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Ethnic Defection in Civil War

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The study of ethnicity is dominated by constructivist approaches, yet empirical studies of civil war have been oblivious to their insights. In this article, the author examines the relationship between ethnic identity and civil war and points to several empirical instances of fluidity in the behavioral expression of ethnic identities within civil war. The author identifies two processes that are consistent with constructivist theorizing: identity shift and ethnic defection. The author provides several empirical illustrations along with a micro-level test of the determinants of ethnic defection. At the micro level, ethnic defection is best predicted by the extent of territorial control exercised by the incumbent political actor and the level of prior insurgent violence. The author also hypothesizes that at the macro level, ethnic defection is a function of the resources available to incumbent actors and conclude by stressing the need to take seriously the endogenous dynamics of civil wars.

Keywords: *civil war; ethnicity; identity; insurgency; counterinsurgency*

Recent research on civil wars¹ has generally been oblivious to constructivist insights that stress the social construction of ethnicity and its potential fluidity and malleability.² Although constructivist research has focused on processes of constitution and reconfiguration of ethnic groups and identities (Wimmer, 2007), empirical researchers of civil war, particularly in the field of international relations, have tended to treat ethnic groups as unitary actors and ethnic identities as given *ex ante*, automatically salient, fixed during the conflict, and predictive of individual political behavior (e.g., Posen, 1993; Walter, 2005). In their simplest formulation, these assumptions boil down to the claim that during civil wars, individuals will tend to act in support of organizations claiming to represent their ethnic identity—so much so that individuals and organizations can be conflated into a single actor, the “ethnic group” (Biddle, 2006; Kaufmann, 1996a, 1996b).

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Ethnicity enters in studies of civil wars in two ways. First, it is an independent variable in macro-level studies of civil war, typically operationalized via the Ethnolinguistic Fractionalization Index (ELF), which proxies ethnic identity by linguistic diversity. In that incarnation, ethnicity is used in econometric models that primarily track civil war onset. The main question asked is whether ELF is associated with a higher likelihood of civil war onset. The evidence is inconclusive. Some studies find that it has no effect on the likelihood of civil war onset (Collier & Hoeffler, 2002; Fearon & Laitin, 2003), whereas others argue against the practice of pooling ethnic and nonethnic civil wars and show that ELF has a significant effect only on ethnic wars (Sambanis, 2001). Some researchers have argued in favor of using an indicator of ethnic polarization as opposed to fractionalization and find a significant effect for polarization (Montalvo & Reynal Querol, 2005). Last, others have challenged the validity of ELF, arguing that it does not distinguish between politically salient versus politically nonsalient cleavages (Posner, 2004), that it ignores the religious and racial dimensions of ethnicity in favor of its linguistic dimension, and that it misspecifies the mechanisms linking ethnicity and conflict (Cederman & Girardin, 2007; Wimmer, Cederman, & Min, 2007). Overall, however, the focus on civil war onset rather than dynamics, has led the large-N literature away from constructivist insights.

In its second incarnation, ethnicity enters as the defining characteristic of “ethnic wars,” a subset of civil wars defined on the basis of their recruitment patterns and actors’ goals. In a simple definition, ethnic civil wars are fought between ethnic groups and ethnically biased states over their power relationship (Sambanis, 2006). Ethnic identities matter for two reasons: First, they facilitate collective action (Fearon & Laitin, 1996; Hardin, 1995);³ second, they are uniquely sticky and visible, and hence more constraining, almost to the point of being inescapable (Caselli & Coleman, 2006; Kaufmann, 1996a, 1996b). Put otherwise, the distinction between ethnic and nonethnic civil wars is based on a microfoundation that posits a clear link between identity and behavior: Ethnic individual identities predict political support for an ethnic organization. This microfoundation violates constructivist insights.

Based on these assumptions, ethnic civil wars are said to be exceedingly violent and intractable (Caselli & Coleman, 2006; Horowitz, 1985; Oberschall, 1993). This line of reasoning is either informed by explicitly primordialist assumptions (Van Evera, 2001) or pays lip service to constructivist insights by pointing out that although ethnic identities are socially constructed, their only possible transformation is toward consolidation or hardening; therefore, they can be treated as if they were fixed.

In this article, I incorporate constructivist insights into the study of civil wars. Theoretically, I link ethnic identity and civil war in a way consistent with constructivist approaches.⁴ I identify two key processes: identity shift and ethnic defection. By identity shift, I imply the acquisition by individuals of a new ethnic (or national) identity that replaces the old one, such as is frequently observed among immigrants in the United States—a process whose aggregate end result is assimilation (Alba & Nee, 2003; Wimmer, 2007).⁵ In contrast, ethnic defection is a process whereby individuals join organizations explicitly opposed to the national aspirations of the ethnic group with which they identify and end up fighting against their coethnics.⁶ The process of ethnic defection implies a disjunction between ethnic identification and political support for ethnonational goals, without requiring a shift in a person's self-identification.

Empirically, I argue that constructivism's empirical prediction of multidirectional identity transformations, as opposed to just consolidation, is more widespread than commonly assumed. I point to overlooked evidence suggesting considerable heterogeneity and fluidity in the behavioral expression of ethnic identities within civil war. Even when ethnic divisions cause the eruption of civil war in the first place, these identities do not always remain stable and fixed during the conflict; if they do change, they may soften rather than only harden. At the very least, the behavioral potential of ethnicity is empirically variable. I hypothesize that a key determinant of this variation is the willingness of incumbent states facing ethnic rebellion to recruit ethnic defectors, which, in turn, depends on their resources.

By suggesting that civil wars are dynamic social and political contexts that potentially shape the behavioral expression of ethnic identities, this article qualifies existing conceptualizations of ethnicity (particularly in the field of international relations) as well as existing conceptualizations of civil war (mainly in the field of comparative politics).

The article is organized as follows. First, I briefly review the constructivist contribution and discuss the processes of identity shift and ethnic defection. I point to a subset of ethnic civil wars that display dynamics that do not differ from those of nonethnic civil wars and stress the organizational demand for ethnic defection on top of its popular supply. In the second section, I switch to the supply side and present micro-level evidence from recent historical research on ethnic defection. I then turn some of these insights into hypotheses that I test by estimating a model of recruitment in a counterinsurgent militia. I conclude by pointing to an emerging research agenda focusing on identities as a consequence, rather than just a cause, of civil war.

