One for All?

State Violence and Insurgent Cohesion

Abstract

What effect does state violence have on the cohesiveness and fragmentation of insurgent organizations? This article develops a theory on the consequences of state violence against civilians for insurgent cohesion and fragmentation in civil war. It argues that the state-led collective targeting of an armed group's alleged civilian constituency increases the probability of insurgent fragmentation, defined as the process through which insurgent organizations split into distinct entities, each with its own social composition, goals, and leadership. This effect is driven by the interaction of several mechanisms at the individual, group, and organizational level: State-led collective targeting increases the risk of insurgent fragmentation by enlarging the supply of fresh recruits, by strengthening the bonds between immediate group members (*interpersonal cohesion*), and by disrupting intra-organizational coordination, strategic unity, and institutional arrangements that underpin the commitment of individual fighters to the organization as a whole (*ideological cohesion*). The implications of this argument are empirically tested in an analysis of armed groups fighting against their governments between 1946 and 2008. The results suggest that campaigns of massive state violence directed against the civilian constituency of rebel groups increase the overall risk of insurgent fragmentation, a finding that has important implications for the duration and escalation of civil wars.

State violence against civilians is a cause of immense human suffering in many countries around the globe. An estimated 700,000 Rohingya have been displaced from Myanmar to the refugee camps in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh, in one of the most recent waves of violence unleashed against them in 2017. A fact finding mission established by the United Nations Human Rights Council concluded that the human rights violations in the Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States were "shocking for their horrifying nature and ubiquity,"[1] and identified "the Myanmar security forces, particularly the military"[2] as the principal perpetrators. In the armed conflict that has ravaged Syria since 2011, many thousands of civilians have died as a result of persistent state violence, often inflicted through unguided barrel bombs dropped in large numbers, and frequently hitting markets, hospitals, and schools.[3] The United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide expressed grave concern about noncombatants in areas under attack by the government, given that "Government offensives in areas controlled by armed opposition groups in Syria have been carried out with little regard for the lives of civilians."[4] Over the course of the civil war in Guatemala from the early 1960s to the mid 1990s, most of the state's victims were civilians, particularly of indigenous origin:[5] In its report to the U.N. Secretary General in 1999, the Commission for Historical Clarification found that over 80% of the 200,000 war victims were Mayan, and that state forces and affiliated paramilitary groups were responsible for more than 90% of all documented violations.[6] Other high-profile examples of large-scale state violence against civilians include the internal armed conflicts in Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and Sudan. In short, large-scale state violence against civilians remains a horrifyingly common feature around the globe. Between 1955 and 2005 alone, 90 campaigns of state-led mass killings with 1,000 victims or more have been identified, the overwhelming majority conducted in the context of political instability, such as civil wars.[7]

[1] United Nations Human Rights Council 2018, p. 18.
[2] United Nations Human Rights Council 2018, p. 1.
[3] Human Rights Watch 2016; Syrian Network for Human Rights 2015; United Nations 2018.
[4] United Nations 2018.
[5] Ball, Kobrak, and Spirer 1999; United States Institute for Peace nd.
[6] United States Institute for Peace nd.
[7] Ulfelder and Valentino 2008.

Evidence from several studies suggests that the likelihood of state-led mass killings of civilians increases dramatically in times of internal conflict, when state actors deliberately target not only rebels but also members of their alleged civilian constituency, or fail to effectively distinguish between the two.[8] And yet, the consequences of this type of violence on wartime dynamics, and armed groups in particular, remain poorly understood. While previous research has suggested a critical role for state-orchestrated civilian victimization in explaining patterns of insurgent violence,[9] insurgent recruitment,[10], civil war occurrence,[11] and insurgent territorial control,[12] little is known about how state-led mass violence against civilians affects the networks, institutions, and internal functioning of insurgent groups.

This paper investigates the social and institutional repercussions of state-led collective targeting, and in particular, their consequences for the cohesiveness of armed groups. It explores how the state-led collective targeting of an armed group's alleged civilian constituency affects the probability of insurgent fragmentation, defined as the process through which insurgent organizations split into distinct organizations with their own composition, goals, and leadership. I develop a theoretical framework that specifies several mechanisms through which collective state violence influences various dimensions of insurgent cohesion and internal control, and derive the implications for an organization's vulnerability to internal splits. The theory holds that while state violence against the alleged constituency of insurgent groups strengthens bonds between immediate group members (interpersonal or primary cohesion) and multiplies individual-level motivations to fight, it tends to weaken organizational coordination, strategic unity, and institutions that foster the commitment of individual fighters to the organization as a whole (ideological or secondary cohesion). In particular, I argue that institutions that forge and sustain secondary cohesion within armed organizations tend to be disrupted by state violence, while the demand for these same institutions is increased by

[8] Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Krcmaric 2018.
[9] Lyall 2009; Condra and Shapiro 2012; Toft and Zhukov 2015.
[10] Goodwin 2001; Wood 2003; Viterna 2006; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Nillesen and Verwimp 2009.
[11] Uzonyi and Hanania 2017.
[12] Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011.

the influx of new recruits. My theory further implies that it is the distinct combination of strengthened primary cohesion and weakened secondary cohesion that, together with surges in fresh recruits, increases the probability of internal splits.

While the theoretical argument is motivated and illustrated with qualitative examples, the derived hypotheses are empirically tested based on a quantitative analysis of insurgent organizations that were active between 1946 and 2008. I use a novel dataset that records, to my knowledge in this detail for the first time, whether the civilian constituency of each armed group has been affected by state-led collective targeting. The results show that the state-led targeting of the civilian constituency of rebel groups increases the overall probability of major insurgent splits. This finding has important implications for the duration and severity of civil wars. Moreover, it shows how the entrance of new non-state actors into the global landscape of political violence is aided by human rights violations committed by states in their quest to preserve the monopoly of violence.

What Do We Know?

The extent to which insurgent organizations manage to maintain internal control and cohesion varies dramatically. Some organizations successfully unite their members behind a common goal for a very long time, while others quickly disintegrate and decay, sometimes into violently competing groups.[13] The *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), for instance, were a highly unified organization for several decades, successfully managing the challenge of integrating a multitude of divisions and groups.[14] By contrast, the *Groupe Islamique Armée* (GIA), founded in Algeria in 1992, underwent several splits within the first few years of its existence, as insurgent leaders defected to form their own armed opposition, resulting in organizational fragmentation and violent confrontations between different groups.[15]

[13]Kenny 2010; Staniland 2010; Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour 2012.

[14]Gutiérez Sanín 2008.

[15]Uppsala Conflict Data Program (date of retrieval: June 5, 2013), UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia:

A thriving growing body of literature explores the puzzling variation in the internal cohesion of opposition movements and armed groups.[16] However, the insights on the impact of state violence are limited so far. Previous studies have either been primarily concerned with determinants that are exogenous to wartime dynamics[17] or have only partially examined the effect of state violence against civilians as a causal variable.[18] Moreover, the existing literature is characterized by a high degree of conceptual diversity, which complicates the comparison of these studies' findings and claims.[19] Overall, when it comes to the effect of state repression on the cohesiveness of opposition movements, the evidence is still scarce and mixed. Scholars have variously claimed that state repression tends to strengthen the collective identity and internal cohesion of targeted groups,[20] that it fosters tendencies of movement fragmentation *or* cooperation,[21] that it increases the propensity of movements to fragment,[22], and that it has no effect at all.[23] Prior work on fragmentation has also primarily either focused on small subunits on the one hand or overall movements or conflicts on the other,[24] rather than insurgent organizations in particular.[25] Another limitation of prior work has been the reliance on very generalized conceptualizations and measures of state repression, rather than distinct forms and targets of state violence.[26]

`http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=3&regionSelect=1-Northern_Africa`, Uppsala University.

[16]For a review see Pearlman and Cunningham 2012.

[17]E.g., Shils and Janowitz 1948; Bearman 1991; Costa and Kahn 2008; Staniland 2014.

[18]E.g., Kenny 2010; Kenny 2011; McLauchlin and Pearlman 2012.

[19]Khawaja for instance focuses on popular collective action as the dependent variable (Khawaja 1993), while others consider comprehensive counterinsurgency campaigns or human rights violations in general rather than state-led violence against civilians in particular (McLauchlin and Pearlman 2012; Fjelde and Nilsson 2018).

[20]E.g., Khawaja 1993, p. 66.

[21]McLauchlin and Pearlman 2012.

[22]Seymour, Bakke, and Cunningham 2016.

[23]Again though, conceptualizations and measures of state violence and fragmentation vary widely: Asal et al. study the determinants of splits among ethnopolitical organizations in the Middle East, and find no effect of state violence against organizations (Asal, Brown, and Dalton 2012), while others consider the effect of human rights violations and repression more generally on the rise of new rebel groups (Fjelde and Nilsson 2018).

[24]E.g., Mosinger 2017; Fjelde and Nilsson 2018.

[25]There are important exceptions (e.g., Kenny 2010; Staniland 2014).

[26]An exception is the qualitative study of Staniland. He argues that persistent and indiscriminate state violence can have a unifying effect on organizations that are characterized by weak central and robust local control. However, he cautions that the associated mechanisms are tenuous (Staniland 2014, pp. 50–51).

In summary, previous work has greatly enhanced our understanding of how armed groups try to maximize cohesion and internal control.[27] This article extends these important insights by developing a theory on the impact of state violence against civilians on the fragmentation of insurgent organizations. The theoretical framework incorporates several intersecting mechanisms at distinct levels of analysis, and disaggregates the concept of insurgent cohesion.[28] The empirical implications are evaluated based on novel data on collective state violence against the alleged civilian constituency of rebel groups. To the author's knowledge, this study provides the first theoretical and empirical inquiry that directly addresses the effects of state-led collective targeting on insurgent cohesion and fragmentation in civil war.[29]

A Theory of State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation

This section develops a theory that integrates several mechanisms through which the collective targeting of armed groups' purported support base promotes the fragmentation of non-state armed groups. The theory contends that the state-led collective targeting of an opponent's alleged civilian constituency increases the supply of volunteers who are 'pushed' into the opposition's ranks by state violence, but would not otherwise join a particular armed group. Such upswings in the supply of volunteers committed to the fight against the state, but not necessarily to the organization they join, are potentially threatening to the cohesiveness of armed organizations, unless there are sufficient incentives and institutional capacities to screen, socialize, and indoctrinate new and prospective recruits in accordance with the organization's identity, values, and interests. These incentives and capacities are themselves endogenous to wartime dynamics, however, and I argue that they will be undermined by the consequences of state-led civilian targeting. As a result, while bonds between immediate

[27] Kenny 2010; Weinstein 2007; Shapiro 2013; Staniland 2014; Woldemariam 2014, E.g.

[28] The disaggregation of insurgent cohesion as proposed below directly builds on Siebold 2007; Siebold 2011; Wood 2012.

[29] While Kenny explicitly focuses on wartime socialization as an important determinant of insurgent cohesion and strategic interactions with state forces as a determinant of insurgent structural integrity, his theory does not directly address the effect of state violence against civilians (Kenny 2010).

group members (*primary or interpersonal cohesion*) tend to be strengthened by collective state violence, the commitment of individual fighters to the organization as a whole (*secondary or ideological cohesion*) will be weakened. Moreover, state violence will tend to reduce strategic unity and insurgent internal control. It is precisely under these conditions that aspiring leaders of defecting factions will have peak incentives to turn into first movers and launch their 'own' rebellion. Collective desertion is a risky endeavor, and prospective leaders of nascent splinter groups will seize the initiative only once they are confident that their closest allies and subordinates will stay loyal when the time comes — and that, once defected, they will be able to enlarge their ranks fast. Thus, once secondary cohesion is weakened, upsurges in fighting morale, strengthened primary cohesion, and inflows of fresh recruits provide ideal conditions for concerted defections that result in insurgent splits.

Assumptions and Concepts

This paper adopts the conceptual distinction between *selective*, *collective*, and *indiscriminate* targeting of civilians. Selective violence[30] is targeting aimed at punishing behavioral non-compliance at the individual level, while indiscriminate targeting is completely arbitrary.[31] In between is collective targeting[32] or "group-selective violence",[33] the targeting based on collective attributes – in civil wars, often attributes that are associated with the social constituency of the opponent, such as geographic location, political affiliation, or ethnic identity. This article focuses on state-led *collective* targeting against the alleged civilian constituency of armed groups,[34] and in particular where such campaigns of state violence reach a massive scale. I specifically theorize the effects of large-scale, collective violence against civilians that are targeted because of their suspected affiliation or support for insurgent groups.

