonial ties, and not least ties to other third parties already engaged in the conflict (friend or foe), substantially increase the likelihood of third-party involvement (e.g., Bove,

Gleditsch, and Sekeris 2016; Chacha and Stojek 2016; Findley and Teo 2006; Regan 1998; Stojek and Chacha 2015). In addition, several conflict characteristics motivate third-party involvement. Studies show that conflicts with higher risks of spreading into neighboring countries, conflicts in countries where oil and diamonds are present, and conflicts with well-structured and moderately strong rebel groups, are more likely to attract third-party involvement (e.g., Bove, Gleditsch, and Sekeris 2016; Kathman 2011; Koga 2011; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011).

As discussed in the introduction, few studies have investigated whether countries' domestic makeup affects their likelihood of getting involved in intrastate armed conflicts abroad (for an exception, see, Koga 2011). This is surprising, since domestic-level factors have played a major role in explaining the behavior of states with regard to interstate conflicts and disputes, in particular within the liberal school of thought (e.g., Oneal and Russett 1997; Dafoe, Oneal, and Russett 2013). This dissertation argues that two interrelated domestic factors, political institutions and public opinion, affect the likelihood of third-party involvement.

3.3.1 Political institutions (Paper A)

In cooperation with Jakob Tolstrup, I develop a theoretical argument connecting political institutions to decisions about third-party involvement in civil war. Put briefly, the argument holds that democratic political systems feature three crucial characteristics that constrain leaders' decisions regarding third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflicts: competitive elections, checks on the executive, and critical media. These constraints are either absent or much weaker in autocratic political systems.

First, the presence of regular competitive elections means that democratically elected leaders run the risk of losing political power on election day if a civil war involvement turns unpopular. Second, democratic leaders often need parliamentary approval to initiate and uphold involvement in an intrastate armed conflict. Such processes have many potential dead ends, especially since the opposition has incentives to gain support by highlighting the large costs of involvement. Third, the free critical media in democracies have a strong interest in further uncovering and discussing the costs and benefits of an involvement, which reinforces the two other constraints.

These three constraining characteristics of democratic systems are also relevant in terms of understanding the specific types of civil war involvements that countries engage in. We argue that democracies will be particularly less likely than autocracies to intervene with combat-intensive forms of support, such as troops and weapons, because the costs of these types of involvement

are more visible, and visibility is an important driver for all three constraints pointed out above.

In sum, while the constraining characteristics of democratic systems do not prohibit leaders from getting involved in intrastate armed conflicts abroad, they do raise the political costs of doing so. This means that democratic leaders have a lot to lose when intervening in intrastate armed conflicts, which makes them on average less likely than autocratic leaders to pursue this particular kind of foreign policy.

3.3.2 Public opinion (Paper B)

The constraining effect of competitive elections highlighted above builds on the assumption that democratically elected leaders are likely to lose support among the electorate, and thus potentially lose political power, as a consequence of getting involved in costly intrastate armed conflicts. This requires that citizens are indeed skeptic of costly civil war involvement. Extensive research has found that citizens are in fact very responsive to the costs of armed conflict, especially the human costs in terms of casualties (e.g., Gartner 2008; Gartner and Segura 1998; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009; Johns and Davies 2017; Mueller 1973). Citizens react to casualties because they are a salient, visible, and systematic measure of a conflict's current and future cost (e.g., Gartner 2008, 96). As casualties rise, citizens become less supportive of continued engagement in armed conflict, and equally as the risk of future casualties rises, citizens become less supportive of a proposed conflict engagement (e.g., Gartner 2008; Gartner and Segura 1998; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009; Johns and Davies 2017; Mueller 1973).

In spite of the substantive amount of research in this field, few studies have investigated what moderates citizens' responsiveness to casualties. So far, studies show that citizens react more strongly to casualties originating from their own area and to casualties that are socially unequal (Gartner and Segura 2000; Kriner and Shen 2014). Together with Kristina Jessen Hansen, I propose a fundamentally different moderator of citizens' responsiveness to casualties. We argue that citizens differ in their response to the human costs of conflict depending on their emotional state. Building on insights from psychology regarding the role of emotions in information processing and behavioral response (e.g., Ferrer et al. 2017; Lerner and Keltner 2001), we argue that citizens will be less responsive to the risk of casualties when they are experiencing emotions of anger, but more responsive to the risk of casualties when experiencing emotions of fear.

This argument brings further nuance to the theoretical model of Paper A. When combined, the arguments lead us to expect that democratic countries

will be particularly cautious to get involved in intrastate armed conflicts when emotions of fear are dominating in the electorate, but less cautious when emotions of anger are dominating in the electorate.

3.4 Consequences of past and potential third-party involvement

As discussed in the introduction, most research about the consequences of third-party involvement focuses on third-party involvement in ongoing intrastate armed conflict, but only few studies have systematically investigated whether past and potential third-party involvement may affect the risk of intrastate armed conflict.

3.4.1 Uncertainty about potential third-party involvement (Paper C)

Since third-party involvement by foreign states can affect the course and outcome of an ongoing intrastate armed conflict, it seems plausible that domestic actors' expectations about such third-party involvement in case of a future conflict could affect their behavior and thus also the likelihood that intrastate armed conflict breaks out in the first place. Only few studies have investigated this, and the results are mixed.

Cunningham argues that potential large-scale military interventions on the side of the government deter rebels from starting an intrastate armed conflict (D. E. Cunningham 2016). In accordance with this argument, he finds that countries that are closely allied with the US, and thus have a high likelihood of a US intervention in case of an intrastate conflict, do in fact have a lower overall risk of intrastate armed conflict (D. E. Cunningham 2016). In contrast, Gleditsch finds that more transnational linkages, and thus a higher likelihood of third-party involvement, increases the risk of intrastate armed conflict (K. S. Gleditsch 2007). Similarly, Thyne finds that potential third-party involvement increases the probability of intrastate armed conflict, specifically when third-party states send cheap signals about potential third-party involvement (Thyne 2006). Finally, Cetinyan argues that potential third-party involvement does not affect the risk of intrastate (ethnic) armed conflict at all, since domestic actors take future support into account beforehand (Cetinyan 2002).