Constructivism and Civil War

Insofar as constructivism enters in recent research on civil wars, it is via the claim that although ethnic identities are constructed and fluid, they usually harden and solidify during wars. Tone Bringa's remarkable documentary, "We Are All Neighbors," provides a rare glimpse into this process of "identity hardening." The Croat and Muslims villagers Bringa follows in real time while the Bosnian Civil War is unfolding end up much more wrapped up in their respective ethnic identities than they were before. We watch in disbelief as old friendships collapse and hostility rises up. In this account, identity is partly endogenous to the war, but change is unidirectional, toward tighter and more exclusive ethnic boundaries. Ethnic boundaries are cemented rather than trespassed. Bosnian Muslims do not become Croats (despite the fact that religious conversion is theoretically possible), the same way as Tamils do not turn into Sinhalese, Iraqi Sunni into Shia, and so on. Many case studies reach similar conclusions: Insofar as civil wars shape ethnic identities, they do so by hardening them (Allen & Seaton, 1999; Dale, 1997; Dean, 2000; Peterson, 2000).

Yet constructivism would be theoretically meaningless if it could only predict the hardening of ethnic identities during civil war. If this were the case, it could be safely downgraded into a simple mechanism of primordialist dynamics. The theoretical viability of constructivism, at least in the field of civil war studies, requires a multidirectional empirical prediction (i.e., toward both hardening and softening of ethnic identities).

There are two related ways of empirically exploring the relevance of constructivist insights. The first one consists of scrutinizing the claim that ethnic and nonethnic wars differ from each other in fundamental ways, especially with regard to individual political behavior; the second one is to examine the actual behavior of individuals in ethnic wars to assess if it conforms to constructivist accounts.

The argument that ethnic cleavages are deeper or harder than nonethnic ones implies that few people fight for or can be recruited by the opposing ethnic group and that leaders cannot broaden their appeals to include members of rival groups. In other words, people cannot "escape their identity" (e.g., Serbs cannot become Albanians or Croats). In contrast, nonethnic (ideological) wars are seen as contests between the government and the rebels for the (flexible) loyalties of the people (i.e., their hearts and minds); the same population serves as the shared mobilization base for both sides (Kaufmann 1996a, 1996b). Individual loyalties are malleable, presumably because ideological attributes are easier to acquire than ethnic ones: All that is required is

a change of mind (e.g., Kaufmann, 1996a, p. 75). Constructivism, in other words, is a good theory as far as nonethnic identities are concerned.

However, a simple eyeballing of the historical evidence from ideological civil wars challenges the claim of high fluidity in individual identities. The Spanish Civil War is an example of a primarily nonethnic civil war in which ideological polarization (somewhat correlated with class in certain areas and the secular and religious divide in others) ran extremely deep. As a result, violence was often used by the rival sides to ruthlessly exterminate opponents (Balcells, 2007; De la Cueva, 1998; Díaz-Balart & Friend, 1997). Escaping ideological identities was not possible for many people, which is why hundreds of thousands of Republicans fled the country after their side was defeated. Likewise, hundreds of thousands White Russians, Nationalist Chinese, and anticommunist Vietnamese fled under similar circumstances.

Likewise and contrary to claims that “the ability to pass” is a quasi-exclusive attribute of nonethnic identities, there is plenty of evidence that ideological identities can be both visible and sticky. Where political parties associated with one side of a conflict boycotted elections, as in post-WWII Greece and Colombia, electoral registers became depositories of information about each person’s loyalties (Rosenberg, 1991, p. 41). The class cleavage may also carry visible marks. During the Russian Civil War, the Whites sometimes determined who was a Bolshevik by looking for callused hands, an attribute of manual labor and hence class identity (Figes, 1996, p. 665). In contrast, ethnic identities could, in theory, be easily disguised in divided societies such as Bosnia, where nothing differentiated the outward appearance of Croats and Serbs.

Yet if ethnic wars entail dynamics that do not appear to diverge as radically from ideological ones as is often argued, how can we explain the oft-noted inability of individuals to cross ethnic lines in those wars? One possible and overlooked explanation is that “crossing” may be a function of the organizational demand for it as much as popular supply. The intrinsic difficulty of acquiring new ethnic attributes (e.g., a new language, a skin color, etc.) has been often stressed, much more than the variable willingness of rival organizations to attract non-coethnics. We know, for instance, that the rival groups that fought against each other in Bosnia were generally disinclined to allow non-coethnics to join them either via religious conversion or otherwise, even though these ethnic groups shared language, ethnic origins and characteristics, and many customs.⁷ However, this unwillingness was not an invariable characteristic of the former Yugoslavia. What was true in 1992-1993 was less so in 1941-1945. During the Second World

War, the Yugoslav Communists were able to successfully compete with several nationalist groups and recruit across all ethnic groups.

This observation leads to a restatement of the central question. Rather than ask why ethnic identities are impermeable, we should instead ask what explains variation in the degree to which political actors are willing to promote policies of crossing and succeed in doing so. For example, Spanish nationalists, the winners of the Spanish Civil War, were much more inclined to exclude and persecute the losers, as opposed to the equally victorious Greek nationalists—despite similar ideological identities in both cases. Greek Communist sympathizers could obtain a release from prison, find employment, and escape persecution with a simple signature in a so-called declaration of repentance. By signing this boilerplate declaration, which was then published in local newspapers, one presumably acquired a new attribute—patriotism—and qualified for membership in the category of the national-minded individuals (*ethnikofrones*), a term that could have been crafted by constructivist theorists. Clearly, this was a hard decision for imprisoned Communists. Signing this declaration was costly, both emotionally and practically, as one was ostracized by former comrades while still viewed with suspicion by noncommunists. Yet the option of ideological defection existed, whereas it was, initially at least, absent in Spain. We may therefore ask what accounts for the Greek government's decision to endow the winning category of "nationally minded" with identity attributes that were relatively easy to acquire as opposed to the Spanish government's decision to make the winning category of nationalist much harder to acquire. In sum, a rough comparison of ethnic and nonethnic wars suggests that they may not differ as radically from each other as suggested; their differences stem perhaps less from the nature of the identities involved and more from the strategies of the rival actors engaged in them.

