

How Do Foreign Alliances Affect Civil War Onset?

by

Yong Fan

Department of Political Science
Duke University

Defense Date: March 26, 2024

Approved:

Eric Mvukiyehe, Advisor

Kyle Beardsley

Peter D. Feaver

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in the Department of Political Science in The Graduate School of
Duke University
2024

ABSTRACT

How Do Foreign Alliances Affect Civil War Onset?

by

Yong Fan

Department of Political Science
Duke University

Defense Date: March 26, 2024

Approved:

Eric Mvukiyehe, Advisor

Kyle Beardsley

Peter D. Feaver

An abstract of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in the Department of Political Science in The Graduate School of
Duke University
2024

Copyright by
Yong Fan
2024

Abstract

Treated as a practical approach to deterrence, foreign alliances are believed to have a tight relationship with the onset of interstate wars. Scholars have paid substantial attention to how foreign alliances affect international security, and how domestic alliances affect domestic security. However, there could be an interaction between elements from interstate and intrastate stages, and we still lack knowledge of the mechanisms and effects. I argue in this paper that, a state can deter the rebel groups within its ally's territory, thus decreasing the probability of civil war onset of that ally. Like nation-states, rebel groups will also assess the allies' capability and credibility of the state they fight against to decide whether they will initiate a civil war. However, neither capability nor credibility alone can explain this dynamic. Instead, they amplify each other to prevent the onset of civil war. I find that both capability and credibility have the effect of reducing civil wars, but their effects are strong enough only when the other variable is at its higher value.

Contents

Abstract.....	iv
List of Tables	vi
Acknowledgments.....	vii
1. Introduction:.....	1
2. What Explains the Civil War Onset?.....	3
3. How Foreign Actors Influence Domestic Conflicts.....	6
4. Foreign Alliances and the Decision to Initiate a Civil War	10
5. Research Design.....	17
6. Empirical Result and Robustness Checks.....	24
7. Conclusion	34
References.....	36

List of Tables

Table 1: Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000.....	25
Table 2: Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Dropping Alliances Formed in the Same Year of Civil War Onset.....	29
Table 3: Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Using Average S-Score of the Strongest Allies.....	30
Table 4: Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Testing Only the Countries That Have Experienced Civil War.....	32

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to those who have supported and encouraged me during my two years of study in Duke. I would never have finished anything without their company, patience, kindness, and support.

I would like to say thanks first to all the professors and staff from the Department of Political Science. All of you have made great efforts to make sure every student leaves duke with certain improvements and progresses, both on their academic and personal lives. I have to express my gratitude separately to the three professors in my Committee, Eric, Kyle, and Peter. Eric's class was always inspiring and enlightening, and he will always give helpful suggestions when I need them. Kyle shows a great kindness and care to all students in our program, and he always wants the best for his students. I appreciate all the time and patience he has dedicated to all students. Peter witnessed my journey at Duke from day one. His wise suggestions and sincere encouragement make me brave enough to experience so many things at Duke.

To my two best friends at Duke, Francis Zhou and Jocelyn Wang, thank you for being there for me all the time. I cannot imagine life in Durham without your company and support, and I do believe I cannot achieve what I did without you. To Tianyang Fu, I want to say thank you that you show me what real passion is, which I will remember for life.

I have to give a special shout-out to the Duke football team, which has been the most important part of my Duke experience, apart from my studies. I have been working with the team for one and a half seasons, which I consider a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Thank you, John and Lane, who make the video department like a home to me.

Finally, I have to thank my parents, who have always been my most devoted supporters and believed in me.

1. Introduction

Scholars have long been interested in foreign alliances, emphasizing their critical role in international security. Alliance is treated as an effective way to counter international threats by coordination, increasing the capabilities of member states when one country is too weak to protect itself (Morrow 2000). Beyond international conflicts, scholars have also found a negative correlation between foreign alliances and civil war, suggesting that rather than only helping to deter other nation-states, foreign alliances may also help to prevent domestic conflicts (Fletcher 2015).

As a method of deterrence, foreign alliances may not always succeed in preventing conflict onset, which leads scholars to explore a new research question: when will foreign alliances work, and when will they not? When explaining deterrence in an international context, the capability and credibility of a state are two natural indicators for success, whereas a higher capability and credibility usually lead to a higher success rate. Apart from direct deterrence, scholars also find evidence that the success of extended deterrence from an ally also relies on these two indicators (Johnson et al. 2015). However, as most of these research studies are focused on the interstate conflict between nation-states, the deterrence effect of foreign alliances on domestic rebel groups is less understood. This paper attempts to fill this theoretical gap. I argue in this paper that, like in interstate conflicts, the effect of extended deterrence of foreign alliances in intrastate conflicts also depends on the ally's capability and credibility combined. They amplify each other in their impacts on civil war, which means that, for a fixed level of capability,

it has the strongest effect on deterring civil conflict when the level of credibility is also high. Additional test also suggests that, strong and credible foreign allies do not always lead to less civil wars, their existence may boost the onset of civil wars under certain conditions.

2. What Explains the Civil War Onset?

Research focusing on civil contests between domestic groups and governments mainly uses civil conflicts or civil wars as their dependent variables. The Correlates of War project defines Civil War as “any armed conflict that involved (1) military action internal to the metropole of the state system member; (2) the active participation of the national government; (3) effective resistance by both sides; (4) a total of at least 1,000 battle-deaths during each year of war” (2010). For the definition of civil conflict, this threshold is at least 25 battle deaths a year. This paper focuses on civil war, which will be explained further in the following parts.

Scholars have attempted to explain the onset of civil war through various approaches. It is understood that civil wars do not occur naturally but need two prerequisites to be fulfilled. First, all the parties involved have failed to resolve their disputes peacefully. Second, the expected benefits for the party that initiated the civil war should exceed their potential loss. Cunningham explained this process in a simple game theory analysis, which helps us understand why rebel groups turn to violent approaches (2016).