I argue in Paper C that uncertainty is the key to understanding how potential third-party involvement affects the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict, and to make sense of the existing studies' contradictory findings. When there is uncertainty about potential third-party involvement, opposing actors are likely to hold divergent estimates about the probability and effect of a third-

party involvement in case of a future intrastate armed conflict, and thus they are likely to hold divergent estimates of their relative strength. As proposed by bargaining theory, this is a dangerous scenario because it is difficult for the opposing actors to find a peaceful bargain they both prefer over armed conflict (e.g., Fearon 1995; Morrow 1989; Fey and Ramsay 2011; Slantchev and Tarar 2011). For example, imagine that the government of a state and an internal opposition group is in a dispute. In case of an armed conflict, the government believes it is very likely to get support from a third-party state, but the opposition group believes that this is very unlikely. This means that the government and the opposition group hold divergent estimates of their relative strength, in other words, they both feel entitled to more concessions than their counterpart is offering. In this situation, it will be difficult for them to find a peaceful bargain they both prefer over armed conflict, and if they do not find a bargain, one of the actors may escalate the dispute into an armed conflict.

Several different factors may cause such uncertainty about potential third-party involvement. I argue that one important factor is sudden changes of leader in potential third-party states, specifically irregular leader changes such as coups or assassinations in neighboring countries. Such irregular leader changes increase uncertainty about potential third-party involvement for four reasons: first, because neighboring countries often get involved as third parties in case of a conflict; second, because there is a high likelihood of foreign policy change in connection with an irregular leader change; third, because irregular leader change is difficult to prepare for; and fourth, because credible information is scarce in the period after an irregular leader change.

In sum, I argue that uncertainty about potential third-party involvement increases the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict, and that irregular leader change in neighboring countries causes such uncertainty.

3.4.2 Colonization and precolonial state development (Paper D)

To the best of my knowledge, no studies have systematically investigated whether past third-party involvement in the form of European colonization affects present-day conditions for intrastate armed conflict. In fact, few studies have investigated whether deep historical factors affect the risk of contemporary intrastate armed conflicts in general (Fearon and Laitin 2014; Wig 2016). As mentioned in the introduction, this lack of research is surprising, since several influential studies in political science and economics have found that deep historical factors such as early state development, colonization, and slave trade, have had a lasting impact in important areas such as economic

development and democratization in countries outside Europe (Hariri 2012; Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2002, 2001; Nunn 2008).

I argue in Paper D that the interaction between European colonizers and indigenous precolonial states has had serious consequences for present-day risks of intrastate armed conflict in countries outside Europe. When the European colonizers encountered weak precolonial state-like structures, they were able to conquer them and develop their own authority structures, which laid the foundation for developing a strong state monopoly on violence over time. However, when the colonizers encountered strong precolonial state-like structures, which they could not completely dismantle, colonial and indigenous authority structures came to coexist, hindering the development of a strong state monopoly on violence over time.

A lack of state monopoly on violence increases the risk of intrastate armed conflict in general because it is more feasible for rebel groups to organize and fight from areas with little state control. In addition, the particular situation of fragmented authority structures in countries with strong precolonial states further increased this risk. When these countries achieved independence from their colonial masters, the new independent governments often tried to dissolve parallel authority structures, such as local kings and other self-governing entities that had existed during colonization, in order to establish a modern central state. This motivated groups to take up arms against the new governments in order to keep or restore previous levels of autonomy. For example, intrastate armed conflicts occurred in several of the former Princely States in India and in the Highland areas of Burma, all of which enjoyed substantial levels of autonomy until decolonization (see, Paper D).

In sum, I argue that past third-party involvement in the form of European colonization in countries with strong precolonial state structures hindered the development of a state monopoly on violence which led to a higher risk of intrastate armed conflict that persists today.

Chapter 4:
Research design

The theoretical arguments of the dissertation are tested using a variety of data and methods as illustrated in Table 1 below. These include both experimental and observational types of data, at different levels of analysis, using different analysis techniques. The variety in data and methods reflects that each paper in the dissertation seeks to apply best available research design – within the practical and financial limits of the PhD project – to test the specific research question at hand.

Table 1. Overview of data and methods

Paper	Core research question	Unit of analysis	Data type	Unit of observation	N	Analysis technique	Sample	Main data sources
A	Do political institutions affect the likelihood of third-party involvement?	Country	Observational	Dyad-year (conflict country – potential intervener country)	155,750	Logistic regression	All independent countries 1975-2009*	UCDP External Support Dataset Polity IV Project
B	Do fear and anger moderate citizens' responsiveness to casualty information?	Individual	Experimental	Individual	296 285 478	OLS regression	Three samples of US citizens collected in 2017-2018	Respondents recruited on Mturk by the authors
C	Does irregular leader change in a neighboring country affect the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict?	Country	Observational	Country-year	9,615	Logistic regression Linear probability models with country fixed effects	All independent countries 1946-2014*	UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Archigos: A Dataset of Political Leaders 1875-2015
D	Does precolonial state development affect the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict?	Country	Observational	Country-year	6,175	Logistic regression Two-stage least squares regression Mediation analyses	All independent countries outside Europe 1946-2014**	UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset State Antiquity Index V-Dem

Note: *Defined as independent in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, based on the Gleditsch and War State List (K. S. Gleditsch and Ward 1999) and Correlates of War Project (Sarkees and Wayman 2010). ** Identified as independent and non-European by the country codes in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, based on the Gleditsch and War State List (K. S. Gleditsch and Ward 1999) and Correlates of War Project (Sarkees and Wayman 2010).

4.1 Data types and units of analysis

In addressing the first research question concerning the domestic-level determinants of third-party involvement, Paper A uses observational country-level data to investigate the effect of political institutions on the likelihood of third-party involvement, while Paper B uses experimental individual-level data to investigate the role of emotions in public opinion formation about third-party involvement. More specifically, Paper A combines data on intrastate armed conflict, third-party involvement, political institutions, and control variables, for each country in the world in the period 1975-2009. This data is then merged into a dyadic data structure where all countries other than the conflict country itself are considered to be potential third parties. Hence, each observation in our data is a pair consisting of a conflict country and a potential intervener country in a given year. This research design allows Paper A to investigate the effect of political institutions on the likelihood of third-party involvement while holding constant a number of crucial confounders both within and between countries. On the individual level, Paper B uses three samples of US citizens to investigate whether emotions affect citizens' responsiveness to the human costs connected with involvement in armed conflict.

In addressing the second research question concerning past and potential third-party involvement, Paper C and Paper D both use observational country-level data. Paper C combines data on intrastate armed conflict, irregular leader change, and control variables, into spatial models. This allows Paper C to estimate the change in predicted probability of intrastate armed conflict onset after an irregular leader change has taken place in a neighboring country, while holding constant whether there was an ongoing intrastate armed conflict in a neighboring country. Paper D combines data on precolonial state-like institutions in 1500 AD, intrastate armed conflict, state monopoly on violence, and various controls, for all independent countries outside Europe in the period 1946-2014. I use this data to investigate whether precolonial state development affects the likelihood of contemporary intrastate armed conflict, and whether this effect goes through state monopoly on violence, as hypothesized.