The second way of empirically exploring the relevance of constructivist insights is to examine the actual behavior of individuals in ethnic wars. Civil war is a process of severe disruption: It destroys existing structures, networks, and loyalties; it creates new opportunities for political losers, alters the size of optimal coalitions, gives rise to new entrepreneurs, and generally reshuffles politics. Therefore, it has the potential to alter the structure of cleavages and generate realignment in identity affiliations, thus destabilizing and even changing a country's ethnic demography.

Yet few contemporary civil wars appear to produce the kind of permanent ethnic identity shift that requires a change in inherited attributes and alters a country's ethnic demography. This was a feature of either premodern conflicts (including religious wars where entire populations converted

en masse to new religions) or civil wars that preceded the emergence of modern centralizing nation-states. In these contexts, the national consciousness of mostly illiterate peasant populations could still be molded (Darden, 2005). An exemplary case in this respect is that of the guerrilla war in Macedonia from 1904 to 1908, when the emerging Balkan states were competing for the loyalties of the Christian population.

The gradual demise of the Ottoman Empire undermined its system of ethnic classification, which was based on religious distinctions—the Millet system. As a result, emerging nationalist entrepreneurs backed by national states began to promote novel national identities based on educational, religious, and political affiliations. Their goal was to turn the mostly Slavic-speaking, orthodox Christian peasants of Macedonia into Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, or Romanians.⁸ All actors saw national identity as national affiliation (i.e., a malleable category that was not determined by native language). The Greeks, for instance, referred to the followers of the Orthodox Bulgarian Exarchate not as Bulgarians but as “people with Bulgarian tendencies” (*Voulgarizontes*) or more simply as “Bulgarian minded” (*Voulgarofrones*). Likewise, the Bulgarians referred to the followers of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as “Greek obsessed” (*Grkomani*).

The population made a series of religious, educational, and political choices. For example, it was possible to affiliate with the Orthodox Bulgarian Exarchate or the (Greek) Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople; send one’s children to a Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, or Romanian school; or join the local Serb, Romanian, Greek, or Bulgarian faction. These choices were influenced by both coercion and opportunity. According to Konstantinos Mazarakis, a Greek officer and leader of a guerrilla band, “it was by the persuasion of the gun” and the shedding of blood that a village “became Greek or Bulgarian” (as cited in Livanios, 1999, p. 203). A slavophone peasant in Western Macedonia told a French traveler in the late 19th century that he was not prepared to waste his time thinking about Serbia or Bulgaria: “Our fathers were Greek and none mentioned the Bulgarians,” he remarked. “We became Bulgarians, we won. If we have to be Serbs it is not a problem. But for the time being it is better for us to be Bulgarians” (as cited in Livanios, 1999, p. 198). What determined their choice, always tentative and reluctant,” concludes Livanios (1999, pp. 196-197) “ranged from financial considerations, social cleavages, and local politics, to personal animosities, leaving thus precious little room, if any, for ‘national’ orientations.” Instrumental calculations were prevalent. Eventually, however, these choices produced durable ethnic identities (Karakasidou, 1997).

Contemporary ethnic civil wars do not entail this kind of fundamental shift in ethnic identity. These identities tend to have been crystallized via mass literacy and public education (Darden, 2005). What many of these wars do entail, instead, is a subtler yet highly consequential process—namely, the manipulation of cleavage salience through the introduction of a new political dimension, sometimes referred to as “loyalism.”

Consider the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey. For many years, the Turkish state attempted, with little success, to engineer an identity shift by investing in the creation of categories such as “Mountain Turks” and “Eastern Turks.” When the PKK (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* or Kurdistan Workers’ Party) launched a secessionist insurgency in the 1980s, Turkey introduced the category of “loyal Kurd” for Kurdish-speaking collaborators. The Turkish state was thus able to mobilize tens of thousands of Kurdish peasants, many of whom had formerly sympathized with the PKK, into local village militias (Balta, 2007). Once this process of defection took place, ethnic Kurdish identity ceased to predict loyalty to the PKK. As a result, the PKK had to target these defectors. Thousands lost their lives in the many massacres and countermassacres that took place in this context.

As this example suggests, the process of ethnic defection is distinct from that of identity shift. Ethnic defection takes place when a one-dimensional political space (ethnic identity: Turk or Kurd) is replaced by a two-dimensional space (loyal or disloyal to the Turkish state). Loyal Kurds did not relinquish their Kurdish ethnic identity; yet they engaged in political actions that non-constructivist theories of ethnicity would preclude or marginalize. This is not to say that the war between the Turkish state and the PKK was not an ethnic war; indeed, it would be hard to find ethnic Turks fighting on the side of the PKK, whereas the goals of the PKK challenged the existing power relationship between the Turkish state and the Kurds. Rather, this example suggests that the distinct character of ethnic war, with its stated exclusion of individual choices between rival ethnic sides, is untenable. Put otherwise, ethnic defection characterizes contexts where ethnic identity fails to predict political behavior.

In sum, the claim here is that a subset of ethnic civil wars displays the following characteristics: (a) the incumbent state is willing and able to recruit members of the rebellious ethnic minority, (b) a substantial number of individuals collaborate with a political actor explicitly opposed to their own ethnic group, and (c) fighters and sympathizers switch sides from ethnic rebels to the state. This subset displays characteristics that clearly parallel nonethnic insurgencies (Kalyvas & Kocher, 2007). But how can we account for the fact that some ethnic wars experience ethnic defection and

others not? What explains cross-national variation in the presence of ethnic defection? More specifically, which political actors are likely to seek out ethnic defectors—and which ones are likely to reject them? This is a question whose investigation goes beyond this article; nevertheless, I can offer two hypotheses.

First, the organizational demand for ethnic defection is likely to depend on the incumbent actors' resources and level of organization. Actors such as strong states and foreign occupiers should be, *ceteris paribus*, more likely to seek out ethnic defection compared to weaker actors, including poor post-colonial states, ethnic organizations operating within failed states, or ethnic insurgents.

Second, once initial collaborationist structures are in place, ethnic defection is facilitated by dynamics endogenous to the war, including the expansion of territorial control and the logic of revenge. We should therefore observe a rise in ethnic defection in latter stages of a war.