I use the term *armed opposition organization* interchangeably with 'insurgent organiza-

[30]Kalyvas 2006, 141ff.
[31]Lyall 2009.
[32]Steele 2009; Wood 2010; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017.
[33]Straus 2015.
[34]Ulfelder and Valentino 2008.

tion' and 'rebel organization,' defined as formal organizations using armed force to influence the outcome of a stated political incompatibility.[35] Like Kenny[36] and Woldemariam,[37] I restrict the term *insurgent fragmentation* to the splintering of insurgent organizations into two or more distinct ones, each with its own social composition, goals, and leadership. Insurgent fragmentation thus refers to concerted defection within an insurgent organization, a phenomenon that has to be distinguished from individual desertions and side-switching, which may occur simultaneously and in large numbers without constituting fragmentation.[38] By *insurgent internal control* I refer to the extent to which the leadership exerts control over the factions and individual members of a rebel organization in the sense of being able to oversee and discipline the behavior of subordinate group members.[39]

Regarding the concept of *insurgent cohesion*, Wood[40] introduced the distinction between primary and secondary cohesion from military sociology[41] to the study of armed groups engaged in civil wars. Building on this work, by *primary cohesion*[42] I refer to the extent to which horizontal and vertical bonds between primary group members (i.e., individuals that regularly interact face-to-face) are positively 'loaded' with a sense of collective responsibility and mutual trust, while I restrict the term *secondary cohesion* to the extent to which individuals identify with the armed organization as a whole.[43] Secondary and primary cohesion are thus related to the concept of collective identity, "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution."[44] In what

[35]See `http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/` (last access July 27, 2013).
[36]Kenny 2010, p. 537.
[37]Woldemariam 2011, pp. 35–36.
[38]Kenny 2010; Woldemariam 2011.
[39]Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.
[40]Wood 2009; Wood 2010; Wood 2012.
[41]Siebold 2007; Siebold 2011.
[42]Note that according to how I use the term, primary group cohesion is not defined by the size of a group. The size of primary groups varies with the structure and strategies of armed organizations and the specific circumstances of combat that determine which individuals will have regular and close personal contact and hence constitute the primary group members.
[43]For a similar definition of primary cohesion, see Cohen (2010, p. 23), for a similar definition of secondary cohesion, see Wood (2009, p. 137; 2010, p. 313). On social cohesion, see also MacCoun, Kier and Belkin (2006).
[44]Polletta and Jasper 2001, p. 285.

follows, I will use the terms secondary cohesion and ideological cohesion as synonymous, and the terms primary and interpersonal cohesion as interchangeable as well.[45]

Building on a rich body of work that has documented adverse selection problems in recruitment[46] and highlighted the relevance of indoctrination for the transformation of individual preferences and armed group cohesion,[47] I proceed from the assumption that the most secure foundations of secondary cohesion are strong institutions for indoctrination and political education. Typically tied to an organization's particular ideology and agenda, these institutions provide coherent frameworks and instruments to align the commitments and preferences of individual fighters with the organization's goals and principles as defined by the leadership. I further assume that if secondary cohesion is strong among commanders and rank and file members, combatants will not desert in large numbers, be it on their own or in groups. If, on the contrary, cohesion is weak across-the-board, and both interpersonal and secondary cohesion low, individual defections might be common, but insurgent fragmentation unlikely. Since concerted defections are extremely risky endeavors, prospective leaders of splintering factions will launch the initiative only if they are convinced that their allies and followers will stay loyal when the time comes – and if, once defected, they will be able to grow quickly in size.

Supply of Recruits, Screening, and Recruitment

At the individual level, the state-led collective targeting of noncombatants that frequently occurs in civil wars engenders and fortifies incentives to join insurgent ranks among members of the targeted group, hence increasing the supply of volunteers that are 'pushed' into armed organizations by state violence, but would otherwise not necessarily follow the rebels' cause.

[45] Note that secondary cohesion as used in this article refers specifically to ideology of the armed organization rather than broader ideologies. Armed groups might on the surface adopt similar ideologies, but there is significant variation in insurgent ideologies within categories such as Marxism or ethnonationalism (Schubiger and Zelina, 2017).

[46] Weinstein 2007; Shapiro 2013; Obayashi 2018.

[47] See for instance Gutiérez Sanín 2008; Hoover Green 2011; Kenny 2011; Oppenheim et al. 2015; Wood 2012; Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014; Hoover Green 2016; Gates 2017; Schubiger and Zelina 2017.

This occurs through several mechanisms: Non-selective state violence against non-combatants tends to fuel insurgent mobilization through moral outrage that spawns participation-related emotional rewards,[48] by reinforcing grievances that stir reactive mobilization through increased individual cost-tolerance and radicalization,[49] and by turning protection from state violence into a selective incentive.[50]

This implies that, while state violence against civilians tends to create surges of fresh recruits, it also tends to attract joiners primarily motivated by particular motivations related to the state, rather than the long-term goals and principles of the organization.[51] As a result, rebel organizations are typically faced with an increased influx of volunteers driven by motives such as protection and vengeance, rather than a commitment to the ideological principles of the organization they join. Note that this does not imply these recruits are opportunistic or lack determination.[52] Rather, it implies that they are likely highly committed to the fight against the state, but not necessarily to the organization under whose banner they fight.[53] An abundant supply of such recruits has the potential to negatively affect the internal control and cohesion of armed groups, as the norms and preferences between combatants and leaders may be poorly aligned.[54]

Ideally, armed group leaders can screen and recruit only those followers whose preferences are already well aligned with those of the group.[55] Indeed, armed groups do not always aspire to grow in size, especially if this comes at the expense of the 'quality' of their re-

[48]Wood 2003.

[49]Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Goodwin 2001; Wucherpfennig et al. 2012.

[50]Mason and Krane 1989; Mason 2004; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007.

[51]See also Elster 2006.

[52]Hanson (2021) argues that high-risk environments such as government crackdowns help leaders screen for committed recruits. On recruitment context and different types of recruits, see also Weinstein (2007) and Mironova (2019).

[53]I distinguish between motivations incited specifically by state violence on the one hand, and motivations tied to the particular ideology and political goals of armed organizations — beyond power or the fight against an abusive state — on the other. On ideological differences between armed groups of the same orientation (such as Marxism) or opposition movement, see also Schubiger and Zelina, 2017, and Mironova, 2019.

[54]On recruitment and preference divergence, see also Kenny 2010; Shapiro 2013; Hanson, 2021; Foster 2019; Obayashi 2018; Mason (2004, p. 95); and Weinstein (2007).

[55]Weinstein 2007; Shapiro 2013; Obayashi 2018; Foster 2019; Mironova 2019; Hanson 2021.

cruits.[56] However, armed groups also differ markedly in their skills and capacities to select and screen prospective recruits.[57] The extent to which (over-)supplies of certain 'types' of recruits will have a detrimental effect on insurgent cohesion will thus depend on the recruitment and screening strategies of armed groups as well as the internal institutions that forge and sustain the commitment of individuals not only to their immediate peers, but to the goals and principles of the organization as a whole. At the same time, these strategies are themselves endogenous to state violence. Indeed, while state violence against civilians will enlarge the supply of new recruits for insurgents, it will undermine the capacities of insurgent organizations to screen these volunteers carefully. The targeting of the civilian support base of insurgent groups typically enforces insurgent dislocation, strategic adjustments, and sometimes even the break-down into smaller operating units, thus diverting resources away from the in-depth screening of fresh recruits. Moreover, as with other threats to insurgent groups' survival, the attack of their support base increases the pressure on rebel groups to strike back against state forces, to show resilience and strength, and to open their ranks to aspiring recruits, hence increasing the incentives for the adoption of more lenient screening techniques.[58] Finally, even if armed organizations have no incentives to enlarge their ranks, they may be concerned about the recruitment efforts of competing organizations in contexts where such competitors exist, as turning down volunteers enlarges the pool of recruits for rival armed groups.[59]

Of course, insurgent organizations may also be able to adapt. The PIRA's recruitment and screening practices, for example, underwent several major transformations, such as when the organization was radically reorganized and the number of members reduced in the late 1970s as a reaction to the influx of recruits motivated primarily by state violence, leading

[56] Kalyvas and Kocher 2007.

[57] It is worth stressing that screening is a delicate process. Mironova (2019) for example argues that leaders have to carefully balance the use of ideology in screening out opportunistic recruits, as recruits primarily attracted by certain ideological appeals can undermine the unity and effectiveness of armed groups through ideological extremism.

[58] Foster 2019.

[59] See for example O'Leary, 2007, 204; Mironova, 2019; Hanson, 2021

to problems with infiltration,[60] or when the *Fianna Eireann* (the organization's youth wing) was disbanded in the 1980s in a bid to tighten recruitment practices once more[61] for similar reasons.[62] The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) also successfully tightened their screening mechanisms after the dramatic increase in applicants following Black July in 1983.[63]

These are just two cases that illustrate that insurgent leaders are sometimes capable of adjusting their recruitment and screening strategies to changing circumstances in effective ways. However, this is frequently not the case, or – as in the case of the LTTE and PIRA – occurs after inflows of new volunteers have already significantly altered the composition of the rank and file. Whether and to what extent such changes in membership will impair insurgent internal control will depend on the internal institutions that forge and sustain the commitment of individuals not only to their immediate peers — but to the goals and principles of the overall organization and its leadership. In other words, successfully adapting to these changes requires strong institutions that effectively socialize and indoctrinate fresh recruits. Such institutions will be the focus of the next section, where I will argue that state-led violence against civilians will not only increase the pool and influx of prospective recruits, but also facilitate socialization processes that create and sustain interpersonal cohesion, while at the same time weaken those institutions that underpin the commitment of individual fighters to the leadership and the organization as a whole.

Cohesiveness in Insurgent Groups and Organizations

The collective targeting of the civilian support base of insurgent groups typically forces them to dislocate away from targeted areas, to adjust their strategies, and at times even to rearrange their structural makeup. During the El Salvadoran civil war, for example, the insurgents of the *Frente Farabundo Marí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN) responded to indiscriminate

[60] Kenny 2010, 544f.
[61] Hamill 2011, pp. 84–86.
[62] The Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), by contrast, has been marked by 'loose recruitment policies' (Sanders 2012, p. 161), with detrimental effects on the organization's cohesion (Sanders 2012).
[63] Staniland 2014; Obayashi 2018.

state violence – including large-scale aerial bombings – by sending civilians to refugee camps, and by breaking down its battalion-size forces to units that were sometimes composed of no more than five combatants.[64] While such adaptations will tend to strengthen the bonds between immediate group members, they aggravate the challenges of maintaining high levels of intra-organizational coordination, strategic unity, and institutional coherence fostering ideological cohesion, as I will argue below.

In addition to expanding the influx of fresh recruits, exposure to campaigns of state violence may increase the commitment of already mobilized combatants to the fight. Indeed, even less extreme forms of state-induced harm, as caused for example by systematic discrimination, have been argued to increase the cost-tolerance, in-group solidarity, and commitment among those identifying with victimized groups.[65] And yet, a shared commitment to a common goal — be this secession, revolution, or the removal of an abusive government or occupying force — is not sufficient to ensure organizational unity. Insurgent leaders typically face multiple competitors claiming to fight for the same cause. The challenge of insurgent leaders is thus not just to mobilize their followers against a common enemy, but to instill and maintain a strong commitment among them to the norms, values, and goals of their particular organization (secondary cohesion) — and to sustain the conviction that *theirs* is the only true path to political change. Virtually all armed organizations rely on formal and informal institutions to socialize, discipline, and indoctrinate combatants according to the principles, norms, and goals of the organization as defined by the leadership.[66] Just like armed organizations strive to transform combatant preferences in the sense of instilling norms that prioritize discipline and an application of violence that is consistent with the organization's norms and strategies,[67] it is in their interest to build institutions that create and sustain high levels of combatant commitment to the organization and its leadership. Such institutional

[64] Wood 2003, 134f.

[65] Wucherpfennig et al. 2012; Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013.

[66] Gutiérez Sanín 2008; Wood 2009; Kenny 2011; Hoover Green 2011; Wood 2012; Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014; Oppenheim et al. 2015; Hoover Green 2017; Gates 2017.