4.2 Causal inference

The theoretical arguments laid out in this dissertation are causal, i.e. they posit that changes in a specific independent variable are causing changes in a specific dependent variable. To corroborate a causal claim it is not enough that we observe a correlation between the independent and dependent variable,

since this correlation may be influenced by omitted variable bias and/or reverse causality – what we collectively refer to as endogeneity.

If a variable not included in our model causes variation in both the independent and dependent variable, we have omitted variable bias, also known as a spurious or confounded relationship. To illustrate this, I use an example from Paper A. The distance between a potential intervener country and a conflict country raises the costs of third-party involvement, since it requires more resources to move military equipment and other material over larger distances, not to mention sustaining and controlling a military mission far from home. If democratic countries are systematically positioned further away from intrastate armed conflicts than autocratic countries, distance will bias the estimated effect of political regime type on the likelihood of third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflict. We solve this by including distance as a control variable in Paper A. I discuss the logic of control in more detail below.

Reverse causality happens when the dependent variable causes changes in the independent variable, or when the independent and dependent variables are causing each other (i.e. simultaneity). In the case of Paper A, reverse causality would imply that decisions about third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflicts affected countries' political regime type the year before (since the independent variable is lagged one year). This seems unlikely in the case of Paper A. Nevertheless, it is often difficult to determine which is the cause and which is the effect.

In this dissertation, I use four main strategies to address potential endogeneity: randomized experiments, conventional statistical control, statistical control via fixed effects estimators, and instrumental variable estimation. The choice of strategy is determined by the phenomena under investigation in the individual studies, but ultimately also by the availability of reliable data. For example, the theoretical expectations regarding public opinion laid out in Paper B are well suited for experimental testing, which alleviates the risk of endogeneity via random assignment to treatment. The arguments laid out in Paper A, Paper C, and Paper D do not lend themselves to such experimental testing, because the main variables of interest – third-party involvement in intrastate armed conflicts, political institutions, irregular leader change, precolonial state development, and intrastate armed conflict – cannot be randomly assigned. Thus, the empirical analyses in Paper A, Paper, C, and Paper D rely on observational data analyzed using a combination of the above-mentioned strategies to alleviate some of the endogeneity concerns and get as close as possible to causal estimates. The following sections describe each strategy in more detail.

4.2.1 Experiments

The empirical analysis of public opinion formation about involvement in armed intrastate conflict presented in Paper B is based on individual-level data from three survey experiments conducted in collaboration with Kristina Jessen Hansen. The surveys were sent to US citizens recruited on Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk) in 2017-2018. Mturk is a crowdsourcing internet marketplace that is an increasingly popular place to recruit respondents for psychology and political science surveys. Samples from Mturk are not nationally representative, but research has shown that Mturk data meet common psychometric standards (e.g., Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011) and that respondents do not differ from other populations in terms of attention (e.g., Paolacci 2010). Most importantly, research shows that Mturk data mirrors experimental results in the mass public (e.g., Clifford, Jewell & Waggoner; 2015).

We designed a 3 by 2 survey experiment in which we exposed respondents to an emotional prime of either anger, fear, or control, and subsequently to a hypothetical armed conflict scenario involving either a high or low risk of casualties. The study built on established emotion-induction paradigms, commonly used in psychology to study the effects of emotions on judgment (e.g., Lerner et al. 2003; Lerner and Keltner 2001). Specifically, we instructed participants to list and describe in detail things that made them either angry or fearful, to induce the emotions of anger or fear. In the hypothetical conflict scenario, we presented the respondents with a military intervention in an ongoing conflict in French Guyana, in which we stressed either a very low or a very high risk of casualties among American soldiers. In sum, this design allowed us to estimate the conditioning effect of fear and anger on citizens' casualty responsiveness.

As mentioned above, such experimental designs alleviate the risk of endogeneity from omitted variable bias and reverse causality since the treatment is fully controlled and randomized. However, this strength of experimental designs in identifying causal effects may come at some price in external validity (e.g., McDermott 2002, 35ff.). External validity is the extent to which results can be generalized across persons, settings, treatments, and outcomes (ibid.). One often mentioned concern in this regard is whether experimental results can be generalized from an artificial experimental setting to real-world situations (e.g., McDermott 2002, 39), also referred to as ecological validity. In our set-up, this concern is partly addressed by the emotion prime we employ. By asking respondents to list and describe things that make them either angry or fearful, our treatment aims to activate real emotions related to respondents' own experience. It is more difficult to create a realistic treatment manipulating the risk of casualties connected with conflict involvement. One

strategy is to present respondents with a real ongoing conflict in which the US is involved. The problem with this strategy is that some respondents may already have knowledge about the specific conflict, including its costs in casualties. Such respondents will likely be less responsive to experimental manipulation of casualties. A hypothetical conflict scenario, such as the one employed in our experiments, has lower ecological validity, but on the other hand ensures that respondents are not influenced by prior knowledge of the specific conflict. Thus, future studies may improve ecological validity, for example by using treatment material concerning a real ongoing conflict in survey experiments or by analyzing observational data. Finally, concerning ecological validity, it should also be mentioned that our experiments were conducted online. This means that our respondents were likely to be in a setting that arguably feels more natural when forming opinions on politics compared to, for example, an unknown lab environment.

Another external validity concern is whether our results based on Mturk samples generalize to the wider US population. As mentioned, research has showed that Mturk respondents react to many experimental treatments in similar ways as wider populations. Furthermore, it is likely that universal emotions, such as anger and fear, function in similar ways in most people. Thus, we would expect similar findings in a nationally representative sample. We are planning to test this in the near future.

4.2.2 Control variables

The most commonly used strategy to reduce endogeneity from omitted variable bias in observational studies is to statistically control for possible confounders. I use this strategy in Paper A, Paper C, and Paper D. For example, as discussed above, we identified distance as a potential confounder in Paper A. By including distance as a control variable in our models, we estimate the effect of political regime type on the likelihood of third-party involvement while holding distance constant, thus reducing the risk of distance biasing our results.

Even though the use of control variables as the main strategy to reduce endogeneity has dominated the field of quantitative conflict research, it is very seldom possible to include all thinkable control variables due to data limitations, and even in that case, confounders beyond the researchers' theoretical scope would still be likely to exist. Thus, there is often a remaining risk of endogeneity. I use two strategies to further address this potential endogeneity: fixed effects estimators and instrumental variable estimation, which I turn to below.