A testable implication of these hypotheses is that imperial colonizers and foreign occupiers should be more likely to launch processes leading to ethnic defection because their resources generally exceed those of post-colonial states. Note that this implication runs counter to the predictions derived from conventional wisdom on ethnic wars, because both colonizers and occupiers are much more distant from the local population compared to native incumbent actors. It is notable that Israel was successful in setting up a Lebanese militia partly composed of local Shiites or that Indonesia managed to recruit a native militia in East Timor. Likewise, among states facing ethnic insurgencies, ethnic defection could well correlate with stronger states. Russia and India, for instance, have been much more likely to engage in this process compared to Liberia or the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Obviously, exploring and testing these hypotheses requires an altogether different research design. In the following section, I switch instead to the demand side and examine the individual-level dynamics underlying the process of ethnic defection. I discuss two cases that have attracted recent research attention, Algeria and Kenya, and a few additional ones on which information is more scant.

Ethnic Defection: Individual Motivations in Historical Perspective

As pointed out, individuals opting to fight against coethnic rebels claiming to represent their ethnic interests do not discard their ethnic identity; rather,

they add an identity qualifier reflecting a new dimension usually expressed by terms such as “moderate” or “loyal.” Recent historical research on the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) and the Mau Mau insurgency (1952-1960) in Kenya highlights a process that has attracted relatively little scholarly attention until recently.

The “master cleavage” in preindependence Algerian society divided Muslims and non-Muslims, with power relations skewed in favor of the latter (Stora, 2004). Algerian nationalist entrepreneurs, under the banner of the FLN (*Front de Libération Nationale*) launched an insurgency in the name of the Algerian nation. Principles of inclusion into it varied over time and across organizations, but there was no doubt that Muslims, described as natives suffering under colonial rule, constituted the core of the nation.⁹ This was clearly, therefore, a secessionist anticolonial conflict that would be easily coded as an ethnic war.

Once the war began, the French were able to partly undercut this cleavage by introducing the dimension of loyalty to France.¹⁰ Their abundant resources along with their dire need for local support converged into a massive recruitment effort of thousands of Muslim men joined into various auxiliary units. These men became known as *Harkis*, a term whose generic character covered all Muslim, armed collaborators of the French.¹¹ Their total number reached 158,000 in 1960, a very substantial number when compared to the nationalist rebels who mobilized 75,000 to 90,000 men (Faivre, 1994, p. 117; Roux, 1991, pp. 140-141). Why did so many Muslim Algerians join and fight on the French side and against their coethnics, given that France treated the Algerians as second-class citizens? The historical literature has highlighted a number of factors.

First, the French emphasized the benefits that followed from siding with what appeared to be the stronger side. An officer argued in a report that the “power of France and the weakness of the rebels must suggest to the mind of the rural population that there is a choice to be made right now and that a bad calculation has consequences. This must in the end bring the Muslim population to the idea that they must collaborate with France” (as quoted in Roux, 1991, p. 69).

Second, the motivations underlying the choice of those who joined the auxiliary units were multiple and heterogeneous. For some people, tribe or clan ties were essential. When tribal and clan leaders allied with the French, their members felt compelled to join as well (Roux, 1991, p. 15).¹² Local cleavages were an important factor, as was coercion (Roux, 1991, p. 156). Material incentives (better food, passes for free movement, local status, etc.) were not inconsequential either (Roux, 1991, pp. 41-42).

Last, revenge appears to have been a key motivation. Many people had been targeted by the FLN for a variety of reasons, justified or not. Their relatives and friends sought revenge by joining the auxiliary forces when such an opportunity became available (Roux, 1991, pp. 150-152). In fact, Hamoumou (1993, p. 157) argues that the most important factor in motivating Algerians to switch their support toward the French was the FLN violence; he also emphasizes the powerful effect that initial small choices had in constraining future actions (an expression used by his informants was *être pris dans l'engrenage*). Relying on interviews with former fighters, Hamoumou concludes that feelings of loyalty and fidelity to France were a rather minor factor in explaining collaboration with the French. In short, the Algerian case shows that (a) ethnic defection was widespread; and (b) it was engineered by the French authorities and subject to dynamics endogenous to the war, especially rebel violence.¹³

Mass ethnic defection also took place in colonial Kenya, where the ethnically Kikuyu Mau Mau insurgency (1952-1960) challenged the British colonial rule. By March 1954, there were 25,600 Kikuyu Home Guards in Kenya, 14,800 full-time and 10,800 part-time, a total that exceeded the strength of the Mau Mau insurgents. It is estimated that most of the 13,000 officially acknowledged casualties of the insurgency were killed by fellow coethnics (Branch, 2007, p. 2).

Individual motivations among Kenyan loyalists match those recorded in Algeria. They were mixed and included coercion, opportunism, and revenge (Branch, 2007, p. 3). Anderson (2005) argues that the success of the British should not be interpreted to mean that loyalism was a popular cause or that those who joined the Home Guard necessarily opposed the broader aims of the Mau Mau movement ("Nothing in this dirty colonial war could ever be so simple," he points out; pp. 241-242). For the most part, recruitment to the Home Guard was left solely in the hands of local chiefs and their headmen: "Some cajoled and persuaded; others bullied and threatened; some tested the political views of their recruits, others dragooned their enemies. The Kikuyu Home Guard was a rag-bag army, whose membership had little to do with matters of conscience but everything to do with circumstance." Anderson (2005) adds that "these people did not *like* colonialism. In taking a stand, these so-called loyalists were in fact motivated by more prosaic and personal concerns: by the interests of their families; by the need to protect their property; by their sense of social status; and by their own values" (p. 229). In fact, many loyalists had been Mau Mau before and switched sides when the local balance of power changed (Branch, 2007, p. 3). Based on his research on loyalism, Branch (2007)

concludes that “the Mau Mau war was no simple dispute between colonizer and colonized” (p. 4)—no simple ethnic war, to use a different terminology.

Endogenous dynamics can also be observed in Kenya. A British December 1952 intelligence report from the Kiambu area reported that “the district is now tending to divide into two camps, whereas formerly the entire population was sitting firmly on the fence Now that there are targets for the attacks of the thugs in the shape of the Home Guard, incidents of violence are likely to increase, but this is a more healthy atmosphere than the uneasy quiet which has hung over our district for so long.” As a result, Anderson (2005) concludes, “the British were forcing the Kikuyu to take sides. Kiambu would see the most bitter of all the cycles of reprisal between Home Guard and Mau Mau as the war unfolded” (p. 241).

