

Foreign Sanctuary and Rebel Violence: The Effects of International Borders on Rebel

Treatment of Civilians

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in the Department of
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Rebel groups frequently rely on support from civilian populations to conduct civil conflicts. Why, then, do rebel groups risk alienating civilian populations by committing atrocities against them? Much of the civil wars literature argues that relative rebel capabilities and the source thereof explain rebel group decisions to use violence against noncombatants. In this paper, I examine how international borders, through rebel use of a foreign sanctuary, increase the violent behavior of rebel groups toward civilian populations. I argue that sanctuary constrains cooperative rebel strategies by reducing the level of possible interaction with local populations, and lowers the cost of violence by protecting rebels from government reprisals. Additionally, since violence can be counterproductive to rebel success in the long-run, rebel groups utilizing sanctuary should moderate their violence as a conflict ages. I test these expectations using a quasi-Poisson count model of civilian deaths caused by rebels, and I find support for both of my hypotheses. My findings suggest foreign sanctuary is more powerful in describing variation in one-sided violence than previously researched phenomena, such as foreign support.

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1. Introduction

Civil conflicts are frequently characterized by significant civilian victimization at the hands of the belligerents. Scholars have long sought to understand and explain what causes rebels to choose such violent strategies in their effort to win legitimacy, and why we see such variation in the level of violence within and between conflicts. The civil wars literature often argues that the balance of capabilities and the source thereof drive rebel decision-making for committing violence on civilians. However, a review of the likely causes of civilian victimization fails to explain some variation in observations. Consider Sri Lanka, for example, where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fought a secessionist insurgency and engaged in considerable violence upon the civilian population. LTTE rebels were not consistent in the level of violence they applied over the course of the conflict, killing an average of 325 individuals a year from 1989 to 1991, but only about 80 per year from 1992 until the end of the conflict in 2009.¹ Early in the conflict, the LTTE enjoyed substantial support from India in the form of training and weaponry (Byman, et al., 2001). By 1987, however, this explicit assistance ended and the group began to more heavily rely on diaspora remittances, lootable resource revenue streams, and its own international arms procurement network (Byman, et al., 2001;

¹ The conflict between Sri Lanka and the LTTE began in 1983, but the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) one-sided violence data used to calculate these figures only contains observations from 1989 to 2009. These numbers are based on UCDP one-sided violence best yearly estimates; 975 from 1989-1991 & 1,448 from 1992-2009 (Eck and Hultman, 2007). A tentative ceasefire held from late-2001 to late-2005; removing these years from consideration, the average is approximately 103 per year, still roughly a third of the average from 1989-1991.

Human Rights Watch, 2006). These networks remained in operation until the end of the conflict, thus failing to explain the drop in violence. Other factors like the relative capabilities of the group do not explain this variation either; the LTTE was severely outmatched by the Sri Lankan government throughout the conflict and did not experience an abnormal change in battlefield deaths. So, what caused the LTTE to reduce its use of violence on civilian populations?

In order to address this puzzle, I look to a specific dimension of the international system: international borders. Up until 1991, the LTTE enjoyed an explicit external sanctuary across the Palk Strait in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, beyond the reach of the Sri Lankan government. I will argue that rebel group strategy selection for interacting with civilians is a function of the opportunities presented by the environment and the willingness of that group to engage in a given strategy, as shaped by its calculation of the costs and benefits. Foreign sanctuary constrains rebel access to the local population, making cooperation less viable, and protects rebels from government reprisals, lowering the cost of violence on civilians. Additionally, with violence being detrimental to long-term success, I argue that rebels should learn to prioritize cooperation to avoid the negative consequences of targeting civilians and thus the effect of foreign sanctuary should decline as a conflict matures.

This article proceeds in six parts. In the first section, I explore the influence of the international system and international actors on civil wars. In the second, I discuss the

theoretical foundations for how rebel groups select strategies, why they might victimize civilian populations, and why changes in the strategic environment can lead to changes in the overall level of victimization. In the third, I lay out how rebel group acceptance of foreign sanctuary changes their strategy selection for interacting with civilians, and hypothesize how this relationship should play out empirically. In the fourth section, I discuss my research design and carry out my empirical analysis using a quasi-Poisson count model on civilian deaths caused by directed rebel violence. In the fifth, I present my results—which support my hypotheses—and discuss the importance of my findings relative to previously researched phenomena. And in the sixth and final section, I discuss the implications of my results on the broader rebel violence literature and on policymaking.

2. *The International System and Civil Wars*

Civil wars frequently cause problems for states in the international system. This statement is neither new, nor surprising. The ongoing civil war in Syria, for example, has had extensive effects on the Middle East, Europe, and even on the relations between Russia and countries in the West. The war has resulted in a safe-haven for terrorists intent on attacking states abroad and has led to the eroding of international norms against the use of chemical weapons and the targeting of civilians. The conflict has also displaced millions of civilians, over eight million internally, nearly five million to countries in the region, and roughly one million to Europe (Syria Emergency, 2016; Syrian Refugees, 2016). This dispersion of refugees has placed additional financial and cultural burdens on host states (Cassidy, 2015; Syria Emergency, 2016). Like many civil wars, the conflict in Syria has drawn other states in and has spread across the border to Iraq. Kenneth Waltz might characterize these problems as the second image — characteristics of the state — affecting the third image — the international system (Waltz, 2001). Scholars have long recognized the importance of this dynamic and its impact on the prevalence of war.

A similar trend in the civil wars literature is turning this concept around and studying the effects of the international system — or at least a dimension of it — on intrastate conflict (Deutsch, 1964; Modelski, 1964; Rosenau, 1964; Gourevitch, 1978). Scholars have found many different ways in which this can occur (Balch-Lindsay and

Enterline, 2000; Regan, 2000; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2002; Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006). For example, Kalyvas and Balcells (2010) argue that the international system shapes the way in which civil wars are fought. They note that after the end of the Cold War there was a large decline in the number of irregular wars and an increase in symmetrical non-conventional wars as superpower competition declined, and as a result, so did the propagation of material support, revolutionary beliefs, and military doctrine (Kalyvas and Balcells, 2010).

The literature also reflects the importance of international actors in civil wars, particularly as they relate to intervention and the nature and outcome of the war. Neighboring states are prone to becoming involved in civil wars as they are more likely to have ethnic, political, security, and economic ties; when these relationships are disrupted by the presence of a conflict, they can create regional instability (Rosh, 1988; Maoz, 1996; Enterline, 1998; Murdoch and Sandler, 2002; Hegre and Sambanis, 2006; Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz, 2008). As a result, bordering states experience higher threats to regime stability and even state survival from the prospect of civil war infection, and thus are incentivized to intervene (Kathman, 2010).

Recognizing the commonality of foreign intervention in civil wars, researchers have also looked at the consequences of this involvement. Scholars argue, for example, that foreign states are integral in the decision-making process of actors in civil wars and that third-party intervention can influence the duration, outcome, and behavior of

belligerents (Zartman, 1993; Regan, 2002; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 2008; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham, 2011). They contend that foreign intervention heavily in favor of one side of the conflict more frequently results in favorable outcomes for the supported belligerent, that conflicts are more quickly resolved, and that the opposing belligerent is likely to commit higher levels of violence on civilian populations (Regan, 2002; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 2008; Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 2012). When support is provided relatively equally for both sides, the conflict is extended (Regan, 2002; Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce, 2008). Foreign interventions in intrastate conflicts do have some positive consequences as well. Beardsley (2011) notes that foreign peacekeeping missions in intrastate wars can help contain conflicts by reducing the transnational movement of and support for insurgencies.