One of the most influential approaches, as first proposed by Gurr, argues that the sense of grievance drives rebel groups to fight against the state (Gurr 2015). It is believed that the gap between expected and actual gains triggers the anger of rebel groups, resulting in a civil war (Cederman et al. 2010). As this approach believes the rebel groups fight based on absolute gains and costs, scholars found it confusing that civil conflicts can arise in impoverished and undeveloped areas, where the absolute gains could be low

(Horowitz 2000). Grievance becomes less compelling when considering the apparent fact that grievance occurs in almost every country in the world, but not all states experience civil war (Sobek and Payne 2010). These critiques lead scholars to pay more attention to the relative costs, taking the likelihood of success and the ability of the rebels to mobilize into account, which is described as a broader concept, “opportunity” (Fletcher 2015). In some scholars’ eyes, the insurgents are a group of people who try to make the most profit in terms of wealth and power (Collier & Hoeffler 1998). Instead of being only an actor that will only trigger rebel group’s anger with mistreatment, the states are also considered a precious target that can fulfill individual self-interest. Based on the assumption that rebel groups also make rational choices and calculations before initiating a civil war, scholars start to consider costs and benefits. Thus, the country can become a target simply because the rebel groups can be financially benefited from looting (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). This also helps to explain why civil wars can be observed much more easily in poor or undeveloped countries. According to this approach, civil war is more likely when the motivation of the rebel group is high and the cost for success against the government is relatively low (Cunningham 2016; Fearon & Laitin 2003; Arena & Hardt 2014). In other words, rebel groups rarely initiate an all-out civil war that they cannot win.

Greed and grievance were long treated as a set of competing variables, and each has drawn substantial support from different scholars. However, this dichotomy was also criticized. Scholars argue that one factor may cause both greed and grievance at the same time or at different stages of civil war; greed and grievance will play various roles at different stages (Taydas et al. 2011). They have also moved beyond the concept of greed

and grievance, trying to identify the factors that may cause these emotions, like poverty, inequality, famine, ethnicity, etc.

3. How Foreign Actors Influence Domestic Conflicts

Following previous studies, we know that rebel groups do not always consider a war against the government as their first choice to express dissatisfaction. Only when the angry crowd can see a certain degree of success and can not reach an agreement with the government through peaceful ways like procession or protest will they decide to initiate war against the state. Though called civil war, this process is never restricted between rebel groups and the government or within the territory of one state but always bears certain degrees of international flavor. Foreign actors can influence the onset and duration of the civil war in various ways, and they always do so by changing one side's probability of winning or the chance to reach an agreement in peaceful ways.

Foreign actors may play different roles in a civil war. Some, like the UN, serve as mediators, who play a broker role between the government and the rebel groups and try to help both sides reach an agreement more easily. These actors may help decrease the duration of civil war, as they can guarantee the agreement to be implemented as expected, or they possess the legality that both sides must respect (Fletcher, 2015). Some are active actors involved in combat, like the US and USSR during the Cold War, who provide military aid and training or even directly intervene in the civil war. These actors may contribute to a prolonged or shortened civil war, as they may change the relative power between the rebel groups and governments. In the most extreme conditions, they can prevent the civil war from happening as one side is so overwhelmed in terms of military power that it cannot see any chance of success.

The most extreme form of foreign actors projecting their influence on civil wars is direct intervention. By maintaining a military presence on the ground, foreign actors can either try to balance the capability between rebel groups and the government, or establish a power asymmetry between them, so that it can achieve its own strategic goals (Cunningham 2016). Due to distinct goals, foreign interventions also vary in their effect on the duration of civil war, where some make the civil war longer, and some make it shorter (Regan 2002; Addison & Murshed 2002; Elbadawi & Sambanis 2000; Balch-Lindsay & Enterline 2000). Rather than only affecting the duration of civil war, foreign direct intervention can also affect the onset of civil war, a topic lacking study. As Cunningham suggests, foreign intervention prevents the onset of the civil war because the state can be more repressive toward its people with foreign support (Cunningham 2016). In contrast, Cetinyan argues that foreign intervention has no impact on the onset of civil war but only on how much the rebel groups eventually gain (Cetinyan 2002).

Foreign actors can affect civil war not only from the state's side, but also from the rebel group's side. Domestic rebel groups sometimes may conduct aggressive actions against the state, which triggers civil war, because they believe the international community may intervene anyway for humanitarian or geopolitical reasons, even though other states do not bear such intentions (Kuperman 2008). In some cases, rebel groups receive economic or military aid from foreign actors, which boosts the insurgency's capability to prolong the war (Salehyan et al. 2011). This phenomenon has been well witnessed, especially after the Second World War. Among over 200 civil conflicts between a state government and ethnonationalism groups pursuing political goals after

1945, half of these groups received support from foreign states in forms like funds, safe havens, weapons, or troops (Jackson et al. 2020).

Besides direct intervention and tangible assistance to one side involved in the civil war, foreign actors also utilize signals to influence the civil war. Some of these signals are defined as “strong,” such as military alliances or trade ties, as they always come with more sunk costs. Some are defined as “weak,” such as statements of support or foreign aid, as they do not require much for a state (Fearon 1997). Scholars hold quite distinct views on the effect of these signals. As Thyne suggested, strong signals will not affect civil war because both parties interpret them similarly, while cheap signals change the bargaining process as they are interpreted differently (Thyne 2006). In contrast, Fearon suggests that strong signals lead to a general deterrence success as they strengthen the state’s capacity. Cheap signals, on the other hand, do not affect civil war as neither party receives credible promises from foreign actors (Fearon 1994;1997). Both rebel groups and governments will seek international signals. As it is critical to be recognized by the international community as the legal government after the civil war, both sides have to try to demonstrate themselves as the more just ones, and they will use the reaction of foreign actors to adjust their activities. These signals can sometimes change the calculations of one side dramatically, as when Bosnia was recognized as an independent country by some of the most powerful countries and Taiwan received strong supporting signals from the US that prevented a civil war with the Chinese mainland. These signals can be effective even when the signaler has yet to take any solid actions, and merely the

expectation for them to make their move is powerful enough to affect all parties involved in the civil war (Akcinaroglu & Radziszewski 2005).