[67] Weinstein 2007; Hoover Green 2011; Wood 2012.

arrangements will most typically consist of collective rituals, formalized indoctrination, and ongoing political education that regularly emphasize the organization's principles, values, and long-term goals.[68] Socialization and indoctrination might be coupled with screening and recruitment, such as when insurgents recruit among affiliated youth wings or connect their recruitment efforts with political education. The PIRA relied partially on its youth wing, *Na Fianna Eireann*, to socialize, screen, and recruit young volunteers up to the 1980s,[69]. The institutionalized coupling of indoctrination, screening, and recruitment has also been reported for other cases, such as the insurgencies in Nepal[70] and El Salvador.[71] Conversely, even coerced recruits can be turned into highly loyal fighters if the institutions for socialization and indoctrination are sufficiently strong.[72]

The Peruvian Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) is an example of an insurgent organization that devoted major attention to the political education and ideological indoctrination of its cadres across all ranks. As Gorriti[73] writes on the formal military training of Shining Path's prospective military leaders at the eve of the war: "[T]he purpose of the Military School was not to saturate everyone in lethal technology (...) but rather to relate and overlap ideology with its military manifestation at every level." Shining Path indeed managed to forge "a unity that appeared unbreakable, organic,"[74] particularly during the early stages of the war.[75]

In the words of one Shining Path combatant:

> "I do not think as a person any longer. One feels the party [*Partido Comunista*

[68]Gutiérez Sanín 2008; Wood 2009; Kenny 2011; Hoover Green 2011; Oppenheim et al. 2015; Wood 2012.
[69]Hamill 2011; Gill and Horgan 2013.
[70]Eck 2010.
[71]Hoover Green 2017.
[72]Gates 2017.
[73]Gorriti 1999, p. 29.
[74]Degregori 2012, p. 35.
[75]Other examples of the central role of indoctrination include leftist insurgent groups in Colombia and Nepal. Oppenheim et al. find that exposure to indoctrination reduced the probability of individual defection from left-wing guerrillas to right-wing paramilitary groups (Oppenheim et al. 2015). Eck, while primarily concerned with indoctrination as a means of mass mobilization and recruitment, argues for the case of Nepal that "Maoist leaders realized that continuous political indoctrination facilitated cohesion amongst the different individuals within the movement so that they all shared a common ideological background, thus deterring factionalization" (Eck 2010, p. 43).

> *del Perú–Sendero Luminoso*] as oneself, I am the party ... and everything we do and think is part of the party. Such is the political mutual understanding that we have, that we draw the same conclusions no matter how far we are from each other. It is the same thing in politics, and better still in the military realm. There may be a column that wanders off because the enemy besieges and divides it. Those two commands know what to do. The unit is so strong that we all have the same initiative. Without coordinating, we coordinate"[76]

One channel through which collective state violence against civilians impairs insurgent cohesion is indeed through the disruption of institutional arrangements that forge and sustain combatants' attachment not only to immediate group members, but to the organization as a whole. To begin with, the influx of a large and diverse group of new recruits does not just hamper careful screening, it also places existing institutions for indoctrination under immense stress.[77] Worse, damage inflicted on the insurgents' sources of support and information, and the increased inflow of fresh recruits, are likely to force insurgents to divert resources *away* from institutions for regularized indoctrination and political education, while at the very same time increasing the demand for them. The consequences, while not immediate, can be profound, as in the words of Gutiérrez Sanín, constant indoctrination is "a sine qua non for internal cohesion."[78]

Large-scale state violence against the civilian backbone of armed groups, in short, is likely to undermine insurgent secondary cohesion by disrupting institutional arrangements within armed groups that are designed to align the preferences of individuals with organizational ones. At the same time, state violence increases the very demand for these institutions due to the increased influx of volunteers.

In addition to the impact on recruitment, screening, and indoctrination, state-orchestrated violence against an armed group's constituency tends to create, reveal, and deepen heterogeneous preferences over ideology and strategy in the leadership by pitting radical leaders against more moderate ones.[79] Radical elements, or otherwise defective factions, within an

[76]Shining Path militant, interviewed in 1986 by Rita MÃ¡rquez (quoted in: Degregori 2012, p. 35).
[77]Foster 2019.
[78]Gutiérrez Sanín 2012, p. 186.
[79]Cederman et al. 2013, 50.

organization might even be able to significantly profit from campaigns of state violence if they manage to successfully exploit them to activate support for their own agenda – including collective, concerted defection. In the case of the IRA, the split into the Official IRA (OIRA) and the Provisional IRA (PIRA) was eventually triggered by internal disagreements about how to respond to the discrimination and victimization of Catholics in Northern Ireland.[80] In Syria, as the massive crack-down of the Syrian government against alleged civilian supporters of armed opposition groups intensified,[81] disagreements over tactics and strategy fostered deep divisions within the opposition as early as 2011.[82] To quote a Syrian supporting the Free Syrian Army:

> "They [the Syrian National Council] just talk and are interested in politics, while the Assad regime is slaughtering our people (...) We favor more aggressive military action."[83]

Importantly, these dynamics can be activated by even lesser forms of state repression, or reinforced by state violence against militants, as long as aspiring leaders of defective factions manage to blame the leadership and mobilize support on their behalf. The influx of new recruits also upsets existing power balances between insurgent leaders, weakening the rank-and-file bases of some leaders relative to others, likewise fueling intra-organizational power struggles and leadership disputes.[84] Thus, while the literature on peace agreements[85] has largely focused on how peace processes stimulate insurgent splits, I argue that dynamics of violent escalation often have similar effects by forging and revealing divisions in the leadership of insurgent organizations about how to respond to state repression, and by allowing radicalized or alienated elements to advance their cause.

Finally, collective state violence against the civilian constituency of armed groups tends to temporarily disrupt intra-organizational coordination,[86] a central pillar of institutional and

[80] E.g., Sanders 2012; Gill and Horgan 2013, p.436f.
[81] Watch 2012.
[82] Bilefsky 2011.
[83] Abdulsatar Maksur, quoted in Bilefsky 2011.
[84] Mosinger 2019.
[85] Stedman 1997.
[86] E.g., Lyall 2009.

strategic coherence even in cases where the mobility of subgroups is among an armed group's central organizational principles.

As a former commander of the FARC explained:

> "[A]lthough they were mobile guerrillas, they had instructions to maintain contact (...) There was a continual exchange of ideas and opinions among the leadership of each unit (...) And when it was necessary to convene a meeting to examine the military situation, or any other situation, then a site was agreed upon and the commanders used every means possible to arrive at the place of the meeting."[87]

In many instances, civilian networks are a crucial pillar of insurgent organizations.[88] The weakening of organizational coordination poses severe challenges not only to a unified central command, but also to secondary cohesion, as the constant exchange of ideas and information between the commanders of individual units is interrupted, potentially giving rise to parallel command structures and diverging perceptions and preferences about how to respond to strategic challenges.[89] Therefore, under conditions of collective state violence, prospective leaders of deserting factions are not only more likely to emerge, but are also faced with windows of opportunity created by weakened internal control in addition to an enlarged pool of potential volunteers eager to fight back against an abusive state.[90]

Once defected, the potential to grow quickly in size is key, as splinter groups will find themselves in deadly rivalry with their former allies. Indeed, splintering organizations often

[87]Manuel Marulanda Vélez, interview from 1987 (cited in: Chernick 2007, p. 55).

[88]Parkinson 2013.

[89]This is a constant challenge in covert organizations (Shapiro 2013) and sometimes reflected in patterns of violence. Wood argues that the widening repertoire of insurgent violence in the case of the Sendero Luminoso insurgency in Peru was partially the consequence of the weakened central control and communication across units that occurred as a result of the state's counterinsurgency campaign (Wood 2008, pp. 542, 547).

[90]Note that *selective* violence is unlikely to result in recruitment surges and in the over-straining of institutions that underpin secondary cohesion. Under conditions of selective violence, civilians can opt for collaboration with the incumbent or stay neutral to protect themselves (Kalyvas, 2006), and even violence-induced grievances and moral outrage should be less pronounced. Thus, under conditions of selective state violence, prospective leaders of splitting factions can be much less confident to grow quickly in size once defected. Similarly, while a subset of the mechanisms I describe in the theory section might also plausibly be related to violence against militants, this article focuses specifically on the effects of collective state violence against civilians, and on how the combination of these effects increase the risk of insurgent splits. Of course, there should be instances in which governments have incentives to target civilians but not combatants. Conversely, state violence frequently affects civilians disproportionately, even under conditions under which governments try to spare them (Kalyvas and Kocher, 2007). While this article focuses specifically on the effects of collective state violence against civilians, I discuss in the theory section conditions under which violence against militants is assumed to reinforce the discussed dynamics.

fiercely compete for new recruits. The split of the IRA into the OIRA and the PIRA in 1969/70, for instance, "was as much a battle among political entrepreneurs for control of the flood of potential new recruits as it was the fragmentation of a pre-existing organization."[91] Importantly, however, the defining feature of splinter groups is precisely that the initial followers are *not* exclusively recruited 'from scratch,' which is why organizational fragmentation is unlikely to emerge if cohesion is low across-the-board.[92]

The targeting of the civilian support base of rebel groups has ramifications for primary cohesion as well. In contrast to ideological cohesion, interpersonal cohesion is not dependent on political education or institutionalized training tied to higher-level goals.[93] Instead, it may be cultivated through repeated, shared experiences and the close observation of others' behavior in situations that reveal the trustworthiness of one's fellow combatants in circumstances where lives are at risk.[94] The high pressures associated with campaigns of state violence against civilian constituencies are likely to strengthen the bonds between combatants that remain in direct contact, through informal socializing experiences such as increased isolation from non-combatant populations and other fighting units, as well as through the shared experience of mutual dependence in situations of hardships and extreme risks. The strengthening of primary cohesion is reinforced if state violence also directly affects combatants. For instance, based on a qualitative study of Burmese and Irish Republican armed groups, Kenny[95] suggests that shared sacrifices through exposure to state repression can promote organizational socialization that is conducive to insurgent cohesion. He also suggests that certain types of operations, such as combat against the military, increase cohesion through the unifying sense of burden sharing.[96] Bonding within factions in this particular context is

[91]Kenny 2010, p. 539.

[92]In the case of the abovementioned split of the IRA, while the PIRA did attract the bulk of fresh recruits that aimed to join the Republican movement after the split, a substantial number of PIRA members had previously belonged to the 'old' organization. Kenny (2010, 539) estimates that about 50 percent of the IRA joined the PIRA during the split in 1969/70, while the remaining 50 percent stayed in what would become the OIRA (see also English 2004, p. 174).

[93]E.g., Wood and Toppelberg 2017; Cohen 2017; Nagel and Doctor 2020.

[94]McLauchlin 2015.

[95]Kenny 2010, 551f.

[96]Kenny 2010; Kenny 2011.

likely to be fostered through *informal* socialization between peers and as such may simultaneously strengthen cohesion within factions yet also undermine norms and loyalties promoted at higher levels of the organization.[97]

Of course, such bonding processes may not always occur, and are not assumed to apply uniformly to all units. If state violence is overwhelming, it may also undermine the fighting morale and interpersonal cohesion in armed groups.[98] However, state-led violence against civilians also dramatically raises the costs of combatants to individually desert their units, as episodes of state violence are typically deadlier for noncombatants than for members of armed groups.[99] The lack of outside options has a strong socializing effect on combatants and can enhance cohesion without indoctrination or the internalization of group norms.[100] Overall, once vertical and horizontal social bonds at lower levels of the organization at least partially trump secondary cohesion, they can readily be exploited by prospective leaders of nascent splinter groups.

The combination of strengthened interpersonal cohesion, weakened ideological cohesion, and surges of fresh recruits significantly enhances the prospects of success for defectors who aim to desert in concert to launch their own organization. Emerging splinter groups are typically led by coalitions of mid- to high-level commanders; these commanders will only take the risk of launching a concerted desertion if they have trust in the loyalty of their allies and their (and their allies') subordinates,[101] and if they are confident that these loyalties eclipse secondary cohesion.[102] Low levels of cohesion across all levels of an organization should accordingly be conducive to the disbanding of armed groups and large-scale desertions of

[97] Nagel and Doctor 2020; Wood and Toppelberg 2017, p. 626.
[98] Henderson 1979.
[99] Kalyvas and Kocher 2007.
[100] Cohen 2017; Gates 2017, p. 681.
[101] On the role of mid-level commanders and the relevance of subgroup bonding and cohesion in fostering fragmentation, see also Nagel and Doctor 2020.
[102] Notably, the assumption here is not that everyone siding with the splinter knows each other or the defecting leaders face-to-face, but that the defective leaders' direct allies, and combatants of various ranks linked to them at lower units, will have loyalties to each other that surpass the commitment to the organization as a whole.

individuals, rather than the emergence of major splinter groups.[103] Concerted desertions, in short, should be rare when cohesion is low across all levels, and more likely to occur when cohesion at lower levels of the organization is strong.[104]

Table 1 encapsulates the mechanisms just discussed:

Table 1: The Impact of State Violence

Level	**Mechanism**	**Outcome**
Individual	Grievances & Moral Outrage ↑ Security Considerations ↑	Incentives to Fight ↑
Group	Social bonding & Informal socialization ↑ Mobility & Social Uprooting ↑	Interpersonal Cohesion ↑
Organization	Institutionalized Screening & Indoctrination ↓ Strategic Unity ↓ Coordination & Central Control ↓	Secondary Cohesion ↓

The core empirical implication to be evaluated in the remainder of this article is that *collective state violence against the alleged civilian constituency of insurgent groups increases the probability of insurgent splits.*

Data and Empirical Approach

The empirical analysis covers armed organizations engaged in intra-state conflict between 1946 and 2008; excluded are conflicts in countries too small to be covered in the state-led mass killing dataset,[105] extra-systemic conflicts, interstate conflicts, and cases that did not have a clearly identifiable armed group opposing the government.[106] I present results

[103]On the distinction between disintegration as the counterpart of cohesion and fragmentation as the counterpart of structural integrity see also Kenny, 2010, 535.