Beardsley (2011) highlights another indirect way in which the international system can influence civil wars: rebel group exploitation of international borders. Salehyan (2009) notes that, "as international institutions, state boundaries are agreed upon or de facto lines of defense against foreign aggression and geographic demarcations of political authority." Rebel groups frequently take advantage of the restraining effects of borders to evade state security forces and organize their violent strategies (Byman, et al., 2001; Bapat, 2007 & 2012; Salehyan, 2009). Between 1945 and 2007, well over half of all rebel groups undertook extraterritorial operations outside of their target state, whether with or without explicit permission from the host state

(Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009; Salehyan, 2009). Prominent rebel groups like the Eritrean People's Liberation Front from Ethiopia, the Kurdistan Workers' Party from Turkey, and the LTTE from Sri Lanka are all examples of groups that have exploited such sanctuary (Salehyan, 2009). Sanctuary can be integral to the success of a rebellion, frequently providing rebel groups the time and space necessary to carry out successful revolutions (Skocpol, 1979; Byman, et al., 2001). While sanctuary can positively affect the outcome of conflicts, it can also detrimentally prolong the conflict as well (Salehyan, 2007 & 2009).

Scholars have conducted extensive work on the consequences of the international system's influence on civil wars, but they have not studied how these factors affect the behavior of belligerents toward the civilian populations within a target state to the same extent. The literature on the domestic elements that lead rebels to victimize civilian populations is robust and growing, but the study of international system factors that influence this strategy selection has just begun. Several scholars have found that foreign support to rebel groups leads to higher levels of victimization. For example, Weinstein (2007) argues that groups that rely on external patronage—among other economic endowments like natural resources or criminal activity—will attract opportunistic recruits, resulting in undisciplined group structures that are more prone to violent strategy selection. Wood and coauthors alternatively argue that foreign support grows a group's capacity for violence and reduces incentives for restraint toward local

populations (Wood, 2010 & 2014a; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014). Wood, Kathman, and Gent (2012) also demonstrate that armed foreign interventions—whether in favor of the government or rebels—lead to higher levels of victimization of civilians as the opponent seeks to reshape the strategic landscape to its benefit.

Despite the recognition that the strategic environment can shape rebel behavior toward civilians and that foreign sanctuary can shape the strategic environment in a civil war,¹ the two lines of reasoning are yet to be bridged. This raises the question, how does foreign sanctuary influence rebel strategy selection for interacting with civilian populations within the target state? Rebel groups regularly rely on the local population for resources, recruits, and information to improve the capability balance within a conflict (Scott, et al., 1970; Mao, 1989; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006). Therefore, researchers need to understand what influences the nature of this interaction. Rebel groups can employ a variety of strategies to extract these resources, such as ideological appeals, wages, public goods like security and civil services, threats, and compulsion (Lichbach, 1995; Mason, 1996; Kalyvas, 1999 & 2006; Gates, 2002; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2010). These strategies largely fall into two categories, violence and cooperation.

¹ Here, the “strategic environment” refers to the totality of material and informational factors that influence the opportunities available to actors within a civil war. Such factors include but are not limited to the geography of a state, resource endowment, mobilization capacity, military success/failure, or balance of capabilities.

Many of the cooperative strategies involve high costs, whether it be in human resources devoted to providing security and services to civilians, or in money for wages and other incentives (Mampilly, 2011). Conversely, using coercion² to extract resources or recruits, is much cheaper and more expedient (Kalyvas, 2006). This benefit also comes with some risk; because civilians are often apolitical and motivated primarily by immediate survival, using too much violence may drive them to cooperate with state forces (Migdal, 1974; Kalyvas, 2006). In the following section, I explore the ways in which rebel groups choose strategies and explore how a violent strategy might be selected, despite the potential long-term costs.

² For this paper, “violence” and “coercion” are used interchangeably.

3. Strategy Selection and One-Sided Violence

Most and Starr (1989) argue that an actor's strategy selection is shaped by the opportunities presented by the environment and the willingness it has for selecting some behavior based on a rational calculation of the costs or benefits of any action.

According to this framework, changes in the strategic environment can have corresponding changes in strategy selection, insofar as they affect the available courses of action or impact the net benefits of any choice. This framework has been shown to hold in a variety of studies in the international relations and civil war literatures.

Siverson and Starr (1990), for example, found that states were more likely to go to war if they possessed a higher interaction potential, as measured by the presence of warring border states, and willingness to fight, as measured by the presence of a warring alliance partner. Gleditsch and Ruggeri (2010) also use the framework, arguing that opportunities for violence that emanate from political instability and willingness for violence as a result of political disenfranchisement can lead to higher levels of civil war initiation.

This framework also shapes the behavior of nonstate actors within conflicts. Potential belligerents, for example, must both perceive the opportunity to challenge the government and possess the will to do so (Gurr, 2000; Gleditsch and Ruggeri, 2010). Buhaug, Cederman, and Rød (2008 & 2009) show this in their findings that large ethnic-groups that are located far away from the state's center of power are more likely to

initiate civil conflict. They argue that larger groups are more likely to stage successful collective action and that distance and rough terrain reduce the state's ability to project power, thus providing both perceived opportunity and incentives for conflict. Wood (2014a) argues that this process directly influences rebel group decisions to use violence on civilian populations. He contends that when rebel groups expand their military capabilities from sources other than the local population—like from the exploitation of lootable resources or from foreign support—they have expanded opportunities for victimizing civilians and reduced incentives for restraining from this destructive behavior, thus increasing the overall level of violence committed (Wood, 2014a).

To appreciate how changes in the strategic environment affect strategy selection, a review of why rebel groups might choose violence in the first place is instructive. Hannah Arendt (1970) argues that “violence, being instrumental by nature, is rational to the extent that it is effective in reaching the end that must justify it.” This conception suggests that rebel groups use violence against civilians with the expectation of improving their position relative to the target state; this might be pursued through using violence to pressure the target government or through the acquisition of resources, recruits, and information that improve its ability to oppose the state. The civil wars literature and real world observations bear this expectation out.

Lake (2002) argues that terrorist targeting of civilian populations is intended to improve a group's recruiting by provoking a disproportionate response from the target

state. Hultman (2012) notes that this tactic is particularly prominent in democratic states suffering civil conflicts, as the governments can be held accountable by the population for failing to provide security, consequently incentivizing the targeting of civilians. Rebel violence on civilians may also encourage local populations to collaborate with rebels if they believe the state is unable or unwilling to provide security, and thus that doing so will improve their chances of survival (Kalyvas, 1999 & 2006; Wood, 2010). Rebels may also employ violence on civilians as a means to punish and deter cooperation with the government (Wood, 2010). For example, Hamas engaged in extrajudicial executions of individuals it accused of collaborating with Israeli forces during the hostilities in late-2008 and early-2009 (Human Rights Watch, 2009). In each of these cases, rebel actions were intended to shift the strategic balance in the favor of the rebel group.

Other literature suggests that rebel groups use violence to shape their resource environment. For example, rebels sometimes seek to expand available resources by encouraging greater humanitarian assistance through an exacerbated humanitarian crisis, as was seen with the Kamajors in Sierra Leone and with the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy group in Liberia (Hoffman, 2004; Wood and Sullivan, 2015). Rebels may also engage in predatory behavior toward local populations and competing political organizations seeking a share of limited resources; this tactic has been employed by the LTTE in Sri Lanka and various rebel groups in Syria (Beardsley

and McQuinn, 2009; Chenoweth, 2010; Nemeth, 2014; Wood and Kathman, 2015). And perhaps most directly, groups may forcefully extract resources held by local populations through acts like kidnapping for ransom, as Abu Sayyaf and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta have done in the Philippines and Nigeria, respectively (Lake, 2002; Mohamed, 2008; Courson, 2011).

The above discussion demonstrates the ways in which rebels seek to influence their environment, but not how variation in the strategic environment can change rebel behavior. The logic discussed by Most and Starr (1989) and Arendt (1970) still applies. Changes that limit the available opportunities for interaction with the local population or that impact the cost-benefit analysis of this interaction should influence rebel strategies. Severe battlefield losses, a change in the balance of capabilities, and the acquisition of a foreign supporter are all examples of strategic changes with consequences for civilian victimization.

One of the most direct ways in which the strategic environment can change in a civil war is through battle. Battlefield losses can impose substantial costs on belligerents, both in fighters and materiel, but also in the loss of territory and the destruction of economic resources available for extraction. Hultman (2007) argues that as rebel groups lose on the battlefield, they have incentives to target civilians in order to raise the costs governments must bear to continue fighting, and conversely, when they succeed, this need should be lessened. Wood (2014b) argues a similar logic, noting that acute resource

demands likely drive his findings of increased civilian victimization immediately after battlefield losses, conditioned on the group's control of territory and the source of financing.