As conventional wisdom unfolds, members of the international community have the ability to influence the dynamic of civil wars mainly by changing the power distribution between the rivals and the probability of successful negotiation. The alliance of the states involved in the civil war also falls into this category. As early as the 19th century, European countries had formed military alliances and agreed to aid each other when “domestic peace in a Confederal state is directly threatened by the insubordination of subjects against the authorities.” (Fletcher 2015) As more and more countries gain their independence and the concept of human rights is chanted globally, we rarely witness such commitment in modern treaties. However, alliances have never been ruled out from the calculation of both targeted countries and the rebel groups. The allies will assist each other directly in fighting a civil war like in the old days and project their influence on the peacemaking process. Scholars find that states tend to negotiate with dissidents to reach an agreement that their allies prefer, and they sometimes intentionally encourage both sides to reach a cease-fire agreement to maintain the existence and effectiveness of the alliances (Kydd 2003; Greig & Regan 2008). I will dive deeper into the relationship between civil war onset and foreign alliances in the following part..

4. Foreign Alliances and the Decision to Initiate a Civil War

In the study of interstate conflict, alliances were first treated as an influential power balance in some classical works (Morgenthau 1948; Waltz 1979). Generally, “alliance” is the short form of “formal alliance,” which is “a formal, written agreement among two or more independent states to cooperate in the event of military conflict.” (Johnson et al. 2015, 314). Challenging conventional wisdom, scholars have started to argue that, instead of balancing relative power, states are attempting to balance threats (Walt 1990). There is a large amount of literature focusing on formal alliances and interstate wars, but their relationship remains debatable. Some scholars have shown that formal alliances’ deterrence effectively decreases the likelihood of war between allies and their international rivals (Johnson & Leeds 2011). Other scholars believe that alliances encourage conflicts because countries with allies are more confident in invading those without allies, and they believe their allies will fight on their behalf (Sabrosky 1980). It is also believed that alliances will have different impacts under different conditions (Smith 1995). Despite these arguments on the effects of formal alliances, scholars tend to agree that alliance is a form of deterrence for potential rivals before a war breaks out. Apart from this kind of alliance, other loosely formed alliances serve economic or diplomatic aims. This paper focuses only on formal alliances, and the reason for this will be provided in the following sections.

To make deterrence work, a state should be both capable and credible. Capable means a state has the capability to impose high costs on its potential rivals. At the same time, credible refers to the stakes of a state on a particular issue, which reflects the

possibility for that state to take action on that issue (311-312). According to different actors sending signals, deterrence is divided into two groups: direct deterrence and extended deterrence. The former means that the defender who sends the deterrence signal is the target itself, while in the latter, it is another state, like an ally of the target (311). Foreign alliances, which I focus on in this paper, lie in the second category. Conventional wisdom believes alliances are triggered mainly by foreign threats by other nation-states (Johnson 2017). Scholars have confirmed that for both types of deterrence, a state with higher capability and credibility tends to succeed in deterring rival countries (Clare & Danilovic 2012; Leeds 2003).

Alliances are better understood in the context of interstate wars rather than intrastate wars. In intrastate war settings, scholars mainly focus on the alliances among the non-state armed groups within the state's territory. Like nation-states, rebel groups also form alliances during civil wars for various reasons, like power politics or identities (Corradi 2023). These alliances may change the relative power between rebel groups and the government, resulting in a different outcome of civil war, just like their counterparts in interstate war settings. Scholars always try to understand international alliances in interstate war settings and rebel group alliances in intrastate war settings. However, it is possible that these settings are not independent of each other. Edry et al.'s paper showed us how both international and domestic threats would trigger a state to seek alliance formation on the international level. They believe that different kinds of threats drive states to form various kinds of formal alliances like defense pacts, consultation pacts, and

neutrality pacts (2021). This paper is an excellent case suggesting that foreign alliances can interact with domestic conflicts in particular ways.

According to what we have developed above, the deterrence effect of foreign alliances can also be applied to intrastate war settings. Both rebel groups and their rival governments pay much attention to the relative power and the winning probability, which can be strongly affected by the alliances of both sides. They also care about the signals from the international community, even when they have yet to take any solid actions. The allies are also motivated to intervene in the civil wars potentially. Scholars have shown that the states do not always hold their commitment as they stated in the alliance treaties, and one of the reasons for this phenomenon is that the states experience changes in their relative power (Leeds et al. 2000; Leeds 2003). As one of the most devastating events that hurt a state's power, the allies of a country intend to prevent a war from happening, or at least make sure it will end earlier, no matter whether the war is interstate or intrastate. The very existence of a foreign ally serves as a deterrence to the rivals of a country both from home and abroad. During this process, as we discussed above, both the ally's capability and credibility affect whether the deterrence works, and some scholars have proved that the existence of a capable foreign ally can decrease the probability of civil war (Fletcher 2015).

Apart from the state's capacity, credibility also attracts scholars' attention. Despite the many focuses on the credibility of allies in interstate wars, scholars have not yet paid much attention to allies' credibility in intrastate wars. Current literature about credibility in civil wars mainly falls in the context of the post-war settlement dilemma and lacks

attention on the phases before and during the war. Some scholars describe this dilemma as a “reversion problem,” arguing that, to reach an agreement with the government to cease fire, rebel groups have to agree to be disarmed by the state. However, after the disarmament, rebel groups would be placed in a highly disadvantageous stage, where the state may take advantage of its overwhelming military power against the rebel groups. Therefore, the best strategy for the rebel groups is to continue fighting (Walter 1997; Matanock 2020). To overcome this commitment problem, one of the most effective strategies is to involve a third party in the bargaining process, who will guarantee both parties conduct as the agreement requires after the war (Spaniel & Savun 2022). This aligns with the observation that the United Nations has been actively involved in peacemaking in the past two decades (White et al., 2018). However, this account was also questioned because third parties do not always live up to their commitments, which raises the issue of why rebel groups believe in third parties (Svensson 2008). Scholars have formed a general agreement that the more credible the third party is, the more accepting the disputant will be of its offers (Maoz & Terris 2006). This concern reminds us that the capacity and credibility of foreign actors also matter in the context of civil war.