[104]This resonates with the study of Bearman, who argues that "in armies unit solidarity may induce greater commitment to army goals, but not necessarily. If the collective is defined on a basis different from the military, soldiers may pursue ends quite different from those expected" (Bearman 1991, p. 340).

[105]Ulfelder and Valentino 2008.

[106]While extra-systemic are not a priori outside the scope conditions of the theory, several important variables are not available for such conflicts. The ACD2EPR data for example do not cover extra-systemic wars. Cases without a clearly identifiable armed group include dyads where the opponent is a "military faction" or where UCDP identifies a set of actors without a group name, such as "Patani insurgents." Note, however, that the results are robust to the inclusion of military factions and such poorly identified groups.

from both a cross-sectional and a time-series cross-section approach. The unit of analysis in the cross-sectional approach is the armed organization; or more precisely, given that these organizations are defined by their opposition to the government, the conflict dyad. In the time-series cross-section approach, it is the armed group-year or put differently, the dyad-year. Dyads are included as soon as they reach the conventional 25 battle-related death threshold in a particular year.[107] I include spells of inactivity to account for the fact that both state violence and fragmentation can occur in years where conflicts do not reach the fatality thresholds for inclusion into conventional datasets. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of whether a splinter group broke away from a given armed group, and the main "treatment" variable is an indicator of whether the civilian constituency of an armed group has been affected by state violence during campaings of state-led mass killings. The cross-sectional analysis relies on linear probability and logistic regression models with covariate adjustment and entropy balancing,[108] while the time-series cross-section analysis is based on Cox duration models[109] and, alternatively, a propensity score weighting approach for time-series data.[110] I include a series of theoretically relevant pre-treatment covariates that are potential determinants of both state-led collective violence and insurgent fragmentation.

State-led Collective Targeting

To identify whether a certain armed group and hence, dyadic conflict, has been affected by campaigns of state-led collective violence against civilians of their alleged constituency, this article relies on an original coding of each case, based on the state-led mass killing dataset of Ulfelder and Valentino,[111] associated coding notes, and additional sources. Episodes of state-led mass killings are defined as episodes in which "actions of state agents result in the intentional death of at least 1,000 noncombatants from a discrete group in a period of sus-

[107]UCDP dyadic dataset, version 18.1 (Harbom et al. 2008, Eck and Petterson, 2018).
[108]Hainmueller 2012.
[109]Metzger and Jones 2022.
[110]Imai, Kim, and Wang 2018.
[111]Ulfelder and Valentino 2008.

tained violence."[112] Mass killings are included in the Ulfelder and Valentino dataset based on several criteria:[113] The victims are unarmed noncombatants and residents of the perpetrator state; the killings are directed against particular social groups (which may be defined ethnically, geographically, politically, etc); there is evidence of state agents as perpetrators or sponsors, or of state complicity; deaths are the result of direct or indirect state violence (e.g., starvation); and there is evidence or context that implies perpetrator intention. The beginning of mass killing episodes is recorded during the first year in which at least 100 civilians were killed; episodes end after 3 consecutive years in which fewer than 100 civilian deaths are recorded.

For the purpose of this study, the state-led mass killing dataset, the underlying coding notes, and additional sources were consulted to code for each insurgent group whether the alleged civilian constituency of that group had been affected by state-led mass killings. This fine-grained approach and attention to both the temporal dimension and the armed group level departs from prior approaches that largely assumed such a connection in case of a temporal overlap of mass killings with a given conflict or country, and that did not descend to the level of each individual armed group.[114] The dataset records whether during any given year of active armed conflict between the government of a country and a given rebel group, there was an episode of state-led mass killing related to that particular armed group, i.e., the killings targeted the alleged members or civilian constituency of the same armed group.

Ideally, the dataset could capture whether specific fatality thresholds were reached for each affected armed group constituency in a given year. However, as several victim groups, including armed group constituencies, can simultaneously be affected by a particular episode, capturing dyad-specific fatality thresholds resulting from particular state-led mass killing episodes is beyond the scope of this paper. The codings reflect whether a constituency was subject to collective targeting by state actors during episodes of state-led mass killings,

[112] Ulfelder and Valentino 2008, p. 2.
[113] Ulfelder and Valentino 2008, p. 5ff.
[114] Uzonyi and Hanania 2017; Krcmaric 2018.

without necessarily indicating that a particular fatality threshold was reached for any given victim group.[115] Likewise, the start and end dates reflect onset and termination of the state-led mass killings as recorded by Valentino and Ulfelder, while ideally, this could be coded more precisely for each constituency and armed group. Despite these limitations, and to the best knowledge of the author, the presented data go beyond existing efforts to link state-led mass killings to constituencies of specific armed groups.[116]

Insurgent Fragmentation

The occurrence of *insurgent fragmentation* is coded based on the UCDP Actor Dataset,[117] a dataset that provides basic information on all actors included in UCDP's datasets on organized violence, as well as the FORCE datset, a dataset on the organizational origins of rebel groups.[118] For every insurgent group, I code whether and when there was a group that split from the original rebel group to form an armed organization of their own. Splinter organizations are included if they end up being involved in political violence that resulted in at least 25 related deaths a year – more specifically, if they were involved in non-state conflict(s) against other armed groups, one-sided violence, and/or state-based conflict(s) as defined by UCDP. The occurrence of insurgent fragmentation is thus operationalized through the emergence of a major splinter group, whereby 'major' refers to the fact that the splinter group itself ends up being involved in organized violence that results in 25 deaths or more during at least one year. The coding thus has one main limitation: It does not capture splinter groups that do not end up engaging in organized violence that reached such fatality levels. The inability to detect splinter groups not subsequently involved in such violence is likely to bias against detecting a positive effect of state violence, as we only observe a subset

[115] If several mass killings affect one conflict, only the first is considered in the cross-sectional analysis.

[116] Alternatives include the Targeted Mass Killing Dataset (Butcher et al. 2020) and the Ethnic Once-Sided Violence Dataset (Fjelde et al. 2021). While each can be linked to specific armed groups, these datasets are limited to either violence of a particular intent (Butcher et al. 2020) or violence against members of politically relevant ethnic groups (Fjelde et al. 2021).

[117] Version 2.2-2015

[118] Braithwaite and Cunningham 2019.

of splinter groups.

In the cross-sectional analysis, the outcome variable is measured as the occurrence of at least one instance of insurgent fragmentation after the onset of state-led mass killings that affected the civilian constituency of the original organization, or — in the absence of state-led mass killings — after the initial phase of the conflict (cf. description of quasi-pre and post-treatment periods on page 24). Once an organization splits from the original movement, it is treated like an independent organization, and splinters from this new organization do not affect the fragmentation coding for the original organization.

For armed groups whose alleged constituency has been affected by state-led collective targeting and that also experience a split in the same year or after, about 47% of splits occur within the first three years of mass killing onsets,[119] about 58% within five years, and about 81% within 10 years. Table 2 provides additional information on time to first split for cases that experience splintering as a possible consequence of state violence.[120]

Table 2: Time to First Split after State Violence Onset

Years	Frequency	Share	Cum. Share
up to 5	25	58.14	58.14
up to 10	10	23.26	81.40
up to 15	5	11.63	93.02
up to 20	2	4.65	97.67
20 or more	1	2.33	100.00
Total	43	100.00	

Confounders

I include several variables that potentially confound the relationship of interest. In the cross-sectional analysis, these are measured at the onset of a conflict (i.e. during the first year or initial conflict episode), while in the time-series cross-section analysis, they are measured over time wherever possible.

[119] 14% occur in the same year, 16% in the first, 7% in the second, and 9% in the third year after onset.

[120] State violence onset is coded as concurrent with the first conflict year in cases in which mass killings start prior to conflict onset. For cases affected by several mass killings, table 2 focuses on the first.

First of all, I include a "pre-treatment" or past outcome variable (*Prior Fragmentation*) where appropriate.[121] Pre-existing levels of fragmentation likely trigger distinct types of state responses, as governments adapt their counterinsurgency strategies partly in response to the perceived structure and cohesiveness of armed groups. Moreover, initial levels of fragmentation affect subsequent organizational dynamics and reactions to state violence.[122] The estimates of the effect of state violence would biased if state targeting were more or less likely to occur against groups with an already higher tendency to fragment, and if this tendency were not accounted for.

In the time-series data, fragmentation is recorded year by year. In the cross-sectional data, the prior fragmentation variable indicates whether the armed organization was affected by splits prior to the onset of the mass killing for affected dyads. For conflict dyads without exposure to state-led collective targeting, creating an equivalent measure of initial fragmentation is not straightforward. I proceed by dividing control units into quasi-pre and post-treatment periods. For groups not exposed to collective state violence, the prior fragmentation variable thus indicates whether there were insurgent splits during the initial phase of the conflict, that is, within 5 years following the year of conflict onset.[123] As it is not a priori clear how the initial period should be defined for the "control" units, I assess the robustness of the results to an alternative definition that caps the initial period at 2 years following the year of conflict onset (see appendix).[124] Moreover, I present additional results with no such periods, and without the prior fragmentation variable, in the appendix.

Another important variable is whether a war is conducted as an *irregular war*,[125] as the type of warfare should significantly affect both state violence and insurgent institutions,

[121]The duration analysis focuses on the time to first split, and hence does not include this variable. Additional time-series analysis (see appendix) offers specifications with and without past outcomes.

[122]Staniland 2014.

[123]As defined by UCDP.

[124]If mass killing onset and insurgent fragmentation occur in the same year, both the outcome variable and the prior fragmentation variable are coded 1. The equivalent rule applies to the prior fragmentation variable if splits occur during the cutoff year.

[125]This variable is adopted from Balcells and Kalyvas (2014) but expanded to code missing values where possible. Note that Balcells and Kalyvas (2014) use a different unit of analysis and higher fatality threshold in their dataset.

and insurgent cohesion and fragmentation as a result. The indirect warfare strategies of insurgents engaged in irregular war, and their dependence on the civilian population, can make it difficult for counterinsurgent forces to engage with rebel groups directly.[126] Insurgent institutions that underpin secondary cohesion should also be stronger under conditions of irregular civil war, as such institutions can serve as a partial substitutes for direct internal control.[127]

Several authors have argued that the social base of insurgent groups is a powerful determinant of insurgent cohesion.[128] Most relevant for this study is the possibility that the type of social base of an insurgent group might also determine the vulnerability to state violence. I focus on the intersection of mobilization and exclusion. Specifically, I thus include a variable, *insurgent recruitment from excluded ethnic groups*, that indicates whether the rebel group of a conflict dyad recruits its members from an ethnic group excluded from state power.[129] Ethnic exclusion is a strong and robust predictor of conflict duration and outcome,[130] a relationship that has been argued to be driven to a considerable extent by grievance-induced gains in individual commitment and group solidarity — or, in other words, cohesion.[131] Moreover, this variable is also an important predictor of state-led civilian targeting, as both ethnic exclusion[132] and exclusionary ideologies have been associated with mass killings and genocide.[133] Even short of genocidal or large-scale violence, ethnicity is often one of the main 'profiling' attributes used in campaigns of wartime violence against civilians in general and state violence in particular.[134] To capture the prevalence of both exclusionary elite ideologies and the extent to which the civilian population is likely perceived to be a threat to the regime, I also

[126]Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004, p. 377.
[127]Balcells and Kalyvas 2014; Gutiérez Sanín 2008; Wood 2009; Wood 2010; Hoover Green 2011; Wood 2012.
[128]E.g., Weinstein 2007; Staniland 2014.
[129]This variable is based on the ACD2EPR dataset, version 2018 (Wucherpfennig et al. 2012) and the Ethnic Power-Relations Dataset, version 2018 Vogt et al. 2015. If ethnicity is politicized in a country, I also include recruitment from ethnic groups classified as politically "irrelevant" in this category.
[130]Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Wucherpfennig et al. 2012.
[131]Wucherpfennig et al. 2012; Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Mosinger 2017.
[132]Ulfelder and Valentino 2008.
[133]Goodwin 2001; Harff 2003; Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004; Straus 2015.
[134]E.g., Fjelde et al. 2021.

include a measure of the faction of the population that is excluded from access to political power (*excluded population*).[135]

Prior research suggests that access to *external rebel support* has an important influence on patterns of insurgent cohesion,[136] although theories diverge in whether they predict a negative[137] or positive[138] effect. External support for insurgent organizations may also influence the level of threat the insurgents are perceived to pose to the regime, hence potentially increasing the risk of state violence.[139] Finally, the availability of external support may reduce the insurgents' reliance on the civilian population, and hence increase the resilience of insurgent organizations to state violence against noncombatants.[140]

The *relative fighting capacity*[141] is another relevant confounder. The capability of insurgent forces to challenge the state shapes the strategic environment of the armed competition, including the incentives of state forces to employ violence against civilians on a massive scale.[142] It also determines the incentives of insurgents to enlarge their ranks and to build large, cohesive organizations.[143]

Territorial control has been shown to be associated with civilian collaboration,[144] insurgent recruitment and defection,[145] the capacity of insurgent organizations to evade state violence,[146] state and insurgent violence against civilians,[147] and insurgent fragmentation.[148] I include a dummy variable, insurgent *territorial control*, that measures whether the rebel group controls territory in the first stage of the conflict or not.[149]

[135]This variable is adopted from (Vogt et al. 2015).
[136]Tamm 2016.
[137]Weinstein 2007.
[138]Staniland 2010.
[139]Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004.
[140]This variable is based on Cunningham et al. 2009. All mentions of this dataset refer to the 3.4-1 version.
[141]This variable is adopted from Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.
[142]Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004.
[143]Weinstein 2007.
[144]Wood 2003; Kalyvas 2006.
[145]Gates 2002.
[146]Goodwin 2001.
[147]Kalyvas 2006.
[148]Woldemariam 2011; Mosinger 2017.
[149]This variable is adopted from Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.