At the core of battlefield losses is a negative shift in the balance of capabilities between government forces and rebel groups. Relatively weaker groups tend to rely on violence as a way of acquiring resources and recruits as they lack the means to pursue costlier strategies like providing security and governance (Lake, 2002; Wood, 2010 & 2014a). As noted above, cooperative strategies frequently include selective benefits like governance, security, or monetary contributions; these benefits require substantial investments of time and personnel, resources that weaker groups possess in lesser quantities. When groups are unable to meet the opportunity cost that individuals face when choosing to assist a rebellion, civilians and potential fighters are likely to withhold support. Sudden shifts in the balance of capabilities against rebels should then lead to corresponding shifts in rebel violence against civilians as rebel groups seek to extract resources after losing some capacity to do so nonviolently (Hultman, 2007; Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 2012). Conversely, as rebel group's gain capability relative to the state, they should commit lower levels of violence (Wood, 2010). However, when capability shifts occur as a result of foreign sponsorship or direct military intervention, rebels demonstrate the opposite behavior and commit higher levels of victimization (Wood, Kathman, and Gent, 2012; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014).

Having discussed the internationalization of civil conflicts, and the ways in which rebels decide to commit violence on civilians, I will now move on to explore how the two overlap with regard to foreign sanctuary.

4. Foreign Sanctuary

In a basic civil conflict, rebel groups ultimately seek recognition as a political actor, specifically through the control of territory and people. In pursuit of these ends, groups prioritize both operational success against the state and survival of the group. The state, on the other hand, seeks to maintain its exclusive right to govern through the control of this same territory and people. To achieve this end, the state usually seeks to eliminate the challenging rebel actor. Each side possesses opposing advantages and disadvantages. Rebels typically enjoy an advantage in information, both of their own membership, location, strength, and strategy, and frequently of the location and disposition of government forces. Because rebel groups are usually relatively small and individual rebel fighters must forego their day-to-day activities in order to oppose the state, they have fewer resources. Conversely, the state usually retains access to greater resources and firepower, but frequently lacks sufficient intelligence on the locations, identities, and operations of the rebels to successfully target rebel networks. Each side attempts to overcome its disadvantage by leveraging the civilian population, which represents the productive body within any given country and possesses both the requisite resources and information required for battlefield success.

While the discrepancy in resources, information, and capabilities does not necessarily exist in every civil conflict (e.g., symmetric conventional civil wars), the

civilian population is still a potential asset for each combatant and represents a potential advantage if it can be leveraged.

The population is not simply a well to be tapped; noncombatants retain some agency in selecting which side to support in any given conflict and will generally prioritize their own survival in any decisions of support (Migdal, 1974; Kalyvas, 2006). Population preferences for whom to support can change throughout a conflict and can dictate how effectively a rebel group or the government can improve its position vis-à-vis the other (Scott, et al., 1970). Cooperation offers the advantage of preserving the economic and manpower base available for future resource extraction and can win the willful support of local populations. Coercion, on the other hand, is the violent extraction of resources and can degrade the future resource capacity of the population (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007; Beardsley, Gleditsch, and Lo, 2015). The big advantage to a violent strategy is that it is expedient and can result in greater resources in the near-term. For a rebel group focused on survival, such an advantage could be the difference in enduring and dissolving. On balance, though, rebel groups have incentives for restraining their use of coercive extraction as they do not wish to alienate or destroy their longer-term source of resources and recruits. Additionally, excessive violence can drive civilians to cooperate with the state, and subsequently, result in greater targeting of the rebel group (Mason, 1996; Kalyvas, 2006). The question then becomes, how does foreign sanctuary impact this rebel strategy selection?

Rebel groups have substantial incentives for seeking sanctuary in a foreign state. International borders provide a relatively stable and inexpensive defense against state targeting, particularly when explicitly provided by the host state. The target state runs the risk of initiating an interstate war by violating the sovereignty of a neighbor to go after rebels. Consequently, rebel groups can plan, organize, and equip their forces largely unencumbered by threat. The appeal of such a sanctuary is clear, the detrimental consequences are not. The acceptance of foreign sanctuary by a rebel group changes the strategic environment within which it operates, both in terms of opportunities available and the willingness of a group to select a given strategy.

The provision of public goods required to mobilize civilian populations to cooperate involves a certain level of interaction between rebels and the noncombatants (Scott, et al., 1970). These services cannot as effectively be supplied from a foreign sanctuary, which necessarily separates rebel groups from those they are seeking to persuade. As a consequence, sanctuary is likely to limit the effectiveness and even feasibility of a cooperative strategy for resource extraction and recruiting. While only a percentage of the group may be in the sanctuary at any given time, those few are additional members that are no longer working toward cooperation. Coercive strategies do not face this same limitation; threatening or killing a civilian to acquire their resources does not demand the same investment as developing a relationship and can still occur if a group relies on a foreign sanctuary. In this context, the cooperative

opportunities available in the strategic environment are constrained by rebel use of sanctuary, and as a result, coercive strategies become a relatively larger proportion of those remaining.

Foreign sanctuary also impacts the cost-benefit analysis associated with the willingness to select a given strategy. As noted above, violent strategies are more expedient for extracting resources, but can degrade a rebel group's ability to fulfill its long-term resource needs. More germane to sanctuary though, is the risk of driving the population to cooperate with the government. One of the primary concerns of a rebel group, particularly when it is weak, is avoiding substantial losses to its forces or leadership as a result of government operations (Byman, et al., 2001). Civilian populations likely know who the rebels are, where they are based, and generally what they are seeking to do. As a result, rebel groups have some incentives to avoid driving civilian populations to cooperate with the government by the excessive use of violence (Mason, 1996; Kalyvas, 2006). While rebel groups may choose to remain mobile or to move to the periphery of the state to avoid such government targeting (Buhaug, 2010; Beardsley, Gleditsch, and Lo, 2015), they still remain within the jurisdiction of the state and can be targeted accordingly. Foreign sanctuary, however, allows rebels to avoid this negative repercussion practically altogether by slipping across an international border, thus rendering this incentive to avoid violence against civilians largely inoperable.

The combined effects of the constraint of cooperative strategies and the reduced costs of violent ones should lead groups to select the relatively more expedient violent strategies, and consequently commit higher levels of civilian victimization when they possess foreign sanctuary. Stated more formally as a hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Rebel group possession of foreign sanctuary will lead to higher levels of violence on civilian populations.

Assuming the expectations of hypothesis 1 are observed and a rebel group with foreign sanctuary begins victimizing civilians at a higher rate, the negative feedback mechanism of greater government targeting should fail to greatly influence rebel behavior. This suggests that rebels are unlikely to change their strategy selection from coercion to cooperation for near-term survival and will prioritize military success against the state. All else constant, rebel groups will achieve greater battlefield success the larger and better equipped they are, thus incentivizing efforts to expand their capacity to oppose the state. Violence against civilian populations is likely to negatively impact the group's ability to recruit new fighters willingly and, in the long-term, collect resources from the local population. Rebels may turn to lootable natural resources, goods seized from government forces, and foreign supporters to make up for lost resources and recruits, but even in such a case, the local population still represents a large, potential asset.

Rebel groups engaged in excessive violence on civilians also may find it hard to gain recognition as a political actor. If the local population they seek to control contests any advances within the state, the group will struggle to make gains against the government.

This logic suggests that rebel groups that remain viable over time should learn that violence is a damaging strategy to select, both for resource acquisition and battlefield success, and that gains can be made through less violent cooperation. As a result, one might expect that the effect of foreign sanctuary on rebel group behavior should decline over time as the group engages in repeated battle with the state and faces limitations in its fighting capacity and its ability to gain recognition as a political actor by controlling territory and people. This learning process is unlikely to occur quickly in the early stages of a conflict. Since rebels in a sanctuary are insulated from government reprisals, groups must learn the detrimental effects of violence through the process of battlefield losses and repeated violent resource extraction from civilian populations. Depending on the pace and intensity of the conflict, this could take several iterations over the course of months.