Drawing on the wisdom of previous scholarships, foreign alliances could sometimes be the response to domestic threats or conflicts, and they can influence both the duration and onset of civil wars (Edry et al. 2021). Formal alliances may commit aid to each other when a member country experiences internal threats, like among the nations in 19th-century Europe (Fletcher 2015). To fulfill their commitments, allies may implement direct military intervention or draw on approaches like economic and military

aid, sanctions against rebel groups, diplomatic support, etc. Before initiating any war against the legal government, rebel groups may have to calculate their winning probabilities, as they are rarely willing to fight a war they will never win. The foreign alliances of their target are critical factors in this calculating process because the target's expected level and type of external support will change rebel groups' calculations. As they conduct this calculation, formal alliances will serve as a highly credible reflection of common strategic interest between the targeted and a foreign country, which makes this country a potential supporter (Jackson et al. 2020). Formal alliances are also a better indicator than other forms of alliances for the rebel groups to judge whether a foreign country will be a credible potential supporter, as this alliance allows another country to use military force directly on an issue. Thus, formal alliances will be my main focus in this paper compared with other forms of alliances because they have the best deterrence effect on rebel groups. When calculating its possibility of success, any domestic party that targets a state will assess the military capability of both the targeted states and their allies. Some allies are so strong that they force the insurgents to believe they stand no winning chance against the government with possible foreign intervention. Rebel groups will also assess the credibility of the allies. They would like to know how likely the allies of the targeted country will intervene if they initiate a war aiming to overthrow the legal government. In this case, we can use allies' capability and credibility to explain the dynamics of civil wars.

One indicator for the rebel groups to determine whether an ally has a capable deterrence threat depends on its military capability. States with more military capacities

tend to send more convincing deterrence signals than those with less (Johnson et al. 2015, 315). Rebel groups will calculate their winning probabilities by considering the relative capability between themselves and the states, and they will only fight against the state when they believe they can achieve their goals with an acceptable cost. When the state has allies, rebel groups have to consider their capabilities too, and assess if they can initiate the attack. This leads us to the first testable hypothesis:

H1: Civil war will be less likely if the targeted state has an ally with substantial military capability.

However, the very existence of a strong ally alone can not fully explain the dynamic between foreign alliances and civil war because not all treaties between allies include commitments to help when one country faces internal threats. The targeted states may fear foreign intervention more than internal threats, like the countries gaining their independence after WWII in Africa. Foreign intervention may also cast doubt on the legitimacy of the targeted states' governments, as they rely on foreign forces to suppress their own people. Thus, rebel groups will also assess the possibility of that ally intervening if a conflict between them and the targeted state breaks out. They will judge how much the ally values the potential target (316). The deterrence effect will be more substantial when the rebel groups believe there is a high chance for that ally to intervene. This leads to our second testable hypothesis:

H2: Civil war will be less likely if the targeted state has an ally with convincing credibility to intervene.

It is also possible that capability and credibility will interact with each other to affect civil war. On the one hand, these two variables can boost each other. For any fixed level of capability, a higher capability will facilitate the deterrence effect and vice versa. On the other hand, they may reduce the effect of one another. Following the argument by Johnson et al., a higher level of capability may matter the most when the credibility is low, and vice versa (316). When the ally's capability is too strong, it does not need to be so committed to the targeted state to change rebel groups' calculations because the risk of defeat is too high. In the same logic, rebel groups will pay more attention to its credibility when the ally has a relatively weak capability. This leads to our third testable hypothesis:

H3a: Civil war will be less likely at any fixed level of the capability of the targeted state's allies when their credibility is higher.

H3b: Civil war will be less likely for all fixed levels of the capability of the targeted state's allies when their credibility is lower.

The following parts describe my empirical strategies for testing my theories. I will first explain the various variables in my model and then provide a statistical test.

5. Research Design

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is the civil war onset. Civil war is a kind of civil conflict that fulfills several requirements, which I have defined in the previous parts. This paper focuses on civil war but not civil conflict because the insurgents may only be deterred by the government's allies not to initiate a civil war, but not civil conflicts. Modern countries are concerned about being considered "intervening in the domestic affairs" of their allies due to the global demonstration of sovereignty. It is not beneficial to intervene, whether directly or indirectly, in all disputes between their allies and the rebel groups. What they care about are mostly those disputes that are serious enough to potentially affect their allies' legal rule, resulting in the inability to fulfill the commitments in the treaties, and they may ignore those tiny ones that may be addressed by their allies themselves. Rebel groups may worry that the mighty allies of their rival governments may intervene if they try to overthrow the government and may not when they try to initiate only a local rally asking to replace a corrupted local government official that may cause 30 deaths. Thus, the deterrence of foreign allies is most effective toward large-scale domestic conflicts like civil wars, but not every type of civil conflict.

To test my hypothesis, I combine two civil war datasets. Firstly, I use Dixon and Sarkees' version of the Correlation of War (COW) intra-state war data, which includes updated data on the intra-state wars from 1816 to 2014 (Dixon & Sarkees, 2015). In this dataset, authors provide information about each civil war, such as the participants, start/end date, initiator, etc. Each conflict coded in the dataset reaches the 1,000 battle-

death threshold, but not all of them will be considered in this paper. COW data adopts an expanded version of war typology. Instead of defining civil war as an independent category of war, it is now one of the three categories under a larger “intra-state war” concept. Besides civil war, regional internal (type 6) and intercommunal wars (type 7) are also counted as intra-state wars in the dataset. These two types of war occur within a state's territory, but the former involves a regional government to be one side of the war, while the latter involves two parties, none of which is government. Civil war is also divided into two types: for central control (type 4) and over local issues (type 5). I include all data of type 4, type 5, and type 6 wars in my new dataset.

I understand that this will create only a small dataset for me to use, so I combine the data from the latest version of the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset to make my dataset a more complete one. This dataset is not one that only codes civil wars but all armed conflicts since 1946. I first delete all type 2 wars as they are between two independent states and then include all conflicts that exceed the 1,000 battle-death-a-year thresholds in my new dataset.

I create a country-year dyad dataset for all countries in the world starting from 1945 to 2000. For each country in a given year, if there was a civil war onset, then it is coded as “1”; otherwise, it would be a “0”. The COW data counts a war between one rebel group and one government as only one war, no matter how long it lasts and how many stages this war may have. However, in the UCDP/PRIO data, different wars are counted in the same situation, and I will adopt their approach to count wars with different stages as different wars. The UCDP/PRIO data also count wars outside a country's

territory as civil wars. Some of the wars happened between rebel groups and their former colonial governments. In contrast, there were other conflicts between local non-government groups and foreign powers that tried to restore a capable government in that region, like in Somalia. I include the former type of war in my dataset and delete the latter.