Similar dynamics can be observed in many recent insurgencies that are classified as ethnic wars, including in South Lebanon, East Timor, Punjab, Kashmir, Chechnya, and more recently, Iraq.¹⁴ Unlike colonial Algeria or Kenya, these are places where ethnic identities have been part of processes of socialization and mobilization for decades. In all these places, many members of ethnic groups that supported an insurgency (Lebanese Shiite Muslims, East Timorese, Chechens, Sikhs, Muslim Kashmiris, and Sunni Iraqis) joined forces with their ethnic “enemies,” the Israelis, Indonesians, Russians, Indians, and Americans (Gossman, 2000; Maass, 2005; Mydans, 1999; Myers, 2005; Tyler, 2001; Ushpiz, 2000). The case of the Chechen militias set-up by the Russians during the Second Chechen War is emblematic. The *Kadyrovtsy*, as the armed followers of pro-Russian Chechen leader Akhmad Kadyrov (and after his assassination in 2004, his son Ramzan), have reached strength of between 4,000 and 20,000 (Balta, 2007, p. 137) and have proved an effective weapon of counterinsurgency. In fact, the majority of the leaders and cadres of this force are former insurgents; mixed motivations recur and include the mobilization of local cleavages (Balta, 2007, p. 138, pp. 145-146) and material benefits or “club goods.” As a Chechen refugee pointed out, “There are no jobs in Chechnya. Either you bring stuff to the market to sell or you work in the reconstruction business. You know, the Russian state is trying to build Grozny, and most of our men work in these construction sites. But there are not many construction jobs. And even if you find one, it is not likely that you will get paid regularly. Many young men are working for Kadyrovtsy. They built camps, neighborhoods only for themselves. They stay with Russian police in these camps. They built private hospitals for their sick, schools for their kids. Ordinary Chechens cannot use these services” (as quoted in Balta, 2007, p. 141)

Recent developments in Iraq highlight precisely the same process. The United States has been able to forge alliances with local Sunni leaders in Anbar province, but also with Shiites in neighboring Diyala province (Michaels, 2007). By the end of September 2007, more than 30,000 primarily Sunni "volunteers" had joined the U.S. side (Tyson, 2007b). This strategy activates intraethnic and subethnic (especially tribal) dynamics and is highly localized (Eisenstadt, 2007). "The most important piece of it is understanding who the important people are of influence," a U.S. officer said (as quoted in Michaels, 2007, p. 1A). Once these people are identified, a mix of coercion and (usually financial) inducement is used to get them to join the U.S. counterinsurgency effort. Many among these new allies are former insurgents who have switched sides for a variety of reasons, among which revenge features prominently (Partlow, 2007; Tyson, 2007a). In turn, this switching has led to considerable intraethnic (e.g., Sunni-on-Sunni) violence (Greenwell, 2007; Rubin, 2007). Precisely because this strategy is predicated on the activation intraethnic cleavages, it has been parasitic on existing local and tribal conflicts (Jaffe, 2007; Raghavan, 2007); at the same time, however, it also runs the risk of generating new forms of (endogenous) polarization. As a U.S. officer pointed out, "You risk getting sucked into tribal conflicts and vendettas" (as quoted in Michaels, 2007, p. 1A).

In the conflicts discussed so far, ethnic identity fails to predict a unique type of political behavior. It is worth stressing that the process of ethnic defection is extremely consequential even when the numbers of defectors remain relatively small. This is so, because ethnic identity ceases to be a reliable indicator of pro-ethnic rebel behavior. Accordingly, ethnic rebels are forced to resort to violence against members of their own ethnic group, so as to deter further defection. The resulting intraethnic violence undermines the ethnic rebels' claim that they represent the true will of the entire group. In short, ethnic defection matters, because it destroys precisely those elements that make ethnic identity so important for collective action in the first place. As a result, many ethnic civil wars, namely those where ethnic defection takes place, turn into contests for the loyalty of the population and resemble nonethnic civil wars.

In the following section, I empirically test some of the insights on individual motivations generated by these historical accounts of ethnic defection.

A Microcomparative Test of the Determinants of Ethnic Defection

Using data from a regional study conducted in southern Greece (in the region of Argolid), I empirically address the question of the determinants of

ethnic defection at the micro level. More specifically, I ask what differentiates this region's villages in terms of the numbers of their inhabitants who took up arms to join the German occupation forces and fight against their coethnics. The data cover 61 villages and 2 towns (i.e., the total number of settlements of the two principal counties of the Argolid prefecture, an area with a population of 65,136 in 1940). The test focuses only on a single region of one country because this type of datum is very hard to collect. I first provide some background information on the Greek Civil War before proceeding with the analysis and results.

The Greek Civil War was fought in two phases. The first one (1943-1944) overlapped with the occupation of the country primarily by the Germans; the second one (1946-1949) took place after the end of the Second World War. The war was an ideological one, pitting (Communist) Left against Right. However, during the first phase, there was an added nationalist layer, because the war began as Greek resistance against German occupation. In that respect, the Greek Civil War closely matches many civil wars of Southeast and East Asia during the same period (Vietnam, China, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines): All combined an ideological dimension with a nationalist one and underwent two basic phases characterized by foreign occupation and the Cold War, respectively.

The test focuses on the occupation period, which allows for the exploration of the phenomenon of armed collaboration by segments of the Greek population with the German occupiers. The historical literature has characterized this phenomenon as "collaboration" and has stressed its ideological underpinnings (e.g., Nazism, anticommunism). Nevertheless, this type of collaboration can be also gainfully conceptualized as ethnic defection, because members of one ethnic group (Greeks) allied with a non-coethnic rival (Germans) to fight against their coethnics. This process is analytically equivalent with the collaboration of ethnic Chechens with Russians in Chechnya or Turkish Kurds with the Turkish state in Turkey.

Following its defeat by the German army in April 1941, Greece was occupied by German, Italian, and Bulgarian forces.¹⁵ Resistance to the occupation began slowly in late 1942, but really exploded following the Italian withdrawal from the war in September 1943. The leftists rebels of the National Liberation Front (EAM) seized the opportunity to extend their territorial control to over 70% of the country. At that time, the vast majority of the population sympathized with the rebels and supported them. Although controlled by the Communist Party, EAM articulated a strong nationalist message that stressed the right of the Greek population to defend itself against a brutal, foreign occupation. The divide was stark: Greeks on

one side, Nazi Germans on the other. Ideological collaboration was minimal, as Greece lacked a Fascist political tradition and a mass Fascist movement of the kind found in other European countries, and the Germans were not interested in co-opting their “racially inferior” Greeks.