Kalyvas (2004) explores the dynamic of learning in his work on the paradox of terrorism. In this piece, he argues that rebel groups use indiscriminate violence because it is much cheaper to use than selective violence, but that as combatants learn that this strategy can be counterproductive, they switch to more restrained selective strategies

(Kalyvas, 2004). Kalyvas further notes that indiscriminate violence is more likely in the early stages of a conflict—when power discrepancies are likely to be higher—rather than late stages of a conflict (Kalyvas, 2004). The distinction between selective and indiscriminate violence is relevant to this case. Selective violence is the targeting of specific individuals for actions they have taken in support of a combatant's opponent; indiscriminate violence is applied to groups of people, regardless of what actions they have taken. A switch from indiscriminate violence that targets noncombatants to one that targets only active participants implies a decline in the overall level of violence applied to noncombatants, suggesting the learning dynamic highlighted by Kalyvas may also apply to the effects of foreign sanctuary on rebel behavior.

Kalyvas provides several examples from previous conflicts of this learning dynamic and the resulting change in violent strategy selection that are also relevant to my argument. During the Chinese Civil War, communist forces found political assassinations of the gentry and the pillaging and killing peasants from other towns promoted opponent community cohesion, undercutting the revolutions ability to gain new supporters (Wou, 1994; Kalyvas, 2004). These developments led to the Communist Party ordering an end to indiscriminate killing of gentry and peasants, and the pursuit of a more discriminate strategy later in the war (Griffin, 1976; Wou, 1994). In Vietnam, the Communist Party instated tight controls over executions after 1954 and ended its practice of bombing cities to avoid the negative consequences of previous practices in

the war (Race, 2010; Kalyvas, 2004). This dynamic is not unique to rebel groups alone: the United States in Vietnam in 1971, Russia in Chechnya in 2003, and Japan in China in the late-1930s, all made changes from indiscriminate to more selective violent strategies in an effort to avoid the detrimental consequences they faced as a result of excessive violence against noncombatants (Kalyvas, 2004). The above logic and qualitative evidence brings me to my second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The effects of foreign sanctuary on rebel victimization of civilians will decrease as the length of the conflict increases.

In the following section, I will discuss my empirical methods and test the two hypotheses highlighted above.

5. Data and Methods

The unit of analysis for this study is the rebel group-year employed in much of the work on rebel victimization of civilians. Using this unit allows for variation in behavior across groups within conflicts and countries. My sample relies upon variables from a collection of datasets, including the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) dyadic dataset (version 1-2016; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 2008), the UCDP one-sided violence dataset (version 1.4; Eck and Hultman, 2007), the UCDP external support for a primary warring party dataset (version 1.0-2011; Höglbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér, 2011), the Non-State Actors (NSA) in conflict dyadic dataset (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009), and on the replication data from Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014), which utilizes the NSA and the UCDP one-sided violence data. The authors use these data for their work on foreign sponsorship of rebels and principal-agent monitoring (Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014). These data span the years 1989 to 2009, have broad geographic coverage, and include approximately 750 observations, with roughly 200 groups involved in over 100 conflicts.¹

The primary dependent variable of interest is the total count of civilians killed by one-sided violence in a conflict. This number is drawn from the UCDP one-sided violence dataset and is based on the best estimate of total civilian deaths. One-sided violence is defined by the UCDP as the intentional and direct use of violence against

¹ See Appendix A for summary statistics for data used in the fully specified model.

non-combatants (Eck and Hultman, 2007). Only years with greater than 25 civilian deaths are recorded in the database; where the UCDP does not include an observation for a year, this variable takes a value of zero for the purposes of this study. This variable does not contain any deaths caused by collateral damage and is intentionally conservative, which makes it well suited for testing my hypotheses concerning strategic targeting of civilians. A demonstrated effect of foreign sanctuary on civilian deaths suggests that other latent, less severe forms of violence are also likely to result. The dependent variable is a count of one-sided violence against civilians with a large degree of overdispersion. Therefore, I used a quasi-Poisson count model to test the two hypotheses discussed above.

To test the relationship between rebel one-sided violence and foreign sanctuary, I draw information on foreign support type from the UCDP external support dataset (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér, 2011). The support dataset contains ten separate categories of foreign assistance provided by foreign states and nonstate actors;² I have only retained cases of confirmed assistance. I use these categories to create two new binary variables, one for *foreign sanctuary* and another for *other foreign support*, which

² These categories include: troops as a secondary force; access to territory; weapons; access to military or intelligence infrastructure; materiel/logistics; training/expertise; funding/economic support; intelligence material; other forms of support (like propaganda); and unknown (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér, 2011).

will be discussed at length below.³ The UCDP dataset codes the access to territory binary variable only when access to territory is clearly and intentionally provided to a warring party (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér, 2011). For all cases in which this variable takes the value of one, a rebel group possessed access to foreign territory. It is possible that in some cases where sanctuary is coded as absent that rebels take advantage of porous borders to acquire a similar sanctuary, without the explicit permission of the host state. I believe rebel behavior in such cases is most likely to reflect that of a group utilizing peripheral territory within a state. Rebel strategies in such cases for interacting with civilians within the state are probably similarly constrained. I find it unlikely, however, that rebel groups will perceive the same sense of security from reprisals that results from an explicitly provided safe haven, as the porous nature of these borders and lack of explicit host state permission likely make this exploitation an inherently risky endeavor. This suggests the willingness to use violence on civilians is still constrained by the potential costs of this strategy. If such a problem is systemic and substantial, these observations would likely narrow any observed difference in victimization between the presence and absence of sanctuary, and the performance of my model may suffer as a result.

³ Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014) also have a binary for foreign support, however, this variable includes cases in which foreign sanctuary were provided (this detail was clarified in email correspondence with an author of the paper and creator of the NSA dataset on 16 November 2016). As a result, I have created my own substitute using the UCDP external support data.

A second variable of interest that has previously been used as a control variable in studies of civilian victimization is the *duration* of the conflict (Hultman, 2007; Wood, 2010); this variable is drawn from the Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014) replication data. Because rebel groups respond to their environment, they likely learn that violence can be counterproductive to their long-term goals. This logic suggests that the effect of foreign sanctuary should decline as the conflict matures. The duration variable is a count of years since the beginning of the conflict as defined by the UCDP dyadic dataset (version 1-2016; Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen, 2008), and is included to test for this interactive effect.

Several additional conflict-specific and country-level variables have been included to control for their confounding effects. The first of these is the group's *mobilization capacity*. My theory on foreign sanctuary's impact on civilian victimization relies partly upon the fact that cooperative strategies with local populations are relatively costlier. If the local population requires no convincing to provide resources and information or to pick up arms in support of the cause, then the expectation that sanctuary constrains strategy availability is undercut. To control for such situations, I have included a variable for a group's mobilization capacity relative to the government. This variable is based on information drawn from the NSA dataset and denotes when a group possessed moderate to high mobilization capacity, relative to the government.

Similarly, my theory relies on the threat of government targeting within the state and the protections from this targeting that international borders provide to explain a group's willingness to select a violent strategy. When a rebel group possesses substantial *control of territory*, it is likely able to avoid some degree of government targeting without traveling abroad. The group would no longer retain the same incentive to flee, and as a result, would avoid the same strategy constraint discussed above. To control for this, I have included a binary variable for whether the group exerted at least moderate to high control of territory, again drawn from the NSA data.

The relative balance of capabilities between the state and rebel group can drive decisions to commit violence on civilian populations; thus, I include a control for rebel *fighting capacity*. Groups that are relatively stronger are less likely to victimize civilians, as they are more capable of providing benefits like security or services to gain support from local populations (Wood, 2010). Additionally, they are likely able to adequately defend against government reprisals within the state, reducing the need for sanctuary. Conversely, those that are weak are more likely to target civilians as they lack the resources or ability to provide benefits to locals and are less able to directly target government forces (Lake, 2002; Wood, 2010; Hultman, 2012). To account for this effect, I created a binary variable based on information drawn from the NSA data. This variable is coded one for all groups with a moderate to high ability to win battles against the state and zero for those relatively less so.