An additional dummy variable, *previous conflict activity*, indicates whether a conflict related to a particular dyad was active in the past. Hence, it is a measure of potential unobserved confounders associated with the long-term intractability of the conflict as well as social and institutional legacies from previous but related conflicts that could affect both state violence and insurgent cohesion in the long run.[150] To take into account the level of competition between armed groups, the degree of choice for prospective fighters,[151] the extent of pre-existing movement fragmentation, and the overall threat to the regime, I include the *number of dyads* in a particular conflict during the first year of an armed conflict.[152] I also include an index of *"neopatrimonial" rule*[153] that is based on various indices measuring clientelism, presidentialism, and regime corruption. This measure captures the idea that state weakness and fragmentation influence state violence, and are mirrored in insurgent politics.[154] It is important to isolate government-rebel violence from violence against civilians, as battle-field dynamics can affect insurgent cohesion[155] and have important implications for state violence against civilians due to the perceived thread of the insurgency.[156] High intensity violence might deter opportunistic recruits.[157] At the same time, survival threats from battle losses will make it less likely that insurgents screen new recruits carefully even if they are aware of the need to do so.[158] I hence include a measurement of the *conflict intensity*. In the crossnational dataset, this measure is based on conventionally used thresholds of battle-related deaths resulting from direct confrontations between state actors and rebel forces.[159] In the yearly analysis, I also include inactive years. Specifically, unless there is

[150]This variable is again adopted from Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.
[151]On recruitment competition see for example Hanson (2021) and Mironova (2019).
[152]The variable is based on the UCDP dyadic dataset, version 18.1 (Harbom et al 2008, Eck et al 2018).
[153]This variable is based on the varieties in democracy dataset (Sigman and Lindberg 2017; Varieties of Democracy 2018).
[154]Reno 2011; Seymour 2014.
[155]Woldemariam 2011; Hanson 2021.
[156]Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004.
[157]Hanson 2021.
[158]Foster 2019.
[159]The conventional intensity coding only distinguishes between high (1000 or more battle-related deaths) and low activity (at least 25 such deaths) (Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen 2008; Eck and Pettersson 2018).

clear evidence that an armed group is no longer functional, inactive spells are included; the covariate here hence is simply whether a conflict was active (at least 25 battle related deaths per year) or not.[160] Finally, in the time-series cross-section analysis based on propensity score weighting,[161] I include a variable indicating the occurrence of *prior mass killings*, as units are only compared to each other over relatively short periods of time.

Analysis and Results

Cross-Sectional Analysis

In the cross-sectional analysis, the armed group is the unit of analysis. The analysis here relies on covariate adjustment and entropy balancing.[162] Entropy balancing reweights the control units in order to approximate the covariate moments between the 'treated' and 'control' groups and reduce model dependence in the subsequent analysis.[163] All covariates are measured prior to the onset of mass killings or during the first year or first phase of the conflict to mitigate endogeneity issues and 'post-treatment bias.'

Of the 382 armed groups in the dataset, about half (51%) have been affected by state-led collective targeting against their alleged civilian constituencies. About 14% of all insurgent organizations in the dataset underwent major splits after the initial conflict period (here defined as 5 years following the year of conflict onset) or the onset of state-led mass killings. Of those armed groups affected by state-led collective targeting, 22% experienced splintering as opposed to 5% of those non-affected.[164]

Table 3 shows the results of linear regressions. The binary outcome indicates whether at least one splinter group broke away from the main organization after the onset of state

[160] I include spells of inactivity between active conflict episodes, as well as up to 5 years of conflict inactivity after conflicts are no longer active within the period of this dataset (i.e., prior to 2008).
[161] Imai, Kim, and Wang 2018.
[162] Hainmueller 2012.
[163] Hainmueller 2012, 30f.
[164] Descriptive statistics for the specifications with no or alternative periods are given in the appendix and replication files.

Table 3: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.231***	0.231***	0.231***	0.231***	0.231***	0.231***
	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.035)	(0.030)
Prior Fragmentation			0.613***	0.613***	0.603***	0.603***
			(0.136)	(0.152)	(0.130)	(0.144)
Irregular War					0.006	0.006
					(0.054)	(0.056)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.046	0.046
					(0.040)	(0.043)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.006	0.006
					(0.053)	(0.053)
Previously Active					-0.018	-0.018
					(0.053)	(0.066)
Fighting Capacity					0.056	0.056
					(0.050)	(0.048)
Territorial Control					-0.012	-0.012
					(0.040)	(0.043)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.049	0.049
					(0.108)	(0.104)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.015	-0.015
					(0.018)	(0.013)
Excl. Population					-0.003	-0.003
					(0.101)	(0.098)
Fighting Intensity					-0.035	-0.035
					(0.057)	(0.057)
Constant	0.011	0.011+	-0.001	-0.001	0.017	0.017
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.119)	(0.113)
R2	0.120	0.120	0.186	0.186	0.200	0.200
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

violence or the initial conflict period. Models I and II include the main predictor variable of interest, namely whether the constituency of the armed group in a dyad was affected by state-led mass violence or not. Models III and IV also include an indicator for whether the same armed group had experienced fragmentation prior to the onset of state-led mass killings, or during the initial conflict phase. Columns V and VI present the results with the full set of confounders. In all specifications, the effect of state violence on the probability of insurgent fragmentation is positive and statistically significant at conventional levels. In all of these these linear probability models, state-led collective targeting increases the probability of insurgent fragmentation by 23 percentage points.

The main finding of a positive effect of state violence on fragmentation holds without entropy balancing and the alternative prior fragmentation variable, and if replicated with binary logistic regressions; it remains positive but loses significance in the models with entropy balancing in which prior fragmentation is not taken into account (detailed results are reported in the appendix).[165] Figure 1 plots the predicted probabilities based on a logistic regression, without entropy balancing or adjusted standard errors, with all covariates included and held at their median values.[166] According to these calculations, exposure to state-led mass killings raises the predicted probability of subsequent insurgent fragmentation from about 3.5% to 30%.

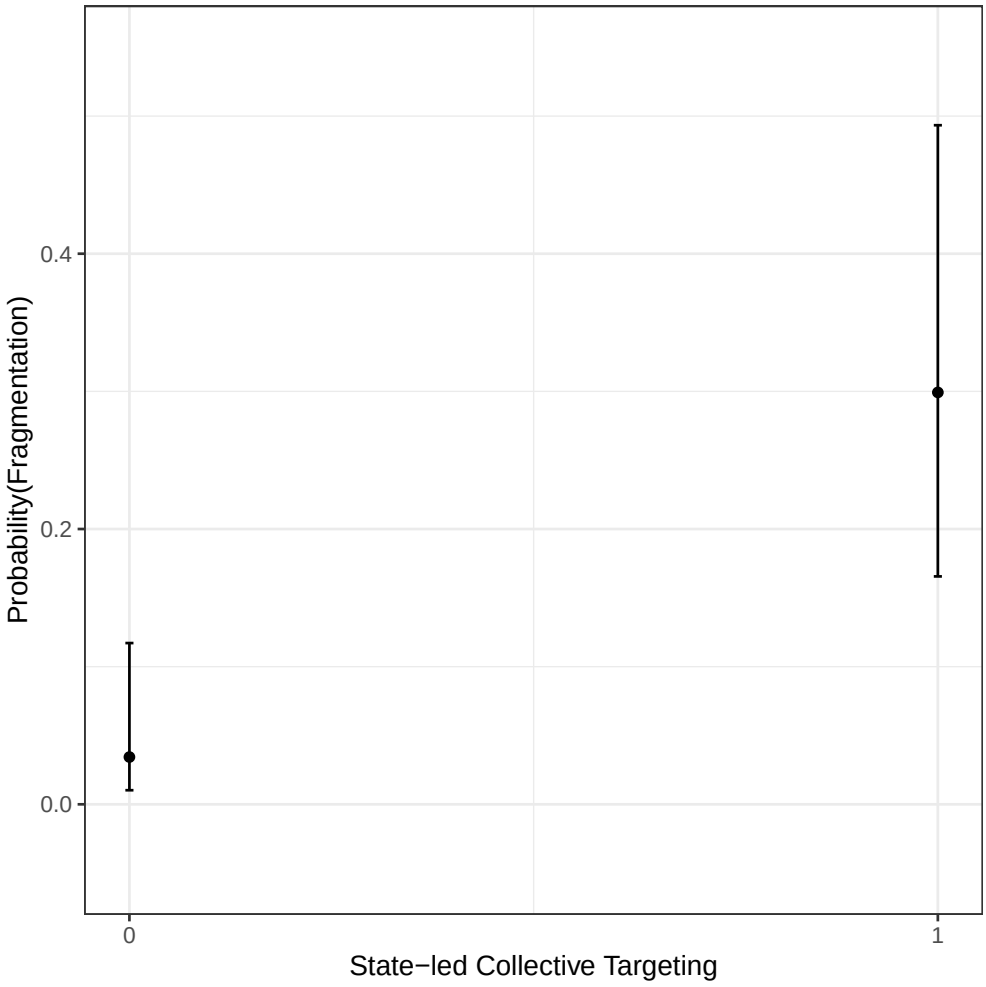
Time-Series Cross-Section Analysis

The analysis presented above simply considers conflict dyads — regardless of their duration — as the unit of analysis. This section presents an alternative approach that follows armed groups over time. Given that the majority of groups experience either no splintering or only one major split, the analysis focuses on the duration up until the first split, or until groups either cease to exist or the dataset coverage ends, which is in 2008. The duration analysis thus

[165] While the set of covariates is less complete in this set of models, this specification does not require a definition of quasi-periods. To further explore the results without such periods, the next section introduces a time-series approach.

[166] Ward and Ahlquist 2018.

Figure 1: Predicted Probability of Insurgent Fragmentation



does not require quasi-periods, yet is able to indirectly control for pre-existing tendencies of fragmentation by focusing on the first split. The unit of observation is the dyad-year, and the dependent variable equals 1 if the armed group splits and zero if the group does not fragment, or ceases to be observed or at risk. I rely on a Cox proportional hazards approach, which has the advantage of reducing misspecification bias compared to fully parametric approaches.[167] Table 4 shows the results. Columns I, III and V show the results for models relying on the Breslow method, and columns II, IV and VI results based on the Efron method for handling ties. Columns I, II, III and IV show the results of baseline models, whereas columns V and VI show results for models where the territorial control variable, which exhibits non-proportional effects according to diagnostic tests based on Schoenfeld residuals, is interacted with the time at risk. All models suggest that state-led collective targeting increases the risk of insurgent fragmentation. The conflict intensity variable is omitted here due to the lack of variation within risk sets.[168] The appendix shows additional results including this variable. Moreover, the appendix presents additional models for which only the first mass killing episode is considered for cases that have been exposed to several episodes; this mirrors the focus on the first collective state violence episode in the cross-national analysis. The conclusions remain the same.