During the spring and summer of 1944, the German authorities realized that they could not defend the territory they held on their own and decided to create auxiliary native military units, the biggest of which was called Security Battalions (SB). The biggest challenge was recruiting and arming thousands of men from a deeply hostile population. However, the Germans faced little difficulty in their task and recruited quickly more than 20,000 men, including hundreds of demobilized officers of the Greek national army. What is most remarkable is that they did so at a time when it was obvious that Germany was losing the war—a fact that rules out opportunism as a cause for joining. What accounts for the German success?

Qualitative evidence (memoirs, interviews, and archival sources) suggests a few answers: material inducements, coercion, internal Greek politics (the absence of noncommunist political options because the communists destroyed most noncommunist resistance organizations), local and regional factionalism, and revenge by people who had been hurt by the insurgents. Field and historical research revealed that the demand to join the militia actually exceeded the Germans’ absorption capacity. In fact, the Germans were surprised by their success, which was ultimately due to the fact that many Greeks saw them as instruments in their own civil war—a fact obscured by the popular designation of these militias as simple “puppets.”

The empirical test throws additional light on this issue.¹⁶ After the Italian collapse in September 1944, the Argolid fell under the control of the leftist resistance. Even the region’s two towns were heavily infiltrated by clandestine resistance cells. The turning point was April 1944, when the German authorities decided to crack down on EAM in the towns of Argos and Nafplio. A wave of arrests and executions ensued, and EAM’s clandestine organizations were destroyed. In late April 1944, the Germans set up a local collaborationist militia led by an officer of the Greek Army who had been the target of a communist assassination attempt after having refused to join EAM. The Argolid unit began to recruit in May, eventually reaching a force of about 300 men. The initial recruits came from the two main towns, Nafplio and Argos; many were gendarmes who were transferred from the moribund gendarmerie to the newly minted militia. Once control of the towns was consolidated, the Germans and their local allies began to push into the surrounding villages around the 10th of May; they applied a counterinsurgent strategy that the French later dubbed “oil spot.” They set

up several new outposts in and around these villages, increased their patrols, began registering the villagers and checking their identity papers frequently, and imposed a severe curfew. As the Germans extended their control outwardly, they began to recruit additional men during the summer of 1944. Recruitment at this stage was both individual and collective: A few men were recruited from most villages while two strategically important hill villages (Achladokambos and Arachnaio) were each asked to contribute a large contingent.

Two characteristics of the recruitment process are crucial. First, it was predicated on a geographic logic: It began from the two towns and spread gradually from the lowlands toward the highlands, following the expansion of German territorial control. Second, it displayed a one-shot pattern in each locality: Recruitment was solicited at a precise time, usually immediately following the German incursion, after which no more people could join in each village. The reason is threefold. First, the Germans were interested in spreading recruitment to as many localities as possible to maximize commitment across the region; second, they faced serious logistic constraints that precluded the militia's mass expansion; third, they did not stay in most villages they conquered, so joining the militia was not practical after the Germans had left.

In late August 1944, the rapid advance of the Soviet Army on the Eastern Front was felt in Greece. Pressed by the Soviet offensive, the Germans decided to evacuate Greece. They eventually left Argos on September 19; the SB surrendered their weapons in Nafplio on October 5 and were evacuated to a nearby island under British supervision. The war was over.

Given that the Germans wanted to recruit from every locality, what differentiates the localities where they recruited more men from those where they recruited fewer or none? To use this article's formulation, what made some places more prone to ethnic defection? To answer this question, I estimate a model of recruitment. The dependent variable is the number of members of the collaborationist SB recruited in each locality and is operationalized in two ways: as an absolute number and normalized per 1,000 inhabitants. I collected these data from a variety of archival sources and interviews with surviving members of the militia, including one of its local leaders.

The independent variables capture four key determinants of collaboration: prewar politics, geography, the dynamics of war, and socioeconomic processes. First, the propensity of some localities to collaborate with the Germans might have reflected the salient prewar cleavage between the Royalist Conservatives of the Peoples' Party and Liberals of the Liberal Party. Some historians have suggested that Liberals were more likely to join

the guerrillas and Conservatives the militia because of the more pronounced anticommunism of the latter and the antiroyalist agenda of the resistance. According to this view, the war was a replay of prewar Greek politics, albeit under different labels. The proxy is a dummy variable indicating the political majority in a given village in the 1933 elections (1 = royalist majority; 0 = liberal majority).

Second, several authors have suggested the importance of geographical factors in the development of an insurgency (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Kocher, 2004; Toft, 2003; Tong, 1991). Geographical location captures both opportunities and constraints of insurgency or cultures of collaboration and resistance. For example, it is often pointed out that isolated mountainous villages are more likely to resist central authority; because rough terrain is associated with insurgent strength, villages located in the lowlands in close proximity to towns should exhibit collaborationist strength. Therefore, I included two variables that measure the effect of geography: the elevation of each village and its distance from the closest town during the 1940s.

Third, collaboration with occupation forces may be endogenous to the war itself, via two mechanisms: incentives and constraints on one hand and revenge on the other. First, control of a particular locality may produce a mix of incentives and constraints (e.g., material benefits; reaping the rewards of siding with a particular armed actor who is perceived as winning; coercion), leading people to collaborate with the actor exercising control. Second, as the article's previous section suggests, individuals who have been aggrieved or repressed by one side may turn to its rival if they are offered such an option—even if this means transgressing ethnic boundaries. Two variables capture these factors: the extent of territorial control enjoyed by the rival actors and the level of violence inflicted on civilians by the insurgents prior to the formation of the SB. Villages that experienced a higher level of German control prior to recruitment and substantial prior insurgent violence should be expected to provide more recruits for the SB. Insurgent violence is measured using a fatality count of individuals executed by the insurgents in each village up to May 1944. To measure territorial control I rely on a five-zone indicator ranging from 1 (*full incumbent control*) to 5 (*full insurgent control*). Because the recruitment of militiamen began in May 1944 and was a one-shot process in each locality, avoiding problems of endogeneity requires a measure of control that clearly predates recruitment. For the two towns and the lowland villages, where recruitment took place in early May 1944, I use the control score of late April 1944; for the hill and mountain villages where recruitment took place in late May and June of 1944, I used the control score of May 15. Note that this measure is

also exogenous to potential *ex ante* expectations about the success of recruitment because the German deployment followed a geographic pattern of uniform territorial expansion (from the towns to the mountains) as opposed to targeting places with specific political and social characteristics; it is also exogenous to subsequent shifts in control caused by recruitment itself because recruitment was a one-shot process.