The next newly crafted variable is *foreign support*. Recent research has demonstrated the importance of foreign support to rebel decisions to commit violence on civilian populations; rebels that receive foreign support commit higher levels of civilian victimization (Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2010 & 2014a; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014). To craft this binary variable, I coded one for any rebel group-year observation in the UCDP external support dataset that had a value of one for any known support type other than access to foreign territory (Högbladh, Pettersson, and Themnér, 2011).⁴ A second variable with a similar effect on rebel violence is access to *lootable resources*. For this variable, I use the operationalization employed by Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014), which is a binary for the presence of gems and drugs within the conflict area, based on information from Gilmore et al. (2005), Buhaug and Lajula (2005), and Lajula (2009).

Some research suggests that the type of conflict can also impact rebel violence on civilians. Ethnic conflicts, for example, are particularly violent and hard to resolve (Kaufmann, 1996). They are frequently characterized by violence targeted at a particular outgroup. In fact, Wood (2010 & 2014a) has demonstrated that ethnic conflicts tend to result in higher levels of violence on civilian populations. Conversely, in the same studies he found territorial conflict to be associated with lower levels of violence (Wood,

⁴ There were six observations in which the only assistance type coded was “unknown” and zero cases in which only “unknown” and “sanctuary” were coded; these cases were dropped from the sample.

2010 & 2014a), suggesting rebels may prioritize cooperation with civilians they seek to govern at the end of the conflict. For these reasons, I included two binary variables, *ethnic* and *secessionist* conflict, to control for the influence of each on rebel victimization of civilians. These binaries are drawn from a single nominal variable in the NSA data that designates the primary nature of the conflict.

Regime violence against civilian populations, another conflict-level variable, can also influence the strategic environment within which a rebel group operates. *Government violence* on civilian populations can drive civilians to support rebel groups (Kalyvas and Kocher, 2007). As the government increases its violence on civilians, the relative costs of such actions for rebels should decrease, thus increasing the utility of a coercive strategy. As a consequence, conflicts characterized by higher levels of government repression are also associated with higher levels of rebel abuse of civilians (Hultman, 2007; Wood, 2010). This variable is the count of one-sided deaths caused by the government in a given year and is drawn from the UCDP one-sided violence dataset.

High levels of economic development allow states the ability to provide economic incentives and security to the population, as well as the potential capacity to more effectively pursue rebel forces throughout the country. Democratic regimes are also frequently susceptible to attacks on civilian populations due to the links between civilian preferences and government policies (Hultman, 2012). To control for variation in

these factors, I have included a lagged GDP per capita and regime Polity IV score (Gleditsch, 2002; Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers, 2016).

Higher intensity conflicts frequently create the conditions necessary for groups and governments to perceive one-sided violence as a useful tactic. For example, as combatants suffer battlefield losses they tend to increase targeting of civilian populations (Downes, 2006; Hultman, 2007); a higher incidence of these losses is likely to also lead to higher victimization. To control for the intensity of the conflict, a binary for the occurrence of *war* (i.e., those years in which battle deaths exceed 1,000) is included. This variable is drawn from the UCDP dyadic dataset. Similar logic dictates that states with larger populations present more opportunities for violence to noncombatants. A natural log of the conflict state's *population* is included. This variable is drawn from Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014) and is based on information from the Correlates of War National Capabilities dataset (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey, 1972). Finally, I have included a one-period *lag of rebel violence* to account for temporal dependence and serial correlation.

6. Model and Results

I specified a total of six models to test the relationship between foreign sanctuary and rebel violence on civilians with and without specific controls, to check for an interaction between foreign sanctuary and conflict duration, and to demonstrate the power of foreign sanctuary as a predictor of violence levels relative to previously researched phenomena. Each model includes robust standard errors clustered on the rebel-state dyad to account for correlation of error terms across the data. Models 1 and 2 are the most parsimonious specifications. Models 3 and 4 also include controls for the source of the rebel group resources. Models 5 and 6 are fully specified and include additional conflict level controls for factors that might influence rebel strategy selection. The results of the statistical models are presented in Table 1, below.¹

Considering foreign sanctuary first, the coefficient is positive and statistically significant at 99 percent confidence levels in all models. In Models 2, 4, and 6—those with duration interactions—the coefficient for foreign sanctuary is larger than any of the other variables. All else being equal, rebel groups that possess foreign sanctuary commit higher levels of violence on civilians than those that do not. These findings also suggest foreign sanctuary is a robust predictor of overall rebel violence against noncombatants and provides support for *Hypothesis 1*.

¹ Variance inflation factors were calculated to check for multicollinearity. All factors fell well below the somewhat broad range of tolerable values of 5-10 (Neter, Wasserman, and Kutner, 1989; Rogerson, 2001). See Appendix B for the values.

Table 1: Quasi-Poisson Regression Results for Rebel One-Sided Violence

	<i>Rebel one-sided violence:</i>					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Sanctuary	1.992*** (0.739)	2.923*** (0.848)	1.954*** (0.697)	2.647*** (0.708)	1.905*** (0.587)	2.434*** (0.589)
Mobilization Capacity	0.242 (0.336)	0.016 (0.301)	0.102 (0.279)	0.191 (0.291)	0.126 (0.263)	0.185 (0.274)
Territorial Control	-0.195 (0.430)	-0.276 (0.404)	-0.313 (0.362)	-0.608* (0.327)	-0.082 (0.341)	-0.447 (0.309)
Fighting Capacity	2.631*** (0.685)	2.551*** (0.510)	2.098*** (0.461)	2.392*** (0.486)	1.922*** (0.388)	2.092*** (0.382)
War	1.967*** (0.343)	2.134*** (0.334)	2.029*** (0.400)	2.116*** (0.323)	1.999*** (0.359)	2.070*** (0.316)
Population _{ln(t-1)}	0.323** (0.156)	0.435** (0.187)	0.481* (0.265)	0.525** (0.226)	0.581** (0.249)	0.602*** (0.227)
Rebel Violence _(t-1)	0.00001 (0.00004)	-0.00001 (0.00003)	-0.00001 (0.00004)	-0.00001 (0.00003)	-0.00002 (0.00004)	-0.00002 (0.00003)
GDPpc _(t-1)	-0.00003 (0.0001)	-0.00004 (0.00005)	-0.00004 (0.0001)	-0.00003 (0.00004)	-0.00005 (0.00004)	-0.00004 (0.00003)
Regime	0.094* (0.057)	0.088* (0.052)	0.053 (0.033)	0.034 (0.037)	0.098** (0.040)	0.062 (0.040)
Duration		0.046*** (0.017)	-0.068 (0.055)	0.065*** (0.021)	-0.035 (0.029)	0.047*** (0.018)
Sanctuary*Duration		-0.262** (0.102)		-0.257*** (0.085)		-0.207*** (0.069)
Foreign Support			0.333 (0.260)	0.539** (0.268)	0.146 (0.286)	0.413* (0.247)
Loot			1.126*** (0.374)	1.028*** (0.385)	1.098*** (0.426)	1.051** (0.420)
Government Violence					0.00000* (0.00000)	0.00000* (0.00000)
Ethnic Conflict					-0.016 (0.573)	-0.041 (0.700)
Secessionist Conflict					-1.715*** (0.589)	-1.263*** (0.478)
Constant	-4.080 (3.498)	-6.079 (3.804)	-6.922 (5.260)	-8.399* (4.702)	-8.200* (4.744)	-9.100** (4.444)
Observations	758	758	757	757	748	748

Note: Coefficients with robust standard errors clustered on the dyad in parentheses.
 * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Turning to the interaction between foreign sanctuary and duration, the coefficient is both negative and larger than the coefficient for duration, suggesting that as a conflict ages, the effect of foreign sanctuary on rebel strategy selection fades. The coefficients for the interaction term are statistically significant, at the 95 percent confidence level in Model 2, and at the 99 percent confidence level for Models 4 and 6. The duration coefficient, however, is near zero in all model specifications. It is positive and significant at the 99 percent confidence level only in Models 2, 4, and 6, which include the interaction. To further test this relationship, I drew 1,000 simulated sets of coefficients and used each to calculate the expected count of civilian deaths caused by a group with and without sanctuary, over a range of duration values, while holding all other variables at their mean or modal values.² Figure 1, below, presents this relationship graphically and includes 95 percent confidence intervals. The expected count for groups without sanctuary remains relatively stable as the conflict progresses. Conversely, expected violence levels are much higher at the outset of a conflict for groups that possess sanctuary, though they eventually drop to nearly zero as the conflict enters its third decade. This finding supports *Hypothesis 2*, is consistent with previous literature on combatant violence toward civilians (Kalyvas, 2004), and suggests that the detrimental effects of foreign sanctuary on violent strategy selection are temporary and

² All binary variables are held at median values of 0; lagged rebel violence is held at the mean, approximately 96; government violence is held at its mean, approximately 663; natural log of the population is held at its mean, approximately 17; polity is held at its mean, approximately 0.8; and lagged GDP per capita is held at its mean, approximately 3880.