I can identify 179 civil wars occurring in 77 countries by this approach.

Independent Variable

The first independent variable is the ally's capability. I adopt this variable's measurement approach and data from Johnson et al.'s paper (2015). In the original data, the authors sum up the military capabilities of all the target's unique allies, then compare it with the challenger's military capability to calculate the winning probability of the target country and its allies. However, as I focus on the non-state actors, it is hard to calculate the relative capacity between rebel groups and foreign alliances. Thus, I will use the allies' total military capabilities of the target country each year as a measurement of military capacity. The data on each country's military capability comes from the Composite Indexes of National Capabilities (CINC) database. This dataset assigns a score from 0-1 to each country yearly, with numbers closer to 1 representing a higher military capability. I understand that this approach may not be the best way to test the effect of capability. Capability matters for the rebel groups to calculate their winning probabilities, meaning they will focus more on relative capabilities than absolute ones. A country's higher capability does not necessarily mean a higher winning probability in domestic

conflicts for its ally. Hypothesis 1 predicts that the coefficient associated with the variable should be negative.

The second independent variable is the ally's credibility. To measure it, I have first to identify all dyad years in which the target country has at least one ally willing to defend it in a conflict. According to Johnson et al., an alliance must "(1) be public, (2) require a defender to provide active military support in the event of an attack on the target, (3) not be limited to conditions that could not involve the potential challenger." The alliance data comes from the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) database and is coded by Johnson and Leeds in previous studies (Leeds et al., 2002; Johnson & Leeds, 2011).

However, this method faces a primary challenge that may erode the reliability of the results. While all formal alliances are based on the commitment to defend against an external rival, not all of them include the commitment to face internal threats together. This problem will make the result more significant as the decrease in disputes is related to foreign alliances that are not supposed to have such an effect. An alternative mechanism can mitigate this concern. Though some alliances do not promise to aid the member country in domestic conflicts, they will be motivated to intervene if the capability of that target country is eroded. Domestic turmoil may hurt the target country's ability to fulfill its obligations in the alliance, which leads to an overall decrease in alliance capability (Fletcher 2015). Still, rather than only coding the existence of formal alliances, I have to find a more convincing method to code a state's reliability to intervene in its ally's domestic conflicts.

I adopt the same method as Johnson et al. to measure the credibility of the allies, using the S-score proposed by Signorino and Ritter, and the data comes from the database constructed by Gibler and Sarkees (Signorino & Ritter 1999; Gibler & Sarkees 2004). This concept is treated as an estimate of similarity in foreign policy ties, like bilateral trade, foreign direct investment, democracy aid, and so on (Johnson et al. 2015). However, though it is used to test the allies' credibility, the S-score can not reflect the actual alliance status between two countries; it only shows the extent to which countries share tied fates. In other words, it measures how much of a stake one country holds in another country. Thus, though not a direct reflection of simple alliance status, the S-score is associated with rebel groups' judgment of a foreign country's potential for intervention. In future studies, I have also considered the measurement of international reputation proposed by Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, which focuses on whether a country backed down from previous disputes (Weisiger & Yarhi-Milo 2015). In that paper, they use the militarized interstate dispute (MID) data to reflect states' reputations. A country is treated as earning a victory reputation if the dispute between it and other states escalates to using forces and it achieves all its aims. In contrast, a country is treated as earning a bad reputation if it backs down from a dispute without the use of force. However, this measurement only considers the winning history of one country, but not how reliable their commitments are to their allies. The S-score approach better explains foreign allies' deterrence to rebel groups, which better fits with this paper. Hypothesis 2 predicts that the coefficient associated with this variable should be negative.

To test the third hypothesis, I adopt the same approach in Johnson et al.'s paper by creating an interaction term between the capability and credibility of alliances. This interaction term allows the effect of credibility on civil war onset to vary according to the value of capability. If the coefficient is positive and significant, it serves as support that these two factors moderate each other, which means the effect of one variable is stronger for lower values of the other variable. If the coefficient is negative and significant, it serves as support that these two factors amplify each other, which means the effect of one variable is stronger for higher values of the other variable. Apart from examining the coefficients of all variables in these three models, I also calculated the predicted probability of dispute initiation in these models as further support.

Control Variables

I also include several control variables when estimating the effects of the previous variables. Many control variables in the original data in Johnson et al.'s paper, like the geographic distance between the challenger and the target, offensive/neutral pacts signed between the challenger and its allies, and the polity type of the challenger and target, all become non-applicable as I focus on the war between a state and a non-state actor. I adopt two control variables from the original dataset. Firstly, I control the level of military institutionalization between the target and its allies. As some scholars argue, when facing different types of threats, states will choose to form a variety of alliances, like defense pacts, consultation pacts, and neutrality pacts, which are distinct from each other on the level of military institutionalization (Edry et al. 2021). Whether the target country has an ally who commits to intervene militarily or just provides economic aid

will significantly change rebel groups' calculation of their winning probability. Secondly, I consider any temporal dependence in the data using the number of years since the last conflict, as in Johnson et al.'s paper.

Apart from these control variables, others should be considered. Similar to whether a challenger has any relevant alliances, I should consider whether a rebel group is supported by any other rebel groups or foreign countries, which will change the relative capability between the rebel group and the target country. Domestic political stability should also be a concern, as it can affect both the probability of a rebel group initiating an attack and a foreign country's willingness to intervene. These variables will be adopted in future research but not in this paper.

6. Empirical Result and Robustness Check

Table 1 presents the results from the probit regressions of dispute initiation. The three columns in this table each report the result for one model as a test for different hypotheses.

The first column in Table 1 examines whether disputes between rebel groups and the state will decrease when the state has powerful allies. The results show support for my hypothesis. A state with stronger allies experiences less civil war onsets. Though the coefficient is negative, as I predicted in the hypothesis, this result is not statistically significant, even on a 90% confidence interval. Thus, I calculate the probability of a change in the onset of civil war between a state with stronger and weaker allies. The predicted probabilities of dispute initiation for every value of allies' combined capability support my hypothesis. For example, having an alliance with a 0.082 combined capability rather than a 0.013 capability decreases the probability of disputes by 13.5% [-34%, 7%]¹. These reports support Hypothesis 1: that their rival governments' foreign allies will deter rebel groups because they believe the allies can defeat them in a potential intervention. Similar results are found in the robustness check.