The appendix also presents the matching and weighting approach for time-series data proposed by Imai, Kim, and Wang (2018). This approach is more fine grained than the analysis presented above and matches exactly on time period and treatment history, in addition to weighting or matching based on additional information. It does, however, only work with a small subset of the data as a result of the treatment distribution and exact matching technique. The results of this analysis are presented in the appendix. Albeit insignificant throughout, they tentatively suggest that the effect of state violence could vary over time:

[167] Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004; Metzger and Jones 2022.

[168] Several conflict-specific variables have missing information for years in which fighting does not reach conventional thresholds, as this threshold is the main criterion for inclusion into major conflict datasets. This reduces the number of observations in the models with covariates and the variation of the fighting intensity variable within risk sets in the same models.

Table 4: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Cox Proportional Hazards)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.448+	0.451+	1.385*	1.460*	1.440+	1.524+
	(0.258)	(0.261)	(0.703)	(0.744)	(0.745)	(0.792)
Irregular War			0.812	0.802	0.778	0.778
			(0.562)	(0.583)	(0.579)	(0.600)
Ext. Rebel Support			0.368	0.366	0.399	0.397
			(0.596)	(0.620)	(0.643)	(0.674)
Recr. from Excl. Groups			0.730	0.790	0.891	0.957
			(0.749)	(0.738)	(0.901)	(0.951)
Previously Active			-1.262*	-1.249+	-1.468*	-1.455*
			(0.601)	(0.640)	(0.578)	(0.629)
Fighting Capacity			0.287	0.333	0.125	0.170
			(0.478)	(0.506)	(0.502)	(0.529)
Neopatrimonial Rule			1.784	1.860	2.174+	2.260+
			(1.151)	(1.206)	(1.210)	(1.271)
Dyads at Conflict Onset			0.240	0.256	0.322	0.340
			(0.223)	(0.232)	(0.227)	(0.238)
Excl. Population			-0.805	-0.910	-0.901	-1.009
			(1.059)	(1.124)	(1.094)	(1.161)
Territorial Control†			0.474	0.463	0.270**	0.271**
			(0.492)	(0.516)	(0.088)	(0.091)
Log-Likelihood	-326.156	-325.504	-65.464	-64.788	-62.920	-62.210
Clusters	382	382	267	267	267	267
N	2993	2993	503	503	503	503

Breslow (I, III, V) and Efron method (II, IV, VI) for ties.
† Territorial control variable interacted with duration in models V and VI.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

While fostering fragmentation overall, as indicated in the analyses reported above, it might have no or even a negative effect on insurgent fragmentation for some years. However, the number of analyzed units is too small here and the bootstrap confidence intervals too large to allow for any conclusions. Further research is needed to explore the fine-grained temporal dynamics that underlie the main results.[169]

Discussion

This paper has argued that state-led collective violence against the civilian constituency of armed groups increases the vulnerability of insurgent organizations to internal fragmentation. Based on new data on armed groups and their relation to state-led collective targeting in the context of mass killings, the analysis suggests that such violence is indeed associated with an overall increase in the probability of insurgent splits.

These findings yield important implications for the trajectory of conflicts and their aftermath. Insurgent splintering is likely to complicate negotiation processes between governments and opposition movements,[170] to foster rebel competition,[171] and to possibly even increase the viability of insurgent groups.[172] Indeed, organizational splits do not necessarily reduce the strength or efficiency of armed organizations, and they should not be mistaken for predictors of rebel demise.[173] Insurgent fragmentation is also likely to aggravate local polarization and militarization, two potent drivers of long-term political instability.[174] Insurgent fragmentation may thus be one of the key mechanisms through which large-scale state violence against civilians prolongs armed conflicts and complicates their ultimate termination, but one that previous research on the consequences of state violence has largely overlooked.[175]

[169] In this analysis too, the results remain stable if only the first mass killing affecting a dyad is taken into account.
[170] Cunningham 2006.
[171] Wucherpfennig 2011.
[172] Phillips 2015.
[173] Kenny 2010; Phillips 2015.
[174] Schubiger 2013.
[175] Schubiger 2013.

Theoretically, my argument resonates with work that has stressed the central role of armed group institutions for insurgent cohesion,[176] while at the same time contributing to a better understanding of the determinants of institutional weakness and strength. Future work should continue to uncover further sources of institutional continuity and change in armed groups, especially given the relevance of such dynamics in explaining downstream violence against civilians in civil war.[177]

The presented results also highlight avenues for future empirical work. First of all, this study cannot claim to have identified a causal effect, which remains challenging in this particular context. Future research could supplement these efforts as more data become available, and explore the potential time-varying effect of state violence to a greater extent as well. Second, the presented argument implies that the effect of state violence should be mitigated if existing insurgent institutions that forge and sustain secondary cohesion are strong and robust. Further investigation could explore the validity of this implication in greater depth. Third, the fragmentation measures in this study were restricted to major splinter groups, and subsequent efforts could explore the proposed effects and mechanisms for other forms of organizational fragmentation as well. Finally, this article has explored a consequence of wartime state violence that likely has critical implications for the trajectory of conflicts and the aftermath of civil wars. Future research should continue to expand our understanding of these impacts.

[176] E.g., Gutiérez Sanín 2008; Staniland 2010; Staniland 2014.
[177] Wood 2009; Wood 2010; Hoover Green 2011; Wood 2012.

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Appendix

This appendix provides additional information and robustness tests of the results presented in the main paper.

Cross-sectional Analysis

Table 5 shows the proportion of dyads affected by state-led campaigns of collective violence during at least one year of the conflict; this applies to 51% of cases in this dataset. Examples of dyads affected by state-led collective violence in the context of state-sponsored mass killings include the Sri Lankan, Burmese and Sudanese governments against multiple insurgencies in their countries.

Table 5: State-led Collective Violence

Dyad affected?	Freq.	Percent
No	187	48.95
Yes	195	51.05
Total	382	100.00

Table 6: Insurgent Fragmentation

Fragmentation	Freq.	Percent
No	330	86.39
Yes	52	13.61
Total	382	100.00

Table 7: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Insurgent Fragmentation	0.14	0.34	0	1	382
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.51	0.50	0	1	382
Prior Fragmentation	0.05	0.22	0	1	382
Irregular War	0.75	0.44	0	1	381
Ext. Rebel Support	0.53	0.50	0	1	354
Recr. from Excl. Groups	0.69	0.46	0	1	303
Previously Active	0.20	0.40	0	1	375
Fighting Capacity	0.32	0.47	0	1	360
Territorial Control	0.37	0.48	0	1	367
Neopatrimonial Rule	0.33	0.24	0.01	0.94	380
Dyads at Conflict Onset	1.66	1.05	1	8	382
Excl. Population	0.25	0.23	0	0.97	380
Fighting Intensity	1.18	0.38	1	2	382

Table 6 shows the distribution of the outcome variable, the occurrence of insurgent fragmentation. It refers here to the period after the onset of state-led mass killings or, in the absence of such violence, the period that follows the first five years of the conflict. As outlined in the main text, about 14% of all insurgent organizations in the dataset underwent major splits after the initial conflict period or the onset of state-led mass killings. Of all armed groups affected by state-led collective targeting, 22% experienced splintering as opposed to 5% of those non-affected. The proportion of splinters changes to 16% overall and 9% among unaffected groups with the alternative definition of the initial conflict period (two instead of five years following conflict onset) and to 16% overall and 11% among unaffected groups without taking initial fragmentation into account (see replication code).

Table 7 shows the summary statistics for all variables. Due to missing values on some variables, the models with entropy balancing and/or covariate inclusion contain fewer observations.

Table 8 describes the data before and after entropy balancing in terms of mean, variance, and skewness. Entropy weighing clearly improves balance between treated and control units.

Table 8: Entropy Balancing: State-led Collective Targeting (0/1)

	No Weighting					
	Treated			Control		
Variable	Mean	Variance	Skewness	Mean	Variance	Skewness
Prior Frag.	.01961	.01935	6.93	.09009	.08272	2.863
Irregular War	.8235	.1463	-1.697	.6757	.2211	-.7506
Ext. Reb. Support	.5752	.246	-.3041	.5225	.2518	-.09018
Recr. Excl.Groups	.7582	.1846	-1.206	.6126	.2395	-.4623
Prev. Active	.2222	.174	1.336	.2072	.1658	1.445
Fighting Capacity	.281	.2034	.9742	.3514	.23	.6228
Territorial Control	.4379	.2478	.2503	.3153	.2179	.795
Neopatrim.	.2571	.03629	.6945	.4242	.06904	.2957
Dyads 1st Year	1.961	1.748	1.991	1.477	.6154	1.777
Excl. Pop.	.3446	.06438	.8412	.2153	.04036	1.01
Fighting Int.	1.229	.1776	1.292	1.126	.1112	2.252
	With Entropy Weights					
	Treated			Control		
Variable	Mean	Variance	Skewness	Mean	Variance	Skewness
Prior Frag	.01961	.01935	6.93	.01969	.01948	6.914
Irregular War	.8235	.1463	-1.697	.8232	.1468	-1.695
Ext. Reb. Support	.5752	.246	-.3041	.5751	.2466	-.304
Recr. Excl. Groups	.7582	.1846	-1.206	.7576	.1853	-1.202
Prev. Active	.2222	.174	1.336	.2222	.1744	1.337
Fighting Capacity	.281	.2034	.9742	.2811	.2039	.9738
Territorial Control	.4379	.2478	.2503	.4376	.2483	.2515
Neoptatrimon.	.2571	.03629	.6945	.2577	.04809	1.43
Dyads 1st Year	1.961	1.748	1.991	1.96	1.336	1.102
Excl. Pop.	.3446	.06438	.8412	.3441	.04759	.5274
Fighting Int.	1.229	.1776	1.292	1.228	.1779	1.293

Table 9 repeats the analysis presented in table 3 the main paper, but with binary logistic instead of linear regressions. Tables 10 and 11 replicate the same results, but with the alternative *prior insurgent fragmentation* measurement. Tables 12, 13, 14, and 15 present the same four regression results (linear and logistic regressions with original and alternative prior outcome measure) without entropy balancing. In each table, columns I and II present results without covariates, columns III and IV with adjustments for prior fragmentation, and columns V and VI with the full set of covariates. Within each pair of columns, the standard errors are either robust under heteroscedasticity or clustered at the country level.

Finally, tables 16, 17, 18, and 19 present regression results without adjusting for past outcomes and with the most basic version of the dependent variable. The coefficients remain positive, although they lose significance in the models with entropy balancing. While the set of covariates is less complete in this last set of models, this specification does not require a definition of quasi-periods. To further explore the results without such periods, I also explore two different approaches with time-series data, a Cox duration analysis[178] and a propensity score weighting approach for time-series data,[179] discussed below.

[178]Metzger and Jones 2022.
[179]Imai, Kim, and Wang 2018.