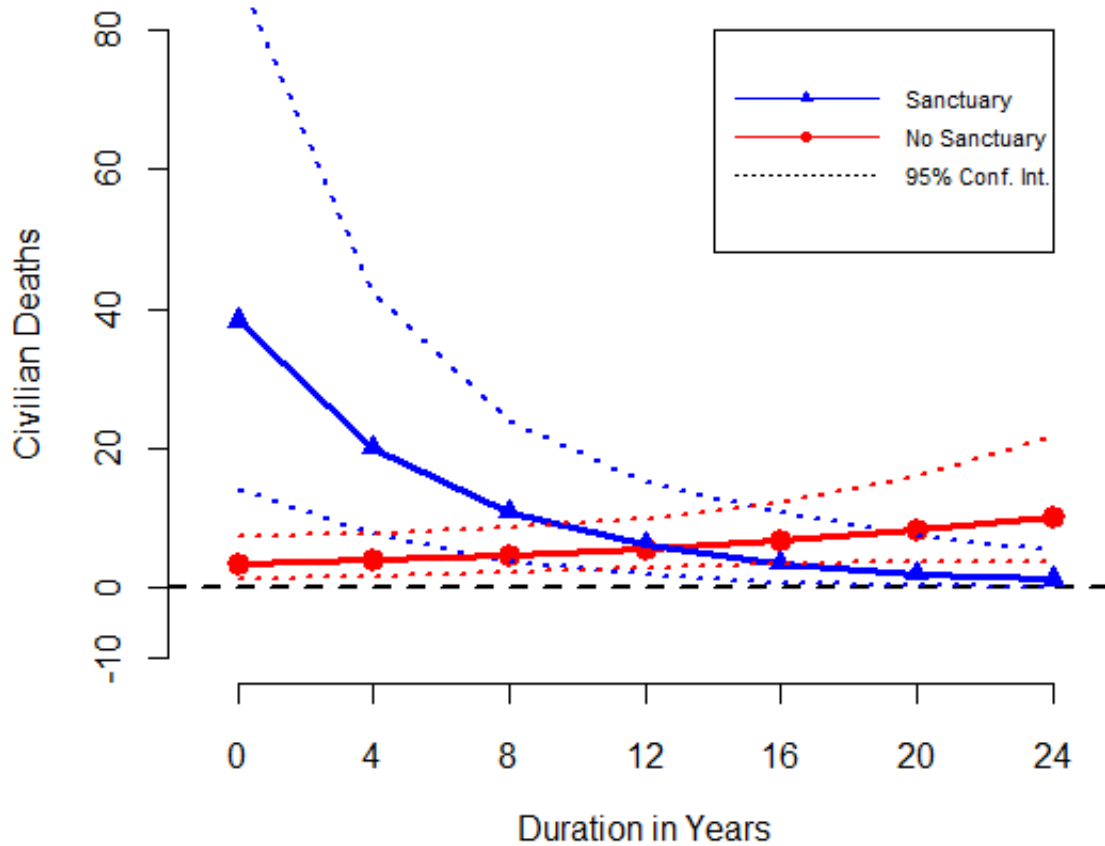


Figure 1: Expected Count of Civilian Deaths, With Sanctuary-Duration Interaction

fade with time as a rebel group learns of the detrimental consequences of excessive violence against civilian populations. While not statistically significantly different than rebel groups without sanctuary, rebels with sanctuary in conflicts that last beyond a dozen years are expected to commit lower levels of violence overall.

In all models, rebel fighting capacity and war retain a great deal of the power in explaining variation in rebel victimization of civilian populations, maintaining relatively large positive coefficients with statistical significance at the 99 percent confidence level in all specifications. The fighting capacity finding is at odds with recent literature on

civilian victimization and relative capacity. Wood (2010) suggests that as groups get stronger, they should commit less violence on civilians because they have more strategies available for cooperation.³ He later found little to support this conclusion when using a ratio of troop levels in a study looking at the source of rebel capabilities (Wood, 2014a). Wood (2014a) did note in this later study, however, that upon replacing the troop ratio with the NSA binary utilized in this study he found a consistently positive and statistically significant relationship. The results for the war binary are consistent with the expectation that as conflicts get worse and rebels suffer greater losses, they will target civilians at a higher rate to raise costs for the regime and to replenish depleted resources (Hultman, 2007; Wood, 2014b).

Contrary to the expectation that popular support should lower a rebel group's need to use violence on civilian populations, the mobilization capacity coefficient is actually positive across the various model specifications, though it is relatively small and fails to reach common levels of statistical significance. This suggests that other factors like the strategic dynamic between rebels and the government may play a larger part in rebel strategy selection than popular support.

The coefficient for territorial control is negative across all models, but only reaches significance at the 90 percent confidence level in Model 4. The direction of these

³ Two outliers were removed and the models were rerun to test for outsized influence. The results are largely the same with a few exceptions. See Appendix C for more details and a table with results.

coefficients is consistent with previous literature (Kalyvas, 2006; Wood, 2010 & 2014a; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014), but the lack of significance across the models perhaps suggests that a simple binary for effective territorial control somewhere within the conflict space may be insufficiently granular to capture the expected effects of increased control resulting in lower levels of civilian victimization.

The population of a state and the presence of lootable resources both demonstrate consistently positive relationships with rebel violence on civilian populations, with the coefficients reaching common levels of statistical significance in all models. The population coefficient reached significance at the 95 percent confidence level in all Models except 3 and 6, which reach 90 and 99 percent confidence levels, respectively. These results provide strong support for the logic that higher populations provide more opportunities for violence, and thus greater victimization. Loot is significant at the 99 percent confidence level for Models 3 to 5, and at the 95 percent confidence level in Model 6. The positive and relatively large coefficient for lootable resources conforms with expectations in other recent literature (Weinstein, 2007), and suggest that this phenomenon retains considerable power in describing levels of violence.

The coefficient for rebel violence in the previous year is close to zero in all models, is negative for Models 2 through 6, and fails to reach common levels of statistical significance in any specification. This finding indicates that rebel strategy

selection is better explained by other factors than rebel behavior in the previous year. This finding also contradicts the directional relationships demonstrated in some previous literature (Wood, 2010 & 2014b), but is consistent with other studies that have found no statistically significant relationship with victimization for this variable (Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014; Wood, 2014a).

Government violence on civilians demonstrated a small positive relationship with rebel violence and reached statistical significance at the 90 percent confidence level in both Model 5 and 6. This finding is congruent with previous studies (Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014; Wood, 2014a; Wood and Kathman, 2015; Wood and Sullivan, 2015), and supports the logic that government violence decreases the relative costs of a violent strategy for rebels.

Turning to two state specific variables, I find relationships consistent with previous literature. The coefficient for the regime variable was relatively small and positive across all six models, but only reached statistical significance at the 90 percent confidence level in Models 1 and 2, and the 95 percent confidence level in Model 5. The direction of the relationship is consistent with the expectation that democracies are more susceptible to violence against civilians as they are more responsive to civilian preferences (Wood, 2010; Hultman, 2012). The coefficient for the economic capacity of a state, as measured by GDP per capita, produced a negative coefficient in all six models,

but failed to reach common levels of statistical significance. While not significant, the direction of the relationship is consistent with previous work (Wood, 2010).