4.2.3 Country fixed effects

Fixed effects is a powerful strategy that utilizes within-unit variation over time to alleviate concerns about unit-specific time-invariant omitted variable bias (see, e.g., Green, Kim, and Yoon 2001). Since the units of interest here are countries, I refer to these models as country fixed effect models. In contrast to traditional cross-sectional models, which pool all observations and use both within- and between-country variation, country fixed effects models only rely on within-country variation (ibid.). When countries are compared only to themselves over time, stable country characteristics cannot affect the results, and thus the risk of time-invariant country-specific confounders is eliminated (ibid.). More precisely, the fixed effects models I use in this dissertation compare each country to its own average over time by "de-meaning" all variables – that is subtracting each country's mean for all variables.

Country fixed effects models are used in Paper C to investigate whether irregular leader change in a neighboring country affects the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict. It is a suitable strategy because the independent variable has substantial within-country variation over time. Almost all countries in the sample in Paper C have experienced one or more irregular leader changes in a neighboring country. Concretely, the use of country fixed effects models in Paper C means that the results are unaffected by stable country characteristics that may cause some countries to have systematically higher or lower levels of irregular leader change in neighboring countries and intrastate armed conflict.

Country fixed effects models are furthermore used in Paper A to investigate the effect of political institutions on the likelihood of third-party involvement, albeit only as a robustness check. The reason for not using fixed effects in the main analyses of Paper A is that a substantial group of countries, primarily western democracies, have no variation in the independent variable, political regime type, in the time period under investigation (1975-2009). Without variation, this large subset of countries do not contribute to the analysis when we use fixed effects (see, e.g., Beck and Katz 2001). However, for those countries that have actually experienced changes in political regime type in the period under investigation, it is still a good design, and we therefore use it as an important robustness check of the overall argument in Paper A. This also means that the main analysis in Paper A relies on control variables to mitigate concerns of omitted variable bias, and thus there is a higher risk of such bias in this paper compared to the other papers of the dissertation. On the positive side, the risk of endogeneity from reverse causality is low in Paper A, as mentioned above.

4.2.4 Instrumental variable estimation

The third strategy used in this dissertation to tackle endogeneity concerns is instrumental variable estimation. An instrument is a variable that is correlated with the independent variable (x), but otherwise uncorrelated with the dependent variable (y) and potential confounders (e.g., Angrist and Krueger 2001; Wooldridge 2013, 512ff.). Thus, instruments may not have any independent effect on y when controlled for x and other variables in the models (ibid.). If these requirements are fulfilled, we can utilize the instrument to identify exogenous variation in x, and then use this exogenous variation to estimate the effect of x on y without worrying about endogeneity from omitted variable bias and reverse causality (ibid.). Hence, the logic of instrumental variable estimation is to find a strong and valid instrument, use it to predict variation in x, and then use this variation to predict changes in y – hereby reducing endogeneity concerns.

Paper D utilizes instrumental variable estimation to investigate the effect of precolonial state development on the probability of having contemporary intrastate armed conflict. Following Hariri (2012), I use the timing of the Neolithic Revolution as an instrument for precolonial state development (Hariri 2012, 480). The Neolithic Revolution refers to the transition from a lifestyle of hunting and gathering to a lifestyle of agriculture and settlement (ibid.). Places where the Neolithic Revolution happened relatively early, such as the Middle East and North Africa, had a higher likelihood of developing early state-like institutions, because agriculture led to increased food production allowing for denser population and more complex society structures (ibid.). Thus, the timing of the Neolithic Revolution is a good predictor of precolonial state development. However, as mentioned above, the timing of the Neolithic Revolution must only affect intrastate armed conflict through precolonial state development to be a valid instrument. In Paper D, I show that this assumption is plausible when geographical controls are also included in the model.

In sum, instrumental variable estimation greatly reduces the risk of endogeneity and thus adds confidence to a causal interpretation of the results in Paper D.

Chapter 5:
Main findings

This chapter presents a selection of the dissertation's main findings. All further results and details are presented and discussed in the individual papers.

5.1 Political institutions, public opinion, and third-party involvement

Our arguments regarding political institutions presented earlier led to the expectation that democratic countries will be less likely than autocratic countries to get involved in intrastate armed conflicts abroad, in particular when it comes to combat-intensive types of involvement such as involvement with troops and weapons support. The results in Paper A support this expectation based on a sample containing all countries with intrastate armed conflict and all independent countries as potential third parties in the period 1975-2009. Both autocratic and democratic countries are represented among the most active third-party countries such as USA, Russia (Soviet Union), France, Libya, Cuba, China, and Iran, but the overall trend is clear: Democracies and more democratic countries are substantially and significantly less likely than autocracies to get involved in intrastate armed conflicts, as expected.

When it comes to the type of third-party involvement, the results are more mixed. Democracies are not as expected less likely than autocracies to get involved with troops in intrastate armed conflicts, but they are significantly less likely to get involved with all other types of support including weapons, funding, logistics, training, intelligence, etc. This somewhat surprising finding might simply be a result of troop support being a very rare event, making the estimates regarding troops uncertain. We discuss this in more detail in Paper A.

To illustrate how third-party involvement played out in a case from our dataset, I look at the intrastate armed conflict in Nicaragua 1982-1990. Armed conflict broke out in Nicaragua in 1982 between the socialist Sandinista regime, which had come into power in an intrastate armed conflict only two years prior, and a coalition of anti-socialist armed opposition groups collectively called the Contras (UCDP 2018c). The conflict lasted until 1990 (ibid.). Both superpowers quickly became involved in the conflict. The Soviet Union supported the socialist Sandinista regime heavily with weapons and material, military advisors, training and expertise in general, and substantial economic aid (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011). Meanwhile, the US supplied

training to the Contras in neighboring Honduras and in Florida, provided material and logistics support, weapons, and substantial financial aid (ibid.). In spite of the clear ideological motivations in the conflict, only one other democracy besides the US chose to engage in the conflict, namely neighboring Honduras, which allowed the Contras to operate from their territory in parts of the conflict (ibid.). The remaining four third-party states engaged in the conflict were all autocracies. Taiwan and Saudi Arabia supplied the Contras with funds, while Cuba and East Germany provided the Sandinista regime with a substantial number of military advisors, arms and weapons systems, uniforms and other materials, training, and expertise in general (ibid.).