The second column in Table 1 examines whether disputes between rebel groups and the state will decrease when it has highly credible allies. The results show that these two variables are negatively correlated, suggesting that rebel groups tend to attack less

¹ These two values, 0.082 and 0.013, represent the mean of the variable and a one standard deviation decrease.

Table 1 *Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Model 1	Model2	Model3	Model4
Allies' Combined Capability	-1.09 (0.738)		-19.82*** (4.649)	-1.17 (0.760)
Similarity in Alliance Portfolios between Target and Allies		-0.03 (0.465)	-2.44*** (0.876)	-0.17 (0.460)
Interaction between Capability and Similarity			-23.54*** (5.140)	
Level of military Institutionalization between Target and Allies	0.009 (0.083)	-0.03 (0.078)	0.03 (0.089)	-0.02 (0.081)
Global S-score computed with all states	-0.27 (0.191)	-0.28 (0.197)	-0.28 (0.196)	-0.23 (0.188)
Peace Years since the last dispute	0.015* (0.007)	0.014* (0.007)	0.010 (0.008)	0.000 (0.001)
Constant	-1.93*** (0.236)	-1.92*** (0.490)	-4.29*** (0.878)	-1.74 (0.496)
<i>Observations</i>	4778	4778	4778	4778

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

when the state has credible allies. However, the results are again not statistically significant, even on a 90% confidence interval. The predicted probabilities of dispute initiation for every value of similarity in the alliance portfolio between the target and its allies support the hypothesis. For example, having an alliance with a 0.94 S-score rather

than a 0.84 S-score decreases the probability of disputes by 1.5% [-26%, 20%]². The result suggests that their rival governments' foreign alliances will deter rebel groups because they believe the allies are credible enough to intervene in the potential civil war. Similar results are found in the robustness check.

The third column in Table 1 examines the interaction between the measurement of capability and credibility. The coefficient is negative and statistically significant, even on a 99% significant interval. This supports Hypothesis 3a, which states that allies' capability and credibility amplify each other. The increase in one variable reduces civil war onset more for higher variables of another variable. I again calculate the predicted probability of dispute initiation for this model based on one variable while holding the other at a constant. With regard to the effect of capability on dispute initiation, a decrease in military capability from 0.08 to 0.013 increases the predicted probability by 22.5% [-34%, -21%] when the average S-score of the allies is 1. The same change of probability decreases to 18.5% [-45%, 8%] when the average S-score of the allies is 0.76. With regard to the effect of credibility on dispute initiation, a decrease in S-score from 0.94 to 0.84 increases the predicted probability by 49% [-69%, -29%] when the capability for the alliance is 0.147. The same change of probability decreases to 9% [-35%, 17%] when the capability for the alliance is 0.013. These predicted probabilities are consistent with the third hypothesis, suggesting that the allies' capability and credibility amplify each other. A country has to be both powerful and credible to deter the rebel groups within its ally's

² These two values, 0.91 and 0.76, represent the mean of the variable and one standard deviation decrease.

territory, and the existence of either a powerful or credible alliance alone is not an effective deterrence against the rebel groups. However, we can see from the first models that, the effects of capability and credibility on the civil war onset are not significant enough when they are tested alone, and they become significant when the interaction term is taken into consideration, which is not normal. Thus, I adopt the fourth model to illustrate this problem further. In Model 4, I include both capability and credibility without the interaction term, and the result returns as shown in the fourth column. The result is in line with the first two models, which shows that the effects of capability and credibility are not significant enough, even though their coefficients are the same as predicted. This problem may be caused by my measurement of capability. I use the absolute combined military capability of all allies of one country as the indicator of capability rather than adopting a relative power measurement. I may have to dig into this problem further in the future studies.

I also did additional tests based on another dataset, which only includes the countries that have experienced civil wars within their territories during the period 1945-2000. There are many countries, like the rich ones in northern Europe or the islands in Oceania, that hardly experience any domestic conflicts and wars, which is not a result of their mighty allies but for other reasons. Thus, I will focus on those countries that experienced civil war and conduct the same test using the new dataset. The results show a different pattern from the original test, suggesting that capability and credibility still amplify each other's effect, but they may not always deter the civil war onset, which I will discuss in the robustness check.

According to the empirical result, neither capability nor credibility alone can fully explain the dynamics between foreign alliances and the onset of civil war. Instead, these two variables decrease the probability of civil war onset coordinately and amplify each other. An ally's higher level of military capability matters the most when its credibility is relatively high, and vice versa.

Following the main test, several robustness checks are conducted. Firstly, there is a primary concern about endogeneity with my research design. Conventional wisdom believes that foreign alliances are formed mainly because states feel threatened by external actors, like other nation-states. However, according to Edry et al., states may form foreign alliances because of domestic threats from rebel groups. It is possible that some alliances are formed as a response to an ongoing civil conflict, which makes them lose the deterrence effect on civil war onset. Thus, it would be ideal if I only focus on the foreign alliances formed before the civil war breaks out, because these alliances are not triggered by the domestic threats by the rebel groups. This leads to the next additional robustness check. I drop all the alliances formed in the same year as the starting of civil wars, and then run the same test on the remaining data. Table 2 provides the result of this test. This robustness check returns almost the same result as my previous test. In model 1 and model 2, the coefficient of the ally's capability and credibility are both negative, representing a deterrence effect on civil war onset, but still not statistically significant. In model 3, the coefficients for capability, credibility, and their interaction is negative and statistically significant, suggesting that these two variables amplify each other in their deterrence effect.