The ethnic conflict binary coefficient was negative in both Model 5 and 6, but failed to reach common levels of statistical significance. This finding contradicts the expected directional relationship, and suggests that a binary variable may not adequately capture the complexities inherent in ethnic conflicts. Wood's (2014a) statistically significant findings utilized the ethnic fractionalization variable, which may more appropriately measure ethnic tensions. The secessionist conflict variable, however, produced negative coefficients that were statistically significant at the 99 percent level in both models. This suggests that rebel groups that seek to separate from the state place a priority on maintaining legitimacy with the population they hope to eventually govern.

Finally, foreign support has traditionally been the variable within which sanctuary has been buried in past studies. In Models 3 through 6 the foreign support variable is positive, but only reaches statistical significance at the 90 percent confidence level in Model 6 and the 95 percent confidence level in Model 4. Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014) note that sponsor state political structures and commitment to human rights can moderate the effects of foreign support on rebel victimization of civilians. It is quite possible that the effects of foreign support are hidden in this model. In fact, Wood (2014a) similarly found no statistical relationship for external support in his initial

statistical models, but notes that upon dropping all cases with democratic sponsors the coefficients were positive and statistically significant.

To further probe the relationship between foreign sanctuary and other forms of foreign support, I created two new specifications of Model 6. The results for both new models and Model 6 are in Table 2, below. The first, Model 6a, dropped sanctuary and the interaction term, and retained the same foreign support variable. The second, Model 6b, also drops the interaction but includes a new binary for foreign support that includes both sanctuary and other forms of support. In both Models 6a and 6b, the coefficients for foreign support are both positive and statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence levels. Upon returning sanctuary to its position as an independent variable, the predictive power of foreign support drops considerably and the sanctuary coefficient becomes larger and statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level. This suggests that foreign sanctuary may have been driving much of the variation in previous work on sponsorship and mobilization capacity (Wood, 2014a).

Undoubtedly, every loss of civilian life in a conflict is tragic. The marginal effect of foreign sanctuary on the expected count of civilian deaths, however, is relatively small. Referring back to Figure 1, though, the difference in the expected count of civilian deaths as a consequence of rebel violence is potentially large enough to raise the yearly observation in a conflict above the UCDP threshold of 25. This is particularly relevant

Table 2: Quasi-Poisson Regression Results for Rebel One-Sided Violence, Sanctuary Versus Support

	<i>Rebel one-sided violence:</i>		
	Model 6a	Model 6b	Model 6
Sanctuary			2.434*** (0.589)
Mobilization Capacity	0.397 (0.395)	0.402 (0.390)	0.185 (0.274)
Territorial Control	0.051 (0.565)	0.084 (0.564)	-0.447 (0.309)
Fighting Capacity	1.776*** (0.332)	1.881*** (0.339)	2.092*** (0.382)
War	1.915*** (0.324)	1.863*** (0.303)	2.070*** (0.316)
Population _{ln(t-1)}	0.464* (0.256)	0.458* (0.254)	0.602*** (0.227)
Rebel Violence _(t-1)	0.00001 (0.00004)	0.00001 (0.00004)	-0.00002 (0.00003)
GDPpc _(t-1)	-0.00002 (0.00004)	-0.00002 (0.00004)	-0.00004 (0.00003)
Regime	0.057 (0.036)	0.066* (0.037)	0.062 (0.040)
Duration	-0.011 (0.025)	-0.004 (0.022)	0.047*** (0.018)
Sanctuary*Duration			-0.207*** (0.069)
Foreign Support _(NoSanct)	0.937*** (0.354)		0.413* (0.247)
Foreign Support _(w/Sanct)		1.187*** (0.376)	
Loot	1.175** (0.485)	1.183** (0.488)	1.051** (0.420)
Government Violence	0.00000* (0.00000)	0.00000* (0.00000)	0.00000* (0.00000)
Ethnic Conflict	0.524 (0.478)	0.425 (0.525)	-0.041 (0.700)
Secessionist Conflict	-1.639** (0.805)	-1.573** (0.755)	-1.263*** (0.478)
Constant	-6.198 (5.089)	-6.392 (5.120)	-9.100** (4.444)
Observations	748	748	748

Note: Coefficients with robust standard errors clustered on the dyad in parentheses.
* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

when considering that 75 percent of all cases have an observation of about 42 civilian deaths or fewer.⁴ And, as noted in Table 1, the coefficient for foreign sanctuary is nearly as large or larger than that of any other variable. That being said, the marginal effect of sanctuary declines as the duration of the conflict progresses, adding fewer and fewer additional deaths to the total with each passing year. According to the results of my study, greater rebel capacity for violence and more intense conflicts likely drive a large portion of variation in rebel violence on civilian populations.

⁴ This number is based on the summary statistics for the sample used in Model 6. See Appendix A.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

Recent studies in the civil war literature have argued that the relative capabilities of rebel groups and the source thereof play an important role in rebel strategy selection for interacting with civilian populations (Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2010 & 2014a; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014). Some of this literature has put an emphasis on the importance of the opportunities for violence provided to rebel groups by the environment and their willingness to select relatively more violent strategies based on the incentives or disincentives created by reliance on locals. This paper bridges these two literatures with the introduction of international borders as a mechanism for shaping both the strategic environment within which rebel groups operate and their willingness to select violent tactics for interacting with civilian populations.

I argue that foreign sanctuary necessarily constrains rebel strategies by physically separating them from local populations across international borders. This reduces rebel ability to engage in cooperative relations with noncombatants and makes relatively more expedient violent strategies a larger portion of the set available for selection. Additionally, foreign sanctuary reduces the costs of victimizing locals by protecting rebels from state reprisals resulting from subsequent civilian cooperation. This reduced cost makes rebels relatively more willing to select violent strategies to get at the resources still available for extraction within the population. Since violence is by nature destructive, I further argue that the effect of foreign sanctuary should moderate

over time as rebels learn the counterproductive nature of violence against civilians when trying to win legitimacy as a political actor.

While it is hard to determine true causality due to potential issues of endogeneity, my findings provide promising support for the hypothesized relationships. The results suggest that rebel use of a foreign sanctuary is more powerful in explaining the variation in rebel one-sided violence levels than previously researched phenomena such as the source of rebel capacity (e.g., loot or foreign support) or other factors that influence rebel relationships with civilians (e.g., mobilization capacity or territorial control). This paper provides potentially important insights into the process through which rebels make decisions to victimize civilians. Certainly, more can be learned. Further work should include effort to unravel the complexities and conditionality of the effects of foreign sanctuary on rebel violence. For example, do the relationships between rebels and the states providing sanctuary reflect the same principal-agent monitoring and sanctioning illustrated by Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood (2014) in their study of foreign support? And, do rebel groups treat civilians within the sanctuary state differently than those in the target state? Further, each of the relatively blunt binary variables used in this study also provide robust opportunities for further work in identifying why we still see such variation in civilian victimization.

These findings also have policy implications around the world as countries seek to manage roiling intrastate conflicts. As noted above, conflicts like the Syrian civil war

are of interest to neighboring states and frequently become internationalized as these actors seek to influence the course and outcomes of these armed struggles. Before offering foreign sanctuary to rebel groups, states must consider the humanitarian impact such a decision can potentially have. Similarly, the regular policy conversations about establishing safe-havens in places like Syria raise the question about how such actions might influence rebel strategy selection, and whether the humanitarian risks are worth the potential rewards. Countries with extensive diplomatic influence, like the United States, may wish to expend some diplomatic capital in trying to prevent others from willfully providing sanctuary to rebel groups, or at least to encourage them to take an active role in monitoring rebel strategy towards noncombatants.