Table 9: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	3.330***	3.330***	4.902***	4.902***	4.959***	4.959***
	(0.667)	(0.678)	(0.932)	(0.864)	(0.933)	(0.918)
Prior Fragmentation			5.987***	5.987***	5.980***	5.980***
			(1.238)	(1.503)	(1.209)	(1.395)
Irregular War					0.054	0.054
					(0.466)	(0.465)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.627	0.627
					(0.419)	(0.458)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					-0.060	-0.060
					(0.524)	(0.510)
Previously Active					-0.080	-0.080
					(0.513)	(0.660)
Fighting Capacity					0.584	0.584
					(0.428)	(0.491)
Territorial Control					-0.063	-0.063
					(0.390)	(0.440)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.166	0.166
					(1.067)	(0.998)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.146	-0.146
					(0.185)	(0.135)
Excl. Population					-0.201	-0.201
					(0.848)	(0.809)
Fighting Intensity					-0.324	-0.324
					(0.518)	(0.543)
Constant	-4.473***	-4.473***	-6.129***	-6.129***	-6.003***	-6.003***
	(0.640)	(0.598)	(0.915)	(0.857)	(1.300)	(1.320)
Log-Likelihood	-94.096	-94.096	-84.867	-84.867	-82.233	-82.233
χ^2	24.92073	24.11991	31.28146	32.74616	39.13699	34.68243
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 10: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.140*	0.140*	0.140*	0.140*	0.140**	0.140**
	(0.063)	(0.066)	(0.062)	(0.068)	(0.053)	(0.051)
Prior Fragmentation (alt.)			0.395	0.395	0.457*	0.457*
			(0.241)	(0.242)	(0.188)	(0.194)
Irregular War					0.009	0.009
					(0.081)	(0.076)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.079	0.079
					(0.049)	(0.054)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.010	0.010
					(0.062)	(0.063)
Previously Active					0.165+	0.165
					(0.099)	(0.104)
Fighting Capacity					0.150+	0.150*
					(0.079)	(0.073)
Territorial Control					-0.023	-0.023
					(0.057)	(0.066)
Neopatrimonial Rule					-0.055	-0.055
					(0.117)	(0.103)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.031	-0.031
					(0.020)	(0.022)
Excl. Population					0.073	0.073
					(0.131)	(0.135)
Fighting Intensity					-0.029	-0.029
					(0.075)	(0.076)
Constant	0.102+	0.102*	0.094+	0.094+	0.050	0.050
	(0.052)	(0.049)	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.132)	(0.143)
R2	0.034	0.034	0.056	0.056	0.142	0.142
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 11: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	1.036+	1.036+	1.061+	1.061	1.158*	1.158*
	(0.600)	(0.614)	(0.620)	(0.648)	(0.508)	(0.477)
Prior Fragmentation (alt.)			1.977*	1.977*	2.731**	2.731**
			(0.959)	(0.954)	(0.877)	(0.866)
Irregular War					0.009	0.009
					(0.581)	(0.508)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.641	0.641
					(0.444)	(0.462)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.069	0.069
					(0.521)	(0.506)
Previously Active					1.172+	1.172+
					(0.598)	(0.664)
Fighting Capacity					1.165*	1.165*
					(0.525)	(0.585)
Territorial Control					-0.221	-0.221
					(0.484)	(0.485)
Neopatrimonial Rule					-0.037	-0.037
					(0.974)	(0.986)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.315	-0.315
					(0.256)	(0.255)
Excl. Population					0.428	0.428
					(0.865)	(0.926)
Fighting Intensity					-0.266	-0.266
					(0.652)	(0.676)
Constant	-2.178***	-2.178***	-2.253***	-2.253***	-2.661*	-2.661*
	(0.569)	(0.531)	(0.598)	(0.574)	(1.182)	(1.257)
Log-Likelihood	-134.948	-134.948	-132.467	-132.467	-118.687	-118.687
χ^2	2.978617	2.841315	5.851708	5.692514	35.75604	33.12877
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 12: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.172***	0.172***	0.199***	0.199***	0.244***	0.244***
	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.048)	(0.045)
Prior Fragmentation			0.374***	0.374**	0.391**	0.391**
			(0.107)	(0.137)	(0.120)	(0.130)
Irregular War					0.031	0.031
					(0.052)	(0.051)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.069	0.069
					(0.044)	(0.046)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.013	0.013
					(0.050)	(0.051)
Previously Active					-0.012	-0.012
					(0.054)	(0.072)
Fighting Capacity					0.074	0.074
					(0.052)	(0.052)
Territorial Control					0.010	0.010
					(0.050)	(0.056)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.152	0.152
					(0.100)	(0.100)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.016	-0.016
					(0.020)	(0.012)
Excl. Population					-0.057	-0.057
					(0.111)	(0.109)
Fighting Intensity					-0.034	-0.034
					(0.065)	(0.069)
Constant	0.048**	0.048*	0.016	0.016	-0.053	-0.053
	(0.016)	(0.020)	(0.012)	(0.017)	(0.097)	(0.096)
R2	0.063	0.063	0.118	0.118	0.132	0.132
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 13: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	1.722***	1.722***	2.520***	2.520***	2.503***	2.503***
	(0.383)	(0.512)	(0.541)	(0.731)	(0.563)	(0.669)
Prior Fragmentation			3.170***	3.170***	2.902***	2.902***
			(0.650)	(0.860)	(0.664)	(0.783)
Irregular War					0.254	0.254
					(0.441)	(0.449)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.671+	0.671
					(0.384)	(0.415)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.105	0.105
					(0.486)	(0.516)
Previously Active					0.009	0.009
					(0.450)	(0.590)
Fighting Capacity					0.529	0.529
					(0.396)	(0.454)
Territorial Control					0.061	0.061
					(0.360)	(0.395)
Neopatrimonial Rule					1.353	1.353
					(0.899)	(0.999)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.102	-0.102
					(0.166)	(0.110)
Excl. Population					-0.499	-0.499
					(0.793)	(0.765)
Fighting Intensity					-0.344	-0.344
					(0.482)	(0.509)
Constant	-2.985***	-2.985***	-3.842***	-3.842***	-4.179***	-4.179***
	(0.342)	(0.447)	(0.521)	(0.715)	(0.879)	(0.957)
Log-Likelihood	-138.958	-138.958	-127.654	-127.654	-100.038	-100.038
χ^2	20.17622	11.31509	27.92758	16.172	38.82858	40.28203
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 14: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.130***	0.130***	0.151***	0.151***	0.158**	0.158**
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.056)	(0.058)
Prior Fragmentation (alt.)			0.653***	0.653***	0.604***	0.604***
			(0.121)	(0.119)	(0.146)	(0.151)
Irregular War					0.006	0.006
					(0.060)	(0.056)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.032	0.032
					(0.047)	(0.051)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.060	0.060
					(0.052)	(0.051)
Previously Active					0.003	0.003
					(0.060)	(0.072)
Fighting Capacity					0.059	0.059
					(0.056)	(0.054)
Territorial Control					0.010	0.010
					(0.053)	(0.061)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.051	0.051
					(0.108)	(0.101)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.018	-0.018
					(0.020)	(0.017)
Excl. Population					0.014	0.014
					(0.118)	(0.114)
Fighting Intensity					-0.013	-0.013
					(0.072)	(0.072)
Constant	0.091***	0.091***	0.059**	0.059**	0.016	0.016
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.018)	(0.021)	(0.102)	(0.106)
R2	0.032	0.032	0.129	0.129	0.119	0.119
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 15: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	1.040***	1.040**	1.422***	1.422***	1.259**	2.018***
	(0.308)	(0.321)	(0.356)	(0.416)	(0.471)	(0.573)
Prior Fragmentation (alt.)			3.586***	3.586***	3.213***	2.383***
			(0.708)	(0.698)	(0.854)	(0.658)
Irregular War					0.083	0.312
					(0.448)	(0.451)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.263	0.645
					(0.370)	(0.407)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.488	0.178
					(0.451)	(0.489)
Previously Active					0.038	0.070
					(0.440)	(0.591)
Fighting Capacity					0.413	0.582
					(0.399)	(0.468)
Territorial Control					0.082	0.130
					(0.354)	(0.436)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.339	1.039
					(0.845)	(0.854)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.135	-0.102
					(0.184)	(0.102)
Excl. Population					0.065	-0.378
					(0.762)	(0.769)
Fighting Intensity					-0.119	-0.320
					(0.505)	(0.500)
Constant	-2.303***	-2.303***	-2.748***	-2.748***	-2.966***	-3.820***
	(0.255)	(0.267)	(0.313)	(0.361)	(0.829)	(0.868)
Log-Likelihood	-159.840	-159.840	-145.582	-145.582	-112.333	-103.290
χ^2	11.40854	10.50062	33.03557	29.9329	30.2128	59.23169
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 16: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065
	(0.081)	(0.076)	(0.081)	(0.076)	(0.068)	(0.060)
Irregular War					-0.086	-0.086
					(0.108)	(0.093)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.117+	0.117+
					(0.060)	(0.063)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					-0.067	-0.067
					(0.080)	(0.071)
Previously Active					0.136	0.136
					(0.101)	(0.109)
Fighting Capacity					0.076	0.076
					(0.093)	(0.099)
Territorial Control					0.059	0.059
					(0.068)	(0.080)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.208	0.208
					(0.171)	(0.170)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.022	-0.022
					(0.024)	(0.020)
Excl. Population					0.043	0.043
					(0.140)	(0.143)
Fighting Intensity					0.052	0.052
					(0.084)	(0.095)
Constant	0.177*	0.177**	0.177*	0.177**	0.066	0.066
	(0.074)	(0.062)	(0.074)	(0.062)	(0.155)	(0.166)
R2	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.099	0.099
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 17: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.489	0.489
	(0.539)	(0.497)	(0.539)	(0.497)	(0.449)	(0.377)
Irregular War					-0.515	-0.515
					(0.535)	(0.428)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.815+	0.815+
					(0.439)	(0.474)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					-0.486	-0.486
					(0.530)	(0.479)
Previously Active					0.897	0.897
					(0.554)	(0.621)
Fighting Capacity					0.486	0.486
					(0.519)	(0.574)
Territorial Control					0.354	0.354
					(0.433)	(0.500)
Neopatrimonial Rule					1.518	1.518
					(1.042)	(1.107)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.144	-0.144
					(0.162)	(0.131)
Excl. Population					0.220	0.220
					(0.852)	(0.894)
Fighting Intensity					0.251	0.251
					(0.511)	(0.576)
Constant	-1.538**	-1.538***	-1.538**	-1.538***	-2.427**	-2.427*
	(0.505)	(0.428)	(0.505)	(0.428)	(0.941)	(1.040)
Log-Likelihood	-156.034	-156.034	-156.034	-156.034	-141.341	-141.341
χ^2	.5361375	.6315192	.5361375	.6315192	15.90793	16.43867
Clusters		71		71		71
N	264	264	264	264	264	264
Entropy Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 18: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (OLS)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.114**	0.114**	0.114**	0.114**	0.109+	0.109+
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.060)	(0.062)
Irregular War					0.025	0.025
					(0.063)	(0.056)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.046	0.046
					(0.050)	(0.057)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.062	0.062
					(0.055)	(0.053)
Previously Active					-0.034	-0.034
					(0.061)	(0.074)
Fighting Capacity					0.024	0.024
					(0.061)	(0.057)
Territorial Control					0.040	0.040
					(0.058)	(0.066)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.046	0.046
					(0.112)	(0.100)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.017	-0.017
					(0.021)	(0.013)
Excl. Population					0.018	0.018
					(0.123)	(0.117)
Fighting Intensity					0.027	0.027
					(0.075)	(0.085)
Constant	0.107***	0.107***	0.107***	0.107***	0.005	0.005
	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.111)	(0.122)
R2	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.043	0.043
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No

Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 19: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Binary Logistic Regression)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.860**	0.860**	0.860**	0.860**	0.739+	0.739+
	(0.293)	(0.289)	(0.293)	(0.289)	(0.418)	(0.423)
Irregular War					0.185	0.185
					(0.431)	(0.376)
Ext. Rebel Support					0.318	0.318
					(0.348)	(0.395)
Recr. from Excl. Groups					0.460	0.460
					(0.417)	(0.415)
Previously Active					-0.227	-0.227
					(0.422)	(0.505)
Fighting Capacity					0.144	0.144
					(0.388)	(0.370)
Territorial Control					0.257	0.257
					(0.350)	(0.400)
Neopatrimonial Rule					0.266	0.266
					(0.749)	(0.656)
Dyads at Conflict Onset					-0.108	-0.108
					(0.158)	(0.095)
Excl. Population					0.116	0.116
					(0.725)	(0.686)
Fighting Intensity					0.140	0.140
					(0.446)	(0.498)
Constant	-2.122***	-2.122***	-2.122***	-2.122***	-2.781***	-2.781***
	(0.237)	(0.230)	(0.237)	(0.230)	(0.763)	(0.828)
Log-Likelihood	-166.471	-166.471	-166.471	-166.471	-123.701	-123.701
χ^2	8.586828	8.860327	8.586828	8.860327	13.28136	19.63209
Clusters		93		93		71
N	382	382	382	382	264	264
Entropy Weights	No	No	No	No	No	No
Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses.						
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.						

TSCS Analysis

Cox Proportional Hazards Approach

This section shows additional results for the Cox proportional hazards approach. Information on several covariates is missing for years in which conflicts are inactive (in terms of not reaching conventional battle-related death thresholds), which reduces the number of observations in the models with covariates. The fighting intensity variable, which equals one here if a conflict is active and zero otherwise, is omitted from the main analysis (table 4) due to the lack of variation within risk sets. Table 20 replicates the results shown in the main paper with this variable added. Tables 21 and 22 present results for models with the state violence variable only including the first episode of state violence in cases of exposure to more than one episode (with the Efron and Breslow method respectively), to match the focus on first episodes in the cross-sectional approach. The substantive results remain unchanged.

Propensity Score Weighting for TSCS Data

This section reports the results of the time-series cross-section approach proposed by Imai, Kim and Wang (2018).[180] Here, only units with an identical treatment history over the exact same time period are taken into account. For each "treated" unit, a set of control units with an identical treatment history up to the year before the treatment is selected first. Second, a matching or weighting technique is employed on pre-treatment covariates to maximize the observable comparability of treated and untreated units. Finally, the average treatment effect on the treated (ATT) is calculated, based on an estimator that Imai, Kim and Wang (2018) show to be equivalent to a weighted linear two-way fixed effects regression approach. I use propensity score weighting as a refinement method to take into account the covariate history of treatment and control units. This method performs comparatively well in terms of balancing. Moreover, unlike with matching approaches, it is not necessary to specify the maximum size of matched sets after refinement, a choice that can affect the results. For

[180]These results are generated with the R package PanelMatch (Imai, Kim, and Wang 2018).