Table 2 *Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Dropping alliances formed in the same year of Civil War Onset*

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Model1	Model2	Model3
Allies' Combined Capability	-1.09 (0.738)		-19.82*** (4.649)
Similarity in Alliance Portfolios between Target and Allies		-0.03 (0.465)	-2.44*** (0.876)
Interaction between Capability and Similarity			-23.54*** (5.140)
Level of military Institutionalization between Target and Allies	0.009 (0.083)	-0.03 (0.078)	0.03 (0.089)
Global S-score computed with all states	-0.27 (0.191)	-0.28 (0.197)	-0.28 (0.196)
Peace Years since the last dispute	0.015* (0.007)	0.014* (0.007)	0.010 (0.008)
Constant	-1.93*** (0.236)	-1.92*** (0.490)	-4.29*** (0.878)
<i>Observations</i>	4778	4778	4778

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

I then perform another additional test on the allies' credibility of the targeted country. In the previous test, empirical results showed that credibility helps to reduce the onset of civil war, but it is not statistically significant. It is possible that rebel groups will not assess the overall credibility of all allies of the targeted country but only the strongest one, as it is the most threatening potential supporter. Thus, I use the average S-score of the strongest alliances of each country to run the test again. Table 3 provides the result of

this test. This test returns quite the same results as the previous tests, suggesting that if the rebel groups only consider the strongest ally of the targeted country, that ally's capability and credibility still amplify each other and have a deterrence effect on the civil war onset.

Table 3 *Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Using Average S-score of the strongest allies*

	(1) Model2	(2) Model3
Allies' Combined Capability		-16.48***
Similarity in Alliance Portfolios between Target and its strongest Ally	-0.12 (0.770)	-1.85*** (0.009)
Interaction between Capability and Similarity		-20.39*** (0.001)
Level of military Institutionalization between Target and Allies	-0.03 (0.656)	0.04 (0.627)
Global S-score computed with all states	-0.27 (0.151)	-0.29 (0.142)
Peace Years since the last dispute	-0.01 (0.624)	-0.00 (0.808)
Constant	-1.83*** (0.000)	-3.76*** (0.001)
<i>Observations</i>	4778	4778

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Finally, I conduct one more additional test using a reduced number of data. As I have discussed above, it is easier to observe civil wars in underdeveloped countries than in developed countries. The deterrence effect of foreign alliances on domestic conflicts is rarely seen in particular countries due to various reasons like regime type, social stability, government capacity, etc. Thus, I drop all data of all countries that have never experienced any civil wars during the time period, and use the remaining data to conduct the same test again. Table 4 presents the result of this test. The results of Model 1 and Model 2 remain the same as the previous tests, with negative but insignificant coefficients. Surprisingly, Model 3 returns with a different result. In this model, the coefficient of both capacity and credibility is positive but insignificant, and the coefficient of their interaction remains negative and statistically significant. This means that, though the two variables still amplify each other, they have the effect of boosting civil war onset. An increase in an ally's capability will cause an increase in the probability of civil war onset in the targeted country, especially when its ally has high credibility at the same time. This is in conflict with our assumption, that the existence of foreign alliances will reduce the probability of civil wars. This result could be supporting evidence for another explanation of the effect of foreign alliances. As Cunningham suggests, foreign intervention may increase the onset of civil war because the targeted country will have more resources in its hands, thus implementing more repressive and violent actions against rebel groups. In the setting of deterrence, the targeted country may be encouraged by its ally's potential aid to initiate the war first against the rebel groups

rather than wait for the rebel groups to take action. The more credible and stronger its ally is, the more confident the targeted country will have to attack.

Table 4 *Probit Analysis of Civil War Onset 1945-2000: Testing only the countries that have experienced civil war*

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Model1	Model2	Model3
Allies' Combined Capability	-0.44 (0.951)		5.82 (5.892)
Similarity in Alliance Portfolios between Target and Allies		-0.36 (0.606)	0.36 (1.258)
Interaction between Capability and Similarity			-7.90** (6.483)
Level of military Institutionalization between Target and Allies	0.13 (0.112)	0.10 (0.104)	0.13 (0.114)
Global S-score computed with all states	-0.22 (0.224)	-0.23 (0.222)	-0.24 (0.229)
Peace Years since the last dispute	-0.00 (0.009)	0.00 (0.009)	-0.00 (0.009)
Constant	-1.83*** (0.303)	-1.48*** (0.655)	-2.15*** (1.218)
<i>Observations</i>	1732	1732	1732

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

As these additional tests show, the ally's capability and credibility of the targeted country amplify each other in their effectiveness of deterring civil war onset. However, they also show possible support for an alternative explanation of the effect of foreign

alliances, that their existence will encourage civil war onset by boosting the winning confidence of the targeted country.

7. Conclusion

Scholars have paid much attention to the impact of foreign alliances in the context of international conflicts. However, how it affects civil conflicts leaves ample room for debate. In this paper, I argue that, like nation-states in international society, domestic rebel groups will also assess both the capability and credibility of the state's allies and decide whether to initiate a civil war based on the relative military capability and how convincing it is for the ally to intervene. I find that neither capability nor credibility alone can fully explain this dynamic, and they interact with each other to decrease the probability of the onset of civil war. These two variables also amplify each other in this effect. An ally's higher level of capability matters the most when its credibility is relatively high.

Looking forward, I believe several improvements can be made in future research. Firstly, the alliance data I adopt does not differentiate between treaties that contain commitments to provide aid in the face of internal threats and those that do not. It would be ideal to assess only those alliances that each member country promises to help address international and domestic issues. Secondly, the measurement of an ally's capability has to be revised. I am now using the absolute military capacity of all allies combined as the measurement, which may be affected by the data of some superpowers and result in outliers. The allies of rebel groups have to be taken into consideration. It would be ideal to measure the relative military capability between the government, rebel groups, and their allies. Thirdly, I should dig more into possible alternative explanations. As my final additional test shows, the existence of strong and credible foreign alliances may

encourage civil war onset rather than reduce it. This is a worth next step to explore on this topic. Finally, several more control variables should be included in the analysis, like a country's regime type or social stability, as these variables may simultaneously affect the probability of civil conflicts and foreign interventions.

This paper's results may help government leaders who are concerned about the effectiveness of their extended deterrence. It would be beneficial for them to consider how they can simultaneously increase their alliance's capability and credibility and be prepared to coordinate them properly rather than only utilizing one of these elements to deter potential domestic rivals.