Appendix A

Table 3: Summary Statistics for Data Used in Model 6

	N	Minimum	1 st Quartile	Median	Mean	3 rd Quartile	Maximum	St. Dev.
Rebel OSV	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	111.03	42.25	30110.00	1134.73
Sanctuary	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.00	1.00	0.41
Mobilization Capacity	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.47	1.00	1.00	0.50
Territorial Control	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	1.00	1.00	0.47
Fighting Capacity	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.27	1.00	1.00	0.45
War	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.00	1.00	0.37
Population _{ln(t-1)}	748	13.16	15.96	17.03	17.18	17.97	20.85	1.54
Rebel OSV _(t-1)	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.26	31.25	30110.00	1124.64
GDPpc _(t-1)	748	192.65	874.01	1786.05	3892.85	3323.17	46208.62	6225.70
Regime	748	-9.00	-5.00	0.00	0.83	6.00	10.00	5.97
Duration	748	0.00	1.00	3.00	5.77	9.00	39.00	7.07
Foreign Support	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.42	1.00	1.00	0.49
Loot	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40	1.00	1.00	0.49
Government OSV	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	786.29	75.25	500000.00	18281.62
Ethnic Conflict	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	1.00	0.22
Secessionist Conflict	748	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	1.00	1.00	0.47

Table 4: Summary Statistics for Data Used in Model 6, Cases of Sanctuary

	N	Minimum	1 st Quartile	Median	Mean	3 rd Quartile	Maximum	St. Dev.
Rebel OSV	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	355.38	105.75	30110.00	2453.75
Mobilization Capacity	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.46	1.00	1.00	0.50
Territorial Control	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.26	1.00	1.00	0.44
Fighting Capacity	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34	1.00	1.00	0.48
War	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.28	1.00	1.00	0.45
Population _{ln(t-1)}	156	14.69	15.68	16.65	16.71	17.64	20.85	1.41
Rebel OSV _(t-1)	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	281.23	68.00	30110.00	2413.36
GDPpc _(t-1)	156	220.96	682.75	1306.39	4323.28	2482.37	35412.48	7342.54
Regime	156	-9.00	-7.00	-2.00	-1.00	6.00	10.00	5.94
Duration	156	0.00	1.00	3.00	4.73	8.00	19.00	5.13
Foreign Support	156	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.71	1.00	1.00	0.45
Loot	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.35	1.00	1.00	0.48
Government OSV	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	3383.19	154.25	500000.00	40020.35
Ethnic Conflict	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	1.00	0.22
Secessionist Conflict	156	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.00	1.00	0.43

Table 5: Summary Statistics for Data Used in Model 6, Cases of No Sanctuary

	N	Minimum	1 st Quartile	Median	Mean	3 rd Quartile	Maximum	St. Dev.
Rebel OSV	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	46.64	30.25	2322.00	168.78
Mobilization Capacity	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.47	1.00	1.00	0.50
Territorial Control	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36	1.00	1.00	0.48
Fighting Capacity	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.26	1.00	1.00	0.44
War	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.00	1.00	0.35
Population _{ln(t-1)}	592	13.16	16.02	17.19	17.31	18.08	20.85	1.55
Rebel OSV _(t-1)	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	52.57	0.00	3580.00	245.41
GDPpc _(t-1)	592	192.65	930.31	1932.92	3779.42	3379.47	46208.62	5898.21
Regime	592	-9.00	-4.00	1.00	1.31	7.00	10.00	5.89
Duration	592	0.00	1.00	3.00	6.05	9.00	39.00	7.48
Foreign Support	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.35	1.00	1.00	0.48
Loot	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	1.00	1.00	0.49
Government OSV	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	101.97	56.00	5801.00	365.13
Ethnic Conflict	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	1.00	0.22
Secessionist Conflict	592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.37	1.00	1.00	0.48

Appendix B

Variance inflation factors (VIF) were used to check for issues of multicollinearity.

Although the literature disagrees about the appropriate VIF threshold, the consensus seems to be between five and ten (Neter, Wasserman, and Kutner, 1989; Rogerson, 2001).

As noted in Table 6, all values are well below 5.

Table 6: Variance Inflation Factors

	Model 1 VIF	Model 2 VIF	Model 3 VIF	Model 4 VIF	Model 5 VIF	Model 6 VIF
Sanctuary	1.213	1.862	1.498	1.996	1.525	2.025
Mobilization Capacity	2.378	2.463	2.339	2.428	2.222	2.258
Territorial Control	2.499	2.535	2.336	2.586	2.155	2.522
Fighting Capacity	1.743	2.257	1.786	2.263	2.093	2.487
War	1.222	1.334	1.411	1.360	1.516	1.466
Population _{ln(t-1)}	1.728	1.993	2.215	2.355	2.233	2.360
Rebel OSV _(t-1)	1.142	1.141	1.176	1.154	1.172	1.160
GDPpc _(t-1)	1.314	1.293	1.457	1.475	1.724	1.733
Regime	2.094	2.355	2.195	2.584	2.408	2.682
Duration		2.020	1.344	2.324	1.512	2.437
Sanctuary*Duration		1.480		1.629		1.800
Foreign Support			1.649	1.697	1.888	2.105
Loot			1.148	1.212	1.203	1.277
Government Violence					1.997	1.946
Ethnic Conflict					2.151	2.246
Secessionist Conflict					1.534	1.651

Appendix C

An outlier test was conducted in R and two cases were removed as a result of the test:

AFDL from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1996: 30,110 civilian deaths; FPR

from Rwanda in 1994: 992 civilian deaths. The results are below in Table 7. Findings

relative to hypotheses are essentially unchanged. The size and significance of several

controls have changed.

Table 7: Quasi-Poisson Regression Results for Rebel One-Sided Violence, Without Outliers

	<i>Rebel one-sided violence:</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Sanctuary	2.059*** (0.734)	3.070*** (0.862)	1.971*** (0.675)	2.717*** (0.700)	2.096*** (0.452)	2.669*** (0.462)
Mobilization Capacity	0.314 (0.330)	0.095 (0.305)	0.182 (0.290)	0.283 (0.303)	0.350 (0.287)	0.390 (0.302)
Territorial Control	-0.173 (0.412)	-0.244 (0.399)	-0.247 (0.354)	-0.531 (0.327)	-0.205 (0.318)	-0.564* (0.325)
Fighting Capacity	2.639*** (0.724)	2.586*** (0.572)	2.106*** (0.489)	2.406*** (0.519)	2.238*** (0.410)	2.377*** (0.399)
War	1.907*** (0.373)	2.026*** (0.336)	1.936*** (0.418)	2.000*** (0.334)	1.627*** (0.268)	1.695*** (0.264)
Population _{ln(t-1)}	0.347** (0.152)	0.472** (0.192)	0.492* (0.265)	0.539** (0.228)	0.528*** (0.167)	0.537*** (0.153)
Rebel Violence _(t-1)	0.0004** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.0003 (0.0002)	0.0004* (0.0002)	0.0005*** (0.0001)	0.001*** (0.0001)
GDPpc _(t-1)	-0.00003 (0.0001)	-0.00003 (0.00004)	-0.00003 (0.0001)	-0.00003 (0.00004)	-0.00003 (0.00002)	-0.00002 (0.00002)
Regime	0.092 (0.057)	0.082 (0.053)	0.053 (0.032)	0.035 (0.036)	0.115*** (0.040)	0.073* (0.037)
Duration		0.051*** (0.018)	-0.067 (0.056)	0.067*** (0.022)	-0.001 (0.018)	0.071*** (0.018)
Sanctuary*Duration		-0.276*** (0.106)		-0.267*** (0.089)		-0.199*** (0.047)
Foreign Support			0.355 (0.288)	0.541* (0.296)	-0.068 (0.275)	0.137 (0.261)
Loot			1.121*** (0.388)	1.006** (0.404)	0.771*** (0.281)	0.642** (0.280)
Government Violence					0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
Ethnic Conflict					-0.497 (0.707)	-0.892 (0.888)
Secessionist Conflict					-1.610*** (0.490)	-0.975*** (0.366)
Constant	-4.639 (3.474)	-6.921* (3.965)	-7.228 (5.297)	-8.786* (4.782)	-7.676** (3.216)	-8.284*** (2.941)
Observations	756	756	755	755	746	746

Note: Coefficients with robust standard errors clustered on the dyad in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

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