Figure 5. Third-party countries involved in Nicaragua 1982-1990
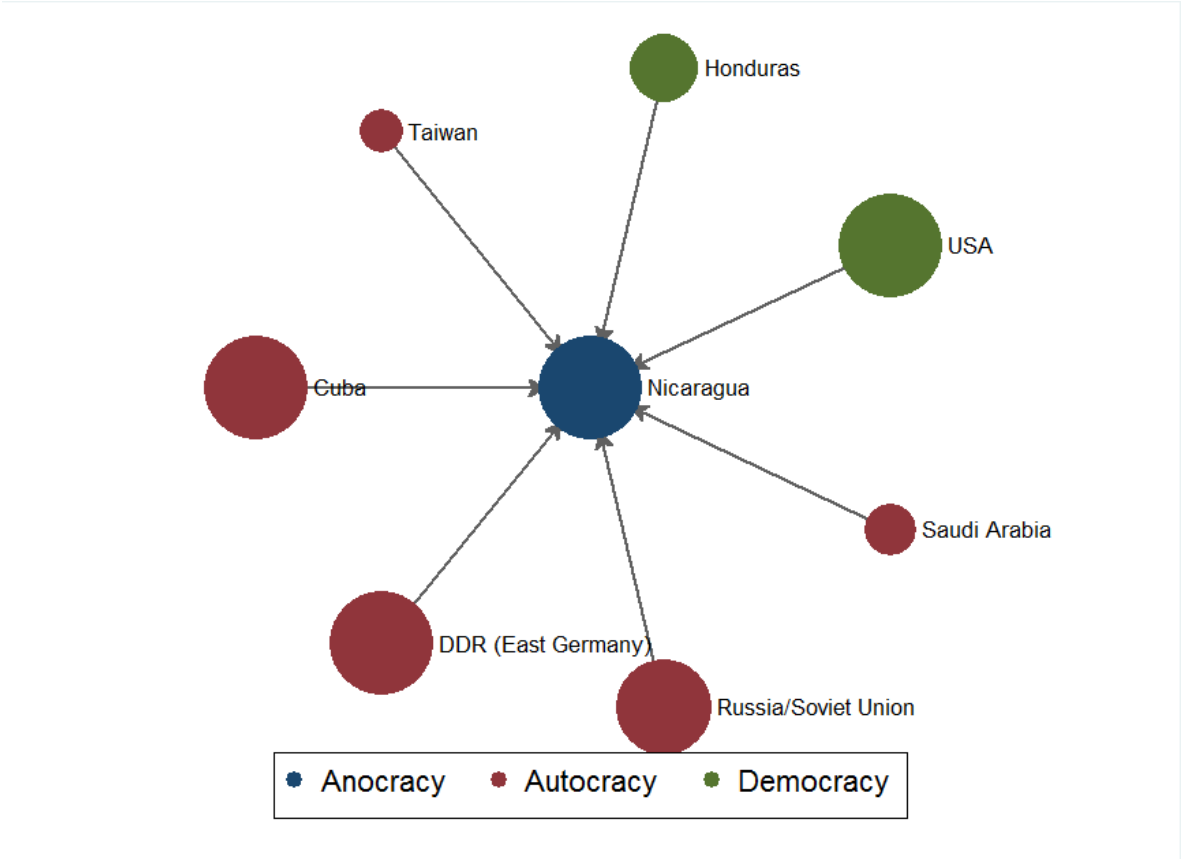
Note: Based on the UCDP External Support Dataset (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér 2011) and the Polity2 Project (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2017). The size of the nodes varies with the number of years a third-party state was involved.

As discussed earlier, a central assumption underlying the argument in Paper A is that democratic leaders risk losing support in competitive elections as a consequence of unpopular third-party involvements. Digging deeper into this assumption, we argued in Paper B that citizens' responsiveness to casualties is moderated by the emotions of fear and anger. The results of three separate

survey experiments support our expectations: Respondents become less re-
sponsive to casualties when they are primed with emotions of anger, while
they become more responsive to casualties when they are primed with emo-
tions of fear. Figure 6 displays the effect of casualties (low vs. high risk of cas-
ualties) for each of the emotion conditions in our three studies. The results in
Figure 6 clearly show the expected pattern. Respondents in the fear condition
were more responsive to casualties than respondents in the anger condition in
all three studies. However, even though we found the expected direction of
effects in all three studies, there was only a marginally statistically significant
difference in casualty responsiveness between the anger and fear condition
when the three samples were combined. We are planning to conduct a nation-
ally representative survey experiment in the near future to test our arguments
further.

Figure 6. Casualty responsiveness by emotional condition
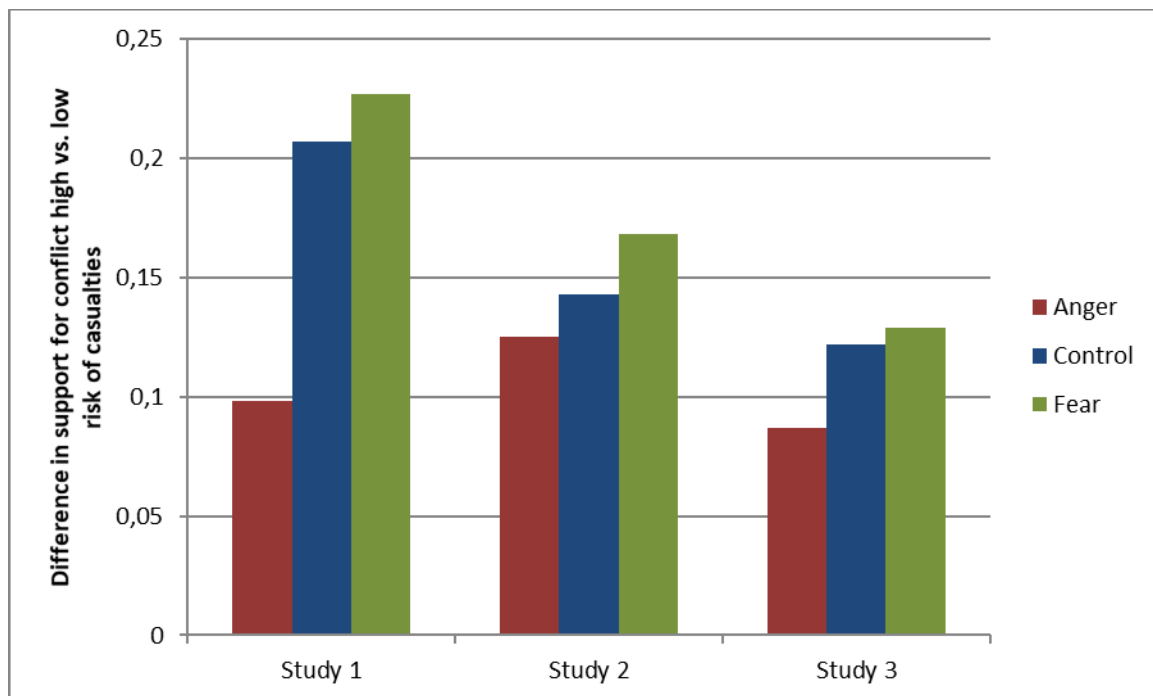
Note: The figure shows the difference in support for conflict between the "low risk of casu-
alties" conditions and the "high risk casualties" condition for each emotional condition. Sup-
port for conflict is scaled 0 to 1. Study 1 (n = 296); Study 2 (n = 285); Study 3 (n = 478). The
effect of casualties is only significantly different between the anger and fear condition when
all three studies are combined. All results are presented in detail in Paper B.