Finally, I use three variables to capture broad socioeconomic processes: education (measured as the number of students in a locality enrolled in a high school, per capita), wealth (a three-scale variable with 3 being the wealthiest localities), and a measure of prewar social conflict (measured as the number of civil suits tried in courts in the period 1935-1939, per capita).¹⁷ I estimate the model using both ordinary least squares and negative binomial regressions. The variables along with basic descriptive statistics are reported in Table 1 and the results in Table 2.

The results can be summarized as follows. First, insurgent violence in the period preceding the recruitment of militiamen is a significant predictor across all specifications: Localities that experienced insurgent violence were more likely to supply men to the SB than localities that did not.¹⁸ Second, territorial control is also a significant predictor across all specifications. The higher the level of control exercised by the Germans and their allies in a locality (i.e., tending toward a score of 1 or total control), the more militiamen were recruited in that locality.¹⁹ Of all the other variables, altitude is the most consistently significant with a surprising causal direction: There appears to be a positive correlation between recruitment and higher elevations—a likely effect of two hill villages that contributed large contingents of men. Significantly, economic, social, and political variables have no predictive capacity.

Obviously, an analysis limited to one province in a single country can only be suggestive. Nevertheless, these results are striking insofar as they point to the considerable and largely overlooked endogenous effects of civil war dynamics. Once a conflict begins, military action has the potential of generating new political dynamics, including ethnic defection, that override prewar political, social, and economic factors. People are likely to commit to, and fight for, an organization with which they share little common political ground. Although Greeks adhered to a strong standard of national self-identification, thousands of Greeks crossed the national boundary and fought on the German side against fellow Greeks—often against their very own neighbors. They did so despite the fact that the Germans were running an incredibly violent occupation that made the population loathe them; despite the fact that the Germans did not even pretend that they were interested in

Table 1
Variables: Descriptive Data

Variable	Range
Number of militiamen recruited	Mean: 4.76 Min: 0 Max: 60
Insurgent violence per village (September 1943 through April 1944)	Mean: 0.97 Min: 0 Max: 12
Control (scale 1 to 5) 1 = <i>total incumbent control</i> , 5 = <i>total insurgent control</i>	Mean: 3.08 Min: 1 Max: 5
Altitude (meters)	Mean: 231 Min: 10 Max: 960
Distance from closest town (minutes)	Mean: 167 Min: 0 Max: 510
1933 Elections (dummy variable: 1 = royalist majority; 0 = liberal majority)	Mean: .92 Min: 0 Max: 1
Education level (secondary school students per capita)	Mean: 0.71 Min: 0 Max: 3.66
Prewar social conflict: Per capita court cases (1935 to 1939)	Mean: 0.06 Min: .01 Max: .24
Income proxy (interval variable; wealthiest village = 3)	Mean: 2.21 Min: 1 Max: 3

winning the “hearts and minds” of the Greek population; and despite the fact that it was clear that Germany was losing the war in 1944. Given these incredibly adverse conditions, the Germans’ ability to recruit thousands of armed collaborators is a testament to the fluidity of ethnic boundaries.

Conclusion

This article suggests that irregular war is a social process that places a premium on territorial control. Control, largely predicated on the judicious use of military resources (Kalyvas, 2006), can potentially generate collaboration,

Table 2
Determinants of Collaboration with Occupying Forces: Argolid, 1943 to 1944

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Estimation Method	Ordinary Least Squares	Ordinary Least Squares	Ordinary Least Squares	Negative Binomial	Negative Binomial
Dependent Variable	Militiamen per Village	Militiamen per Village	Militiamen per village (Normalized per 1,000 Inhabitants)	Militiamen per Village	Militiamen per Village (Normalized per 1,000 Inhabitants)
Insurgent violence (September 1943 to April 1944)	3.249***	3.48	0.430**	2.42	0.404***
Territorial control (Spring 1944)	-4.621**	-1.98	-2.297*	-1.70	-0.543**
Altitude (log)	2.012	2.413**	2.405***	2.82	2.419***
Distance from the closest town	0.020	1.06	0.008	1.65	-0.008**
1933 elections	-0.201	-0.08	-2.901	-1.60	-3.953
Education level (high school students per capita)		-0.887	-1.230	-1.57	-0.038
Prewar social conflict (court suits per capita, 1935-1939; log)		-0.407	0.571	0.53	0.467
Village income		3.236	3.518**	2.39	1.635
Constant	3.501	-5.843	-6.897**	1.02	-1.01
Observations	63	63	63	63	63
R ²	.41	.43	.21		
Probability > F	.0025	.0021	.0032		
Probability > χ^2				0.0	0.0
Alpha				3.172	3.528

*p significant at 10%. **p significant at 5%. ***p significant at 1%.

irrespective of initially adverse preferences, including the type of strong preferences associated with ethnic identities. Two important implications for current macro-level research on civil wars follow. First, treating ethnic groups as unitary actors, whose leaders and members all act homogeneously, can be problematic. Organizations, as opposed to groups, are the appropriate unit of analysis (Sinno, 2008)—and their relation to underlying populations must be the object of systematic theoretical and empirical investigation as opposed to mere assumption.

Second, it is problematic to assume that the factors used to predict civil war outcomes such as their duration or termination are independent of the war itself. For example, the entire greed–grievance debate was predicated on the notion that individuals enter a civil war with a set of goals or grievances that hardly change during the war.²⁰ Put otherwise, current macro-level research tends to assume that strategic interaction between rival actors, and between these actors and the population, plays little if any role in the evolution of the war: Once a war is on, nothing changes in terms of mass-level preferences. This article suggests that these assumptions are incorrect: Many individuals enter the war long after it has started, driven by incentives and constraints that are byproducts of the war and result from innovative and adaptive strategies devised by the rival actors in the course of the war. Put otherwise, neither organizations nor preferences are given *ex ante* and fixed throughout the war. Change is synonymous with war.²¹

To summarize, I have argued that defection from rebel organizations making ethnic claims is both possible and more common than widely thought. I have highlighted two features of ethnic defection. First, it is largely a process endogenous to the war. Once the war begins new, previously unavailable incentives appear, leading people to collaborate with organizations hostile to the ethnic group with whom they are associated. A particularly strong incentive is revenge. Second, ethnic defection can be primarily demand driven: rather than emerging as a spontaneous individual process, it is generated by the organizational demand for collaborators. In turn, this type of demand presupposes the existence of an organization capable of implementing such a complex operation.