References

- Addison, Tony, and S. Mansoob Murshed. (2002) Credibility and Reputation in Peacemaking. *Journal of Peace Research* 39(4): 487–501.
- Akcinaroglu, Seden, and Elizabeth Radziszewski. (2005) Expectations, Rivalries, and Civil War Duration. *International Interactions* 31(4): 349-374.
- Arena, Philip, and Brian Hardt. (2014) Incentives to Rebel, Bargaining, and Civil War. *International Interactions* 40(1): 127-141.
- Balch-Lindsay, Dylan, and Andrew J. Enterline. (2000) Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820-1992. *International Studies Quarterly* 44(4): 615–642.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. (2010) Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis. *World Politics* 62(1): 87-119
- Cetinyan, Rupen. (2002) Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-party Intervention. *International Organization* 56(3):645–677.
- Clare, Joe, and Vesna Danilovic. (2012) Reputation for Resolve, Interests and Conflict. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29(1): 3-27.
- Collier, Paul, and Anke Hoeffler. (1998) On Economic Causes of Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers* 50(4):563-73.
- Collier, Paul, and Anke Hoeffler. (2004) Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers* 56(4): 563-595.
- Corradi, Edoardo. (2023) Beyond Armed Competition: the Logic of Rebel Groups' Alliance Formation. *Civil Wars* 25(2-3): 249–267.
- Cunningham, David E. (2016) Preventing Civil War: How the Potential for International Intervention Can Deter Conflict Onset. *World Politics* 68(2): 307–340.
- Dixon, Jeffrey S., and Meredith R. Sarkees. (2015) A Guide to Intra-state Wars: An Examination of Civil, Regional, and Intercommunal Wars, 1816-2014. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Edry, Jessica, Jesse C. Johnson, and Brett Ashley Leeds. (2021) Threats at Home and Abroad: Interstate War, Civil War, and Alliance Formation. *International Organization* 75(3): 837–857.
- Elbadawi, Ibrahim A., and Nicholas Sambanis. (2000) *External Interventions and the Duration of Civil Wars*. World Bank.

- Fearon, James D. (1994) Signaling versus the Balance of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 236–269.
- Fearon, James D. (1997) Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(1): 68–90.
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. (2003) Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75–90.
- Fletcher, Paul T. (2015) *The Role of International Alliances in Civil War Onset*. Tallahassee: Florida State University Digital Library.
- Gibler, Douglas M., and Meredith Sarkees. (2004) Measuring Alliances: The Correlates of War Formal Interstate Alliance Dataset, 1816-2000. *Journal of Peace Research* 41(2): 211–222.
- Greig, J. Michael, and Patrick M. Regan. (2008) When Do They Say Yes? An Analysis of the Willingness to Offer and Accept Mediation in Civil Wars. *International Studies Quarterly* 52(4): 759-781.
- Gurr, Ted R. (2015) *Why Men Rebel*. New York: Routledge.
- Horowitz, Donald L. (2000) *Ethnic Groups in Conflict, Updated Edition with a New Preface*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Jackson, Jaime A., Belgin San-Akca, and Zeev Maoz. (2020) International Support Networks and the Calculus of Uprising. *Journal of Peace Research* 57(5): 632–647.
- Johnson, Jesse C. (2017) External Threat and Alliance Formation. *International Studies Quarterly* 61(3): 736–745.
- Johnson, Jesse C., and Brett A. Leeds. (2011) Defense Pacts: A Prescription for Peace? *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7(1): 45–65.
- Johnson, Jesse C., Brett A. Leeds, and Ahra Wu. (2015) Capability, Credibility and Extended General Deterrence. *International Interactions* 41(2): 309–336.
- Kuperman, Alan J. (2008) The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans. *International Studies Quarterly* 52(1): 49–80.
- Kydd, Andrew. (2003) Which Side Are You On? Bias, Credibility, and Mediation. *American Journal of Political Science* 47(4): 597–611.

- Leeds, Brett A. (2003) Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties. *International Organizations* 57(4): 801–827.
- Leeds, Brett A., Jeffrey Ritter, Sara Mitchell, and Andrew Long. (2002) Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815-1944. *International Interactions* 28(3): 237–260.
- Maoz, Zeev, and Lesley G. Terris. (2008) Credibility and Strategy in International Mediation. *International Conflict Mediation*, 87–113. New York: Routledge.
- Matanock, Aila M. (2020) How International Actors Help Enforce Domestic Deals. *Annual Review of Political Science* 23: 357–383.
- Morrow, James D. (2000) Alliances: Why Write Them Down? *Annual Review of Political Science* 3(1): 63–83.
- Regan, Patrick M. (2002) Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Interstate Conflicts. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 55–73.
- Sabrosky, Alan N. (1980) Interstate Alliances: Their Reliability and the Expansion of War. In J.D.Singer, *The Correlates of War II: Testing Some Realpolitik Models*, 161–98. New York: The Free Press.
- Salehyan, Idean, Kristian S. Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham. (2011) Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups. *International Organization* 65(4): 709–744.
- Signorino, Curtis S., and Jeffrey M. Ritter. (1999) Tau-b or Not Tau-b: Measuring the Similarity of Foreign Policy Positions. *International Studies Quarterly* 43(1): 115–144.
- Smith, Alastair. (1995) Alliance Formation and War. *International Studies Quarterly* 39(4): 405–425.
- Sobek, David, and Caroline L. Payne. (2010) A Tale of Two Types: Rebel Goals and the Onset of Civil Wars. *International Studies Quarterly* 54(1): 213–240.
- Spaniel, William, and Burcu Savun. (2022) Less is More? Shifting Power and Third-party Military Assistance. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*: 00220027231202797.
- Svensson, Isak. (2008) Guaranteeing Peace: The Credibility of Third-party Mediators in Civil Wars. *International Conflict Mediation*: 133–152. New York: Routledge.
- Taydas, Zeynep, Dursun Peksen, and Patrick James. (2010) Why Do Civil Wars Occur? Understanding the Importance of Institutional Quality. *Civil Wars* 12(3): 195-217.

- Thyne, Clayton L. (2006) Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(6): 937–961.
- Walt, M. Stephen. (1990) *The Origins of Alliance*. Cornell University Press.
- Walter, Barbara F. (1997) The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement. *International Organization* 51(3): 335–364.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Weisiger, Alex, and Keren Yarhi-Milo. (2015) Revisiting Reputation: How Past Actions Matter in International Politics. *International Organizations* 69(2): 473-495.
- White, Peter B., David E. Cunningham, and Kyle Beardsley. (2018) Where, When, and How Does the UN Work to Prevent Civil War in Self-determination Disputes? *Journal of Peace Research* 55(3): 380–394.