5.2 Uncertainty, colonization, and intrastate armed conflict

Existing research in the consequences of potential third-party involvement for the risk of civil war has showed mixed results. As laid out earlier, I argue that uncertainty is the key to understanding the relationship between potential third-party involvement and intrastate armed conflict. Specifically, I hypothesized that irregular leader changes in neighboring countries cause uncertainty about third-party involvement and hereby increase the risk of intrastate armed conflict. The results presented in Paper C support this argument. In a global sample covering the period 1946-2014, I find that irregular leader change in a neighboring country substantially and significantly increases the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict onset. On average, an irregular leader change in a neighboring country increases the predicted probability of intrastate armed conflict onset from 3.77 to 5.66 percent, based on a logistic regression model with all controls held at their observed values (Model 1 in Paper C). In other words, the predicted probability of intrastate armed conflict onset is 50 % more likely after an irregular leader change has taken place in a neighboring country.

It is noteworthy that these results hold in conventional cross-sectional models as well as in country fixed effects models, and that they are robust to a number of different model specifications such as using other distance thresholds of neighboring countries. Figure 7 below illustrates the results of both logistics regressions and linear probability models with country fixed effects at different distance thresholds of neighboring countries. When the distance threshold increases from 500 km to 1,000 km, the effect of irregular leader change diminishes, which indicates that neighboring countries more than 500 km away matter less as potential third parties.

Figure 7. Irregular leader change at different distance thresholds and onset of intrastate armed conflict 1946-2014
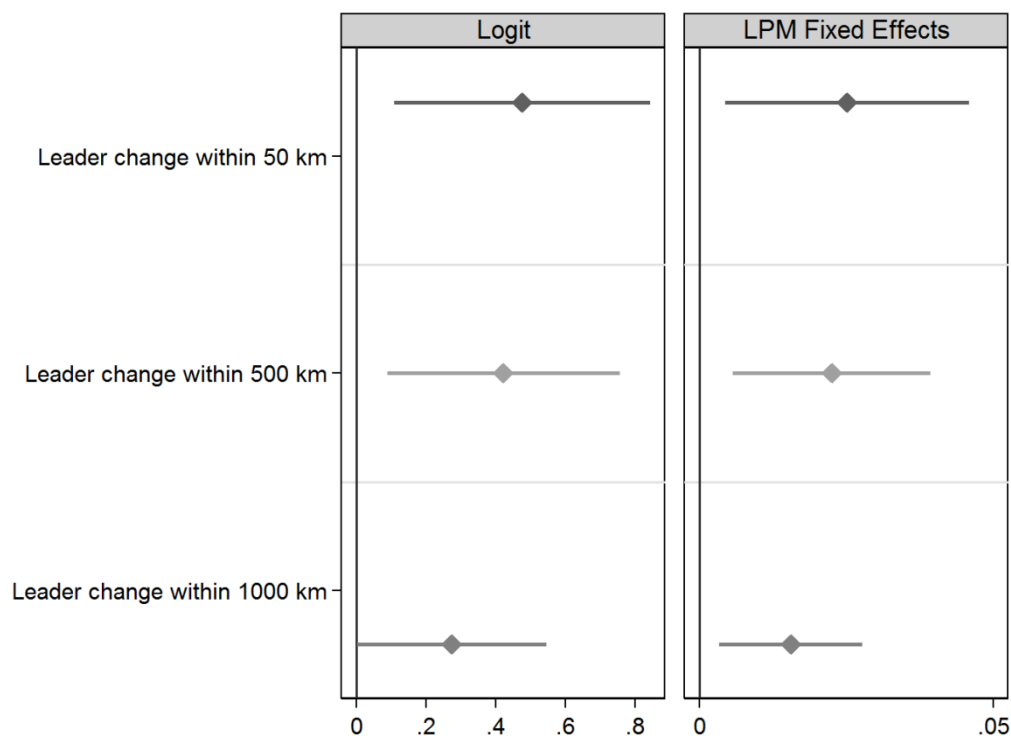
Note: Log-odds and OLS regression coefficients with 95 % confidence intervals. Controls not shown. Full models available in Paper C.

Turning to the consequences of past third-party involvement, I find strong empirical support for the expectation that countries that had strong precolonial states are more likely to have intrastate armed conflict today. The results presented in Paper D show that higher levels of precolonial state development in 1500 AD substantially and significantly increase the likelihood of intrastate armed conflict in the period 1946-2014. These results hold in conventional cross-sectional models and in two-stage least squares regressions using the timing of the Neolithic Revolution (years of agricultural use) to instrument for precolonial state development, as explained before.

Table 2 below presents the results of two-stage least squares regressions with and without control variables. The coefficient of 0.560 in Model 3 means that a 1-unit increase in precolonial state development, which is scaled from 0 (no pre-colonial state-like structures) to 1 (very strong precolonial state-like structures), increases the predicted probability of contemporary intrastate armed conflict by 56 percentage points. This unusually strong effect further underlines the importance of precolonial state development in understanding modern day intrastate armed conflicts.

In addition to the main analyses of precolonial state development, I investigate the proposed mechanism of state monopoly on violence in Paper D. Even though such mediation analyses should be interpreted very cautiously (e.g., Imai et al. 2011; Imai, Keele, and Tingley 2010), the results clearly indicate that state monopoly on violence mediates the relationship as expected.