Overall, this article demonstrates the possibilities that open up when constructivist insights are incorporated into the study of civil war. A particularly promising research agenda suggested by this theoretical move focuses on the identity consequences of civil war, rather than the much more common emphasis on identities as a cause of civil war.²²

Notes

1. Civil war is defined very broadly as armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities. This definition encompasses all types of internal conflict, including anticolonial rebellions and resistance against foreign occupation (see Kalyvas, 2006).

2. I follow Horowitz (1985) in his broad definition of *ethnicity* as ascriptive identity covering “color, appearance, language, religion, some other indicator of common origin, or some combination thereof” (p. 53)—a dimension also stressed by Chandra (2006). The constructivist literature is vast and can be traced back to Weber (1922/1978). More recent contributions include Wimmer (2008), Hobsbawm (1983), Barth (1969), and Moerman (1965).

3. Underlying mechanisms vary and include the inherent strength of ethnic bonds and the subsequent trust and loyalty they entail, communication and information flows that encourage monitoring and deter defection, formal and informal networks that facilitate the acquisition of group-related goods, and identification markers that serve as focal points for coordination under uncertainty. There is a dearth of systematic studies that compare, explicitly and systematically, the impact of ethnic and nonethnic identities on collective action.

4. Although it is widely recognized that ethnicity is formed over time and is therefore endogenous to historical and social processes (e.g., Brubaker, 1995; Brubaker, Feischmidt, Fox, & Grancea, 2006), this observation is much broader from the point made in this article—namely, that ethnic identity can be transformed in the context of civil wars.

5. Identity shift is equivalent to what Wimmer (2007) describes as “boundary expansion.”

6. The assumption is that an ethnic group’s nationalist aspirations are represented by an encompassing and mobilizing ethnonationalist organization.

7. For an exception, see O’Shea (1998).

8. The category “Macedonian” was initially promoted only by a small group of local political entrepreneurs and became popular after it was adopted by Communists in the interwar period and Tito’s Yugoslav partisans during and after the Second World War.

9. Like in all societies, the ethnic distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims covered several competing distinctions. Many non-Muslims lacked a clean French profile: Their families had immigrated to Algeria from various Mediterranean countries (e.g., Spain, Italy, or Malta), whereas others were non-French natives (Algerian Jews). The Muslim population was also divided between Arab and Berber, and along local, regional, tribal, class, and urban and rural lines. The Algerian nationalists were also politically divided among competing factions that fought against each other, sometimes with extreme violence.

10. The term *loyalty* is also relative, because many Pro-French *pieds noirs* ended up being disloyal to the French state after the French President Charles De Gaulle decided to grant independence to Algeria. Some set up a terrorist organization called OAS (*Organisation Armée Secrete*), which launched terrorist actions against the French state and attempted to assassinate De Gaulle.

11. Harkis is a generic umbrella term for several auxiliary formations, including the *groupes d’autodéfense*, *groupes mobiles de sécurité* (GMS; which replaced the *groupes mobiles de police rurale* or GMPR), the *makhzen* (the *mokhaznis* were attached to the special administrative sections or SAS), and the *groupes d’autodéfense* (GAD). This section is based on Besnaci-Lancou (2003), Boulhaïs (2002), Jordi and Hamoumou (1999), Hamoumou (1993), Kerchouche (2003), Muller (1999), and Roux (1991).

12. It is interesting to note that in attempting to activate local cleavages and mobilize the local population on their side, the French relied on anthropologists with field expertise

(Lacoste-Dujardin, 1997). In one well-documented case, the French army called on the services of the anthropologist Jean Servier who attempted to manipulate the traditional hostility of two local clans: the Touabas (which had sent men to the FLN [*Front de Libération Nationale*]) and the Ouled Abdi. As a point of entry, he used their chief, agha Merchi and armed a group of 50 people in the town of Arris. As a result, the FLN attacked Arris, burned houses, destroyed sheep, and murdered relatives of the leading figures of the tribe. Eventually, the cleavage cut across the two tribes, as many Ouled-Abdi men joined the rebellion and many Touabas joined the Harkis (Roux, 1991, pp. 32-35). Similarly, the British used the services of the anthropologist Louis Leakey to defeat the Mau Mau in Kenya (Anderson, 2005). Recently, the U.S. Department of Defense has been enlisting the services of anthropologists in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the context of a program called "Human Terrain Team" (Rohde, 2007).

13. In parallel with the harkis but in much smaller numbers, some French Communists (ironically dubbed *pieds rouges* in contradistinction to the French settlers known as *pieds noirs*) actively supported the FLN. They did not become Muslims but acted in support of the Algerian nationalist cause or, better, in opposition to the French colonial cause.

14. In some cases, members of a rebellious ethnic minority may find that they are safer living under the complete control of the state than they would have been in their ethnic homelands. Tamils in the Sinhalese-controlled capital of Sri Lanka Colombo, Kashmiris in New Dehli, Kurds in Istanbul, Chechens in Moscow, Bosnian Moslems in the Serb Sanjak, even Kosovar Albanians in Belgrade have enjoyed high levels of security during civil wars, despite the inevitable harassment.

15. For a good overview, see Mazower (1993).

16. The discussion of the Argolid draws from Kalyvas (2006).

17. All data sources (with the exception of recruitment) are listed in Kalyvas (2006, p. 415).

18. A possible endogeneity bias may be that insurgents targeted villages with future collaborationist potential (which, in turn, would indicate that their violence had no effect). However, prior analysis of the determinants of insurgent violence shows that insurgent territorial control rather than political factors or expectations about political behavior best predict this violence; in turn, territorial control was largely a function of geography (Kalyvas, 2006).

19. Again, keep in mind that German control had nothing to do with political or other preferences.

20. Indeed, given that the coding of civil war onset requires a rather high threshold of fatalities (1,000 battle deaths), it is highly likely that many civil wars have, in fact, begun well before the year in which their fatalities cross that threshold.

21. For a spirited defense of the claim that organizational practices are formed at the initiation of a civil war and remain fixed throughout its duration, see Weinstein (2007).

22. See Balcells (2006) for a pioneering effort in this direction.

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