Table 20: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Cox Proportional Hazards)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting	0.517*	0.520+	1.371*	1.447*	1.422+	1.505+
	(0.263)	(0.266)	(0.693)	(0.733)	(0.734)	(0.780)
Fighting Intensity	-0.272	-0.274	35.110	36.059	34.768	36.418
	(0.280)	(0.283)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)
Irregular War			0.833	0.824	0.794	0.796
			(0.565)	(0.587)	(0.580)	(0.602)
Ext. Rebel Support			0.396	0.395	0.421	0.419
			(0.591)	(0.614)	(0.641)	(0.671)
Recr. from Excl. Groups			0.750	0.811	0.895	0.961
			(0.745)	(0.778)	(0.892)	(0.942)
Previously Active			-1.204*	-1.188+	-1.440*	-1.424*
			(0.592)	(0.631)	(0.572)	(0.622)
Fighting Capacity			0.292	0.340	0.130	0.175
			(0.479)	(0.509)	(0.502)	(0.530)
Neopatrimonial Rule			1.788	1.864	2.188+	2.275+
			(1.141)	(1.195)	(1.196)	(1.256)
Dyads at Conflict Onset			0.239	0.256	0.322	0.340
			(0.223)	(0.232)	(0.226)	(0.237)
Excl. Population			-0.881	-0.992	-0.933	-1.042
			(1.083)	(1.152)	(1.096)	(1.162)
Territorial Control†			0.444	0.432	0.266**	0.267**
			(0.490)	(0.514)	(0.089)	(0.091)
Log-Likelihood	-325.692	-325.033	-65.186	-64.496	-62.755	-62.035
Clusters	382	382	267	267	267	267
N	2993	2993	503	503	503	503

Breslow (col. I, III, V) and Efron method (col. II, IV, VII) for ties.
† Territorial control variable interacted with duration in models V and VI.
+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 21: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Cox Proportional Hazards)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting (first)	0.405	0.472+	1.464*	1.450*	1.524+	1.505+
	(0.259)	(0.268)	(0.740)	(0.729)	(0.791)	(0.779)
Fighting Intensity		-0.263		36.053		32.412***
		(0.287)		(.)		(0.996)
Irregular War			0.802	0.824	0.778	0.796
			(0.582)	(0.586)	(0.600)	(0.602)
Ext. Rebel Support			0.370	0.399	0.398	0.420
			(0.621)	(0.614)	(0.674)	(0.671)
Recr. from Excl. Groups			0.788	0.810	0.957	0.961
			(0.781)	(0.776)	(0.950)	(0.941)
Previously Active			-1.240+	-1.179+	-1.453*	-1.422*
			(0.640)	(0.630)	(0.628)	(0.622)
Fighting Capacity			0.325	0.331	0.168	0.174
			(0.510)	(0.512)	(0.530)	(0.531)
Neopatrimonial Rule			1.847	1.851	2.257+	2.271+
			(1.207)	(1.196)	(1.270)	(1.256)
Dyads at Conflict Onset			0.254	0.253	0.340	0.339
			(0.233)	(0.233)	(0.239)	(0.237)
Excl. Population			-0.923	-1.006	-1.013	-1.046
			(1.129)	(1.157)	(1.162)	(1.164)
Territorial Control†			0.461	0.429	0.269**	0.265**
			(0.514)	(0.512)	(0.091)	(0.092)
Log-Likelihood	-325.797	-325.364	-64.750	-64.456	-62.203	-62.028
Clusters	382	382	267	267	267	267
N	2993	2993	503	503	503	503

Efron method for ties.

† Territorial control variable interacted with duration in models V and VI.

+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

Table 22: State Violence and Insurgent Fragmentation (Cox Proportional Hazards)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
State-led Coll. Targeting (first)	0.402	0.469+	1.390*	1.375*	1.441+	1.422+
	(0.256)	(0.265)	(0.699)	(0.689)	(0.744)	(0.733)
Fighting Intensity		-0.261		36.361		34.737
		(0.284)		(.)		(.)
Irregular War			0.812	0.833	0.777	0.794
			(0.560)	(0.564)	(0.578)	(0.580)
Ext. Rebel Support			0.371	0.399	0.400	0.422
			(0.597)	(0.591)	(0.643)	(0.641)
Recr. from Excl. Groups			0.728	0.749	0.891	0.895
			(0.748)	(0.743)	(0.899)	(0.891)
Previously Active			-1.253*	-1.194*	-1.467*	-1.438*
			(0.601)	(0.591)	(0.577)	(0.571)
Fighting Capacity			0.278	0.283	0.124	0.129
			(0.480)	(0.482)	(0.502)	(0.502)
Neopatrimonial Rule			1.772	1.775	2.170+	2.184+
			(1.152)	(1.142)	(1.209)	(1.195)
Dyads at Conflict Onset			0.237	0.236	0.322	0.321
			(0.224)	(0.224)	(0.227)	(0.226)
Excl. Population			-0.818	-0.896	-0.905	-0.937
			(1.063)	(1.088)	(1.095)	(1.097)
Territorial Control†			0.471	0.440	0.269**	0.265**
			(0.491)	(0.488)	(0.089)	(0.089)
Log-Likelihood	-326.443	-326.017	-65.425	-65.145	-62.914	-62.748
Clusters	382	382	267	267	267	267
N	2993	2993	503	503	503	503

Breslow method for ties.

† Territorial control variable interacted with duration in models V and VI.

+ p < .10 * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 p < *** 0.001.

cases where the treatment status does not change before the outcome is measured, I estimate average treatment effects from one up to three post-treatment years after exposure to state violence. Ideally, one could adjust for several pre-treatment years. However, the number of control units gets very small with multiple pre-treatment years, and hence only one pre-treatment lag is used in this analysis. With 1 lag, the number of treated units is 11, with the size of the matched set per treated unit varying from 2 to 18. The small sample size, which is due to the treatment distribution over time and fact that this method matches exactly on the treatment year and treatment history, underscores that causal inference in this setting is very challenging. Figure 2 illustrates the covariate balance before and after refinement (propensity score weighting) of the matched sets.[181] A circle below the 45 degree line indicates that the standardized mean difference is reduced after propensity score weighting for a particular covariate. While balance does not improve for all covariates, it improves for most. Moreover, while the standardized mean difference remains larger than ideal for some covariates for which the balance improves, variation in the pre-treatment outcome is very limited throughout for this set of observations. While this is reassuring in terms of the plausibility of the parallel trends assumption, of course more data points would be needed to increase confidence in the appropriateness of this assumption here.

Turning to the results, the first panel in table 23 shows the estimated ATT if 1 pre-treatment year is considered to identify matches, and if propensity score weighting is performed with the covariates irregular war, external rebel support, recruitment from excluded ethnic groups, previously active, territorial control, fighting capacity, neopatrimonial rule, dyads at conflict onset, excluded population, and fighting intensity. The second panel repeats this analysis, but with matching on missing values as well.[182] Next, I include a variable

[181] The balance is explored for the most complete specification shown in table 14, i.e., the last panel. Note that prior fragmentation and external rebel support are not included in this figure due to lack of variation.

[182] As outlined in the main paper, there is no information for several conflict-specific variables during years in which fighting does not reach conventional thresholds for inclusion into major datasets. However, as many armed conflicts fall below the activity threshold for certain periods of time, and as fragmentation can occur in periods with below-threshold activity, spells without activity as defined by UCDP are included in the analysis. Note that in order to code an armed group's civilian constituency as having been affected by state violence, there needs to be some overlap of the killing episode with conflict activity.

previous mass killings that indicates whether state-led mass killings already affected the country before the onset of this particular conflict and/or that ended prior to that particular year, to capture prior violence histories not necessarily covered by the 1 year lag. Finally, the analysis is repeated with *past outcomes* as an additional covariate. The final specification includes past outcomes and previous mass killings. The standard errors are expectantly large and the confidence intervals include zero throughout. The coefficients in the first four panels tentatively suggest a potentially positive effect for years 1 and 3 post exposure to state-led collective targeting, an estimate that is however not statistically significant. Moreover, when adjusting for past outcomes, these coefficients fall to zero. The results also suggest a potential negative effect for year 2 post treatment, though again this result is not significant. The results remain substantively unchanged if the focus is on the first mass killing episode in case of multiple exposures.[183] In general, the samples are too small here and the bootstrap confidence intervals too large to allow for any conclusions. Future research should further explore the possibility of time-varying effects as more data become available.

[183]See additional results generated by replication code.

Figure 2: Covariate Balance

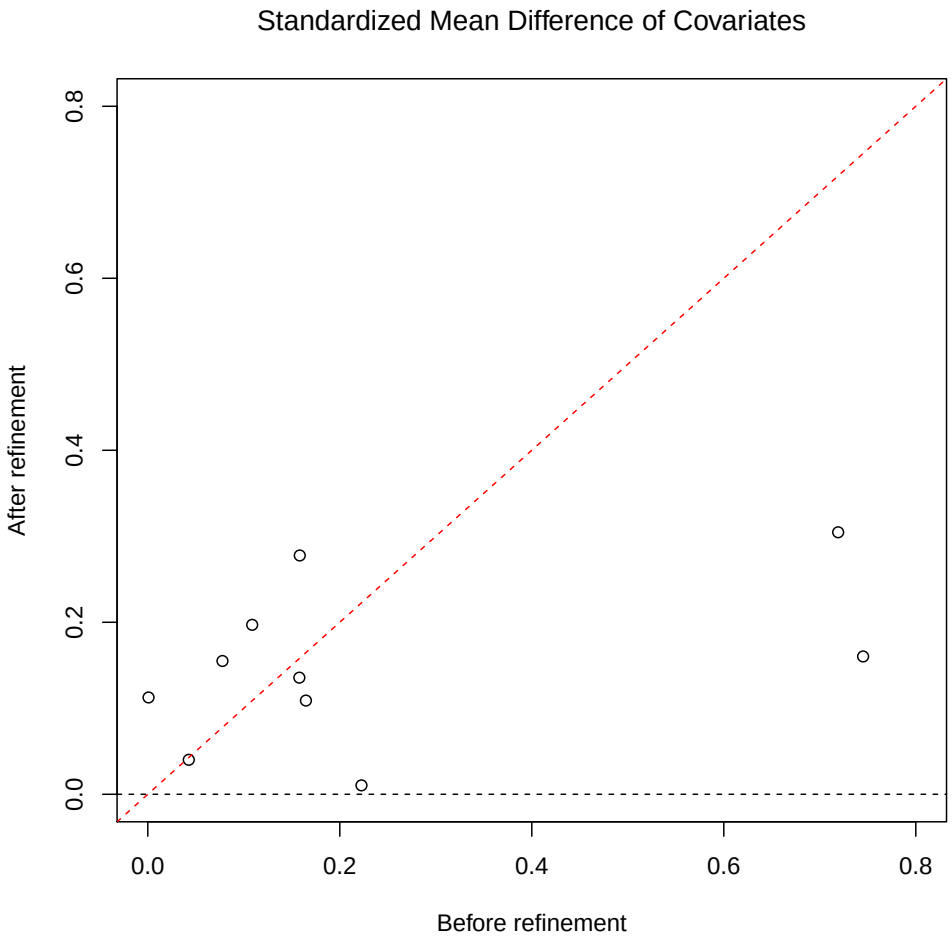

Table 23: ATT by Period

Period	Estimate	Std. Error	2.5%	97.5%
1 lag				
t+1	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
t+2	-0.009	0.011	-0.036	0.000
t+3	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
1 lag, missing values				
t+1	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
t+2	-0.009	0.011	-0.036	0.000
t+3	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
1 lag, previous MKs				
t+1	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
t+2	-0.009	0.011	-0.036	0.000
t+3	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
1 lag, previous MKs, missing values				
t+1	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
t+2	-0.009	0.011	-0.036	0.000
t+3	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.029
1 lag, past outcome				
t+1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
t+2	-0.017	0.016	-0.058	0.000
t+3	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
1 lag, past outcome, missing values				
t+1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
t+2	-0.017	0.016	-0.058	0.000
t+3	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
1 lag, previous MKs, past outcome				
t+1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
t+2	-0.017	0.016	-0.058	0.000
t+3	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
1 lag, previous MKs, past outcome, missing values				
t+1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
t+2	-0.017	0.016	-0.058	0.000
t+3	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Propensity score weighting.

11 treated units; 2 (min) to 18 (max) controls per matched set.

Standard errors based on 1000 weighted bootstrap samples.