Table 2. Two-stage least squares regressions of precolonial state development and intrastate armed conflict in countries outside Europe 1946-2014

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Precolonial state development	0.428**	0.562***	0.560**
	(0.142)	(0.158)	(0.180)
Latitude		-0.00502+	-0.00553+
		(0.00280)	(0.00305)
Early disease environment		0.0349	0.0269
		(0.0389)	(0.0455)
Navigational distance			0.000280
			(0.0105)
Distance to sea			0.113
			(0.0964)
Constant	0.0798*	0.129+	0.128
	(0.0383)	(0.0708)	(0.0935)
	Panel B: First stage regressions		
Years of agricultural use	0.0856***	0.0818***	0.0761***
	(0.00833)	(0.00940)	(0.00871)
Latitude		0.00201	0.00303
		(0.00278)	(0.00289)
Early disease environment		-0.00352	0.0279
		(0.0338)	(0.0351)
Navigational distance			0.0173+
			(0.00936)
Distance to sea			-0.106
			(0.126)
Constant	-0.0184	-0.0473	-0.156*
	(0.0342)	(0.0632)	(0.0727)
N	6130	6002	6002
Countries	104	101	101
First stage R^2	0.398	0.413	0.446
F-statistic	105.6	35.15	26.81

Note: +$p < 0.1$, *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$ (two-tailed). Robust standard errors clustered on countries in parentheses. In Panel B, the dependent variable is precolonial state development. Tajikistan, Somalia, and Barbados are missing due to data coverage in models with control variables. Fiji is missing in all models due to data coverage in years of agriculture use.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Key contributions

Civil wars are the dominant form of conflict in the world today and will likely remain so in the foreseeable future. Third-party involvement by foreign states plays a major role in affecting the course and outcome of these conflicts. By investigating causes and consequences of third-party involvement, this dissertation contributes new knowledge about the factors that shape the likelihood of third-party involvement in civil war as well as factors that shape the risk of having these devastating conflicts in the first place.

While extensive research has uncovered that dyadic ties and conflict characteristics shape the risk of third-party involvement, this dissertation has pointed to the domestic-level determinants of political institutions and public opinion in explaining the likelihood of third-party involvement. The dissertation has contributed theory and evidence demonstrating that more democratic countries are less likely to intervene in intrastate armed conflicts across a wide range of involvement types, and that emotions of fear and anger are central to understanding how citizens form opinions on whether to support or oppose such conflict involvement. In this way, the dissertation has improved our knowledge of what inhibits and facilitates third-party involvement by foreign states in intrastate armed conflicts.

Furthermore, by pointing to the consequences of past and potential third-party involvement, the dissertation has provided new insights on the factors that shape the risk of civil wars occurring in the first place. Specifically, the dissertation has demonstrated that both uncertainty about potential third-party involvement and a history of colonization in conjuncture with strong precolonial states increases the risk of intrastate armed conflict. Thus, the dissertation contributes new knowledge on both a deep historical determinant of civil war, dating back hundreds of years, as well as a proximate determinant, varying with current political events.

6.2 Implications and future research

The arguments and findings laid out in this dissertation have a number of implications for future research and policy. By contributing new knowledge on the domestic-level determinants of third-party involvement, the dissertation

improves policymakers' ability to foresee and prepare for third-party involvement. Based on the dissertation's results, policymakers should expect a higher likelihood of third-party involvement, and thus more complicated and longer conflicts, in contexts where many autocracies qualify as potential third parties. When democratic countries qualify as potential interveners, policymakers should expect involvement to be moderated by both the strength of their democratic institutions and the emotions that dominate among the electorates.

Since the dissertation has showed that domestic-level factors influence countries' likelihood of getting involved in civil wars, a next step for future research could be to investigate whether domestic-level factors also affect the consequences of such involvement. For example, does the level of political continuity within a third-party state affect the behavior of conflict actors? It seems possible that support from a third-party state with a history of frequent changes in foreign policy strategy could complicate civil wars more than support from a third-party state known for long-term foreign policy commitments, since conflict actors will be more uncertain about future support. In this vein, it would also be interesting to investigate what factors cause some countries to have very consistent foreign policies on involvement in intrastate armed conflicts abroad while others have more volatile policies.

A related question is whether different kinds of third-party states withdraw from conflicts in different ways, and whether this affects the outcome of conflicts. Sudden and unexpected withdrawals of third-party states from intrastate armed conflict could potentially bring conflicts to end faster, since supported conflict parties would not have time to find new sources of support and to change tactics in general, while a slow and gradual withdrawal might leave time for this.

A separate avenue for future research concerning third-party involvement in ongoing civil wars is to investigate in more detail what explains third-party states' choices of involvement type. The results in this dissertation showed that democracies were less likely than autocracies to provide all types of support except for troops. What then explains why some countries are very active providers of weapons, while others only provide funds, and still others provide a palette of different support types? This is an important question for future research since recent studies have shown that different types of support have different effects on the length and outcome of conflicts (B. T. Jones 2017; Sawyer, Cunningham, and Reed 2017).

The dissertation's results regarding the role of emotions in public opinion formation about armed conflict raises a number of specific questions. Empirically, it will be important in future research to determine whether the results from this dissertation replicate in a nationally representative sample. The au-

thors of Paper B are already in the process of conducting such additional empirical investigation. If our arguments regarding fear and anger are corroborated, a logical next step is to investigate what triggers emotions of fear and anger when citizens form opinions on conflicts. Building on insights from psychology, we would expect that citizens' perceptions of the standing and strength of their own country on the global scene affect whether they react to conflict scenarios with anger or fear. The context is also important; research shows that the antecedent of anger, among other things, includes perception of intentions (e.g., Brader 2012; Petersen 2010). Thus, if citizens perceive a conflict actor as acting intentionally unjust, it may trigger more emotions of anger than a conflict actor perceived as being caught in unfortunate circumstances and not acting intentionally. It would also be interesting to investigate whether and how political elites can stir up public anger while reducing public fear, and thus muster support for conflict. Overall, the dissertation's arguments and results regarding emotions highlight that much can be gained by drawing on insights from psychology to advance our understanding of international relations. Hopefully, this will encourage more of such interdisciplinary work in the future.

Turning to the risk of having civil wars in the first place, the dissertation shows that researchers and policy makers should take the consequences of past and potential third-party involvement into account. My results on precolonial state development clearly show that deep historical factors are relevant to understanding present-day conflicts. However, these results alone do not fill the research gap on deep historical factors underlying contemporary intrastate armed conflicts. More research is needed in this area. One potential avenue of such future research would be to look deeper into the interaction between European colonizers and strong precolonial states to get a better grasp of the mechanisms producing fragmented authority structures. Future research should also investigate potential moderating factors. For example, did colonizers behave differently depending on their origin and objectives? And did the timing of colonization affect the risk of ending up with fragmented authority structures? Another important topic for future research is to investigate additional deep historical factors that could have shaped conditions relevant for contemporary intrastate armed conflict, such as technological development including the timing and type of industrialization. The dissertation's arguments and results regarding precolonial state development also have implications for other research agendas in political science. For example, future research on state development outside Europe, in particular studies of weak and failed states, should take into account the role of precolonial state development and colonization in shaping the conditions for developing a state monopoly on violence, as laid out in this dissertation.

The dissertation's findings regarding uncertainty about potential third-party involvement showed that political instability in the form of irregular leader changes in neighboring countries have important and unintentional consequences for the risk of civil war. Despite uncertainty being an influential explanation of conflict between states (e.g., Bas and Schub 2016; Blainey 1988; DiLorenzo and Rooney 2018; Fearon 1995; Fey and Ramsay 2011; Morrow 1989; Rauchhaus 2006; Reed 2003), the impact of uncertainty on the likelihood of civil war has only been sparsely investigated (K. G. Cunningham 2013; Thyne 2006). The findings of this dissertation underline that uncertainty, in particular about potential third-party involvement, is indeed relevant and important to take into account in understanding civil wars. Future research should investigate the causes and moderators of uncertainty in civil war further. For example, studies may look into whether structural factors such as institutionalized communication structures within regional or international organizations affect the baseline level of uncertainty between actors. Another important avenue of future research is to investigate whether certain types of foreign policy behavior may increase or decrease uncertainty (see, e.g., Thyne 2006). Future studies could, for example, investigate whether potential third-party states and other potential third-party actors can reduce the risk of uncertainty by making credible commitments to their course of action in case of a future conflict, or by acting as suppliers of credible information to potential conflict parties. Overall, I hope that the arguments and findings provided by this dissertation will inspire many future studies.

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Short Summary

Civil wars are the dominant form of conflict in the world today and will likely remain so in the foreseeable future. Third-party involvement by foreign states is an important aspect of civil wars since such involvement substantially affects the course, outcome, and aftermath of the conflicts. By investigating causes and consequences of third-party involvement, this dissertation contributes new knowledge about the factors that shape the likelihood of third-party involvement in ongoing civil wars as well as the factors that shape the likelihood of having civil wars in the first place.

Extensive research has investigated how transnational ties and conflict characteristics affect the likelihood of third-party involvement in civil wars, but only few studies have investigated whether countries' domestic political environment affects their likelihood of getting involved in civil wars abroad. This dissertation improves our understanding of what inhibits and facilitates foreign states' involvement in ongoing civil wars by pointing to two interrelated domestic-level determinants: Political institutions and public opinion. Specifically, the dissertation argues that democratic leaders are more constrained and thus more cautious about getting involved in civil wars abroad than autocratic leaders. This argument is supported by empirical analyses of all countries in the world in the period 1975-2009, across several different types of involvement. Concerning the role of public opinion, the dissertation proposes a major revision to extant research by arguing that emotions of anger and fear moderate citizens' perceptions of the human costs associated with conflict involvement. The dissertation presents some initial evidence in support of this hypothesis based on three survey experiments conducted in the US with a total of 1,059 respondents.

By pointing to the consequences of past and potential third-party involvement, the dissertation furthermore improves our understanding of what makes some countries more likely to have civil wars than others. First, the dissertation contributes theory and evidence demonstrating that uncertainty about potential third-party involvement caused by irregular leader changes among neighboring countries increases the risk of civil war onset. These results are based on empirical analyses of all countries in the world in the period 1946-2014. Second, the dissertation proposes a novel theoretical argument outlining how higher levels of precolonial state development in conjuncture with European colonization hindered the development of a state monopoly on violence, resulting in a higher risk of civil war. This argument finds support in empirical analyses of all countries outside Europe using conventional cross-sectional analyses as well as instrumental variable estimation. Together, these

findings thus contribute new knowledge about both deep and proximate factors shaping the risk of contemporary civil wars. Overall, the arguments and findings presented in this dissertation prompt policymakers and researchers to take both the causes and consequences of third-party involvement into account to gain a better understanding of the complex phenomenon of civil wars.

Dansk resumé

Borgerkrige er den dominerende konfliktform i verden i dag og vil sandsynligvis fortsat være det i overskuelig fremtid. Fremmede stater involveret som tredjeparter er et vigtigt aspekt af borgerkrige, fordi sådan involvering påvirker borgerkriges forløb, udfald og efterdønninger. Ved at undersøge årsager til og konsekvenser af tredjepartsinvolvering bidrager denne ph.d.-afhandling med ny viden om faktorer, der former sandsynligheden for tredjepartsinvolvering i igangværende borgerkrige, samt faktorer, der former sandsynligheden for at borgerkrige overhovedet bryder ud.

Meget forskning har undersøgt hvordan transnationale bånd samt konfliktkarakteristika påvirker sandsynligheden for tredjepartsinvolvering i borgerkrige, men kun få studier har undersøgt, hvorvidt landes indenrigspolitiske karaktertræk påvirker deres tilbøjelighed til at involvere sig i udenlandske borgerkrige. Denne afhandling uddyber vores forståelse af, hvad der hindrer og muliggør tredjepartsinvolvering fra fremmede stater i igangværende borgerkrige ved at pege på to forbundne indenrigspolitiske faktorer: politiske institutioner og borgernes holdninger. Specifikt argumenterer afhandlingen for, at demokratiske ledere er mere begrænsede og dermed mere forsigtige i forhold til at involvere sig i udenlandske borgerkrige end autokratiske ledere. Dette argument bakkes op af empiriske analyser af alle lande i verden i perioden 1975-2009, på tværs af flere forskellige typer af involvering. Med hensyn til borgernes holdninger foreslår afhandlingen en fundamental revision af vores eksisterende viden ved at argumentere for, at følelser af vrede og følelser af frygt modererer borgernes opfattelse af de menneskelige omkostninger forbundet med involvering i konflikt. Afhandlingen præsenterer foreløbig støtte til denne hypotese på baggrund af tre surveyeksperimenter udført i USA med i alt 1.059 respondenter.

Ved at udpege og undersøge konsekvenserne af tidligere og potential tredjepartsinvolvering uddyber afhandlingen ydermere vores forståelse af, hvad der gør nogle lande mere tilbøjelige til at have borgerkrige end andre. For det første bidrager afhandlingen med teori og evidens, som viser, at usikkerhed om potentiel tredjepartsinvolvering forårsaget af irregulære lederskift i nabolande øger sandsynligheden for borgerkrigsudbrud. Disse resultater er baseret på empiriske analyser af alle lande i verden i perioden 1946-2014. For det andet præsenterer afhandlingen et nyskabende teoretisk argument, der forklarer, hvordan højere niveauer af prækolonial statsudvikling i samspil med europæisk kolonisering forhindrede udviklingen af et statsligt magtmonopol resulterende i en højere sandsynlighed for borgerkrig. Dette argument støttes af

empiriske analyser af alle lande udenfor Europa med brug af både konventionelle tværsnitsmodeller samt instrument variabel estimation. Samlet bidrager disse fund således med ny viden om både dybe og nære faktorer, der påvirker sandsynligheden for borgerkrige i nutiden. Overordnet viser denne afhandlings argumenter og resultater, at politikere og forskere bør tage både årsager til og konsekvenser af tredjepartsinvolvering i betragtning for at opnå en bedre forståelse af det komplekse fænomen borgerkrige.