

**International System and Technologies of Rebellion:
How the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict**

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Recent research on civil wars finds that the end of the Cold War had no impact on internal conflict. By disaggregating civil wars on the basis of their technology of rebellion (irregular, conventional, and symmetric non-conventional), we reach a different conclusion: we identify a massive decline of irregular wars or insurgencies following the end of the Cold War, something that amounts to a radical transformation of civil war. This shift is very robust to multivariate analysis. Our theoretical account highlights the effect of shifting superpower support for states and rebels on the residual capacity of states. This paper brings the international system back into the study of internal conflict, underlines the relevance of warfare for the study of civil wars, and demonstrates that rather than being a plastic and modular technology of rebellion, insurgency is a historically contingent political phenomenon that has already peaked.

Key Words: civil war; Cold War; insurgency; rebellion; irregular war; guerrilla war; warfare

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1. Introduction

In 1975, most ongoing civil wars were located in Asia; all but one, were guerrilla wars—contests entailing an asymmetric rebel challenge launched from the country’s rural periphery. In 1993, by contrast, most ongoing civil wars were located in Sub-Saharan Africa and less than half were guerrilla wars. Much more common were conventional wars using heavy armor and artillery in a landscape dominated by trenches, and “primitive” wars between poorly armed and trained militias. We argue that this dual geographic and military shift is symptomatic of a broader transformation of internal conflict—the result of a major structural shift in the international system: the end of the Cold War. This transformation has been overlooked because the literature on civil wars has tended to neglect the international system and has treated civil wars as a homogeneous phenomenon. We show that bringing the Cold War back into the analysis of civil wars is critical for understanding the evolution and transformation of internal conflict.

We identify the “technology of rebellion” as a key causal pathway in this process of change. A central assumption in the literature is that civil war onset is a function of structural factors that facilitate insurgency, a technology that can be deployed to serve all kinds of political ends (Fearon and Laitin 2003:75). We show that insurgency (or irregular war) is neither the only technology available to rebels, nor is it as time-invariant and plastic as assumed. In contrast, it is contingent on the international system broadly defined. We identify two additional technologies of rebellion: conventional warfare and symmetric-non conventional warfare (SNC). While insurgency is an instance of asymmetric warfare, both conventional and SNC warfare are forms of symmetric warfare—the former entailing higher levels of military technology and the latter lower levels. We find that while irregular warfare is the dominant technology of rebellion between 1944 and 2004, it is just barely so: it is used only in 53% of all civil wars. Furthermore, this conceals a major underlying transformation: 65% of all civil wars fought during the Cold War were irregular wars compared to just 26% of those fought after 1991.¹ In other words, the overlap of civil war and insurgency posited by the literature turns out to be a Cold War phenomenon. Furthermore, insurgency appears to be well past its prime.

How to explain this transformation? The Cold War raised the capacity of both states and rebels worldwide via superpower economic and military aid; yet, it ultimately benefited rebels more than states,

¹ Like most crossnational research on civil wars, we focus on the post-1944 period. The pre-1944 period includes a significant number of irregular wars, many of which were wars of colonial conquest pitting modern against “primitive armies,” rather than civil wars (Lyall and Wilson 2009; Arreguin-Toft 2005).

a result of the rise and diffusion of a particularly robust version of the technology of insurgency. The end of the Cold War corroded this technology and lowered rebel capacity worldwide, leading to two outcomes. On the one hand, civil peace became more likely in states that had been vulnerable to insurgency during the Cold War and on the other, civil war became more likely in residually weak states that lost superpower support after its end; these states were now likely to experience symmetric non-conventional wars. Aside from these two outcomes which are directly related to the structural shift in the international system, we point to an additional effect of the end of the Cold War: the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, which produced a steep, yet temporary, increase in the likelihood of conventional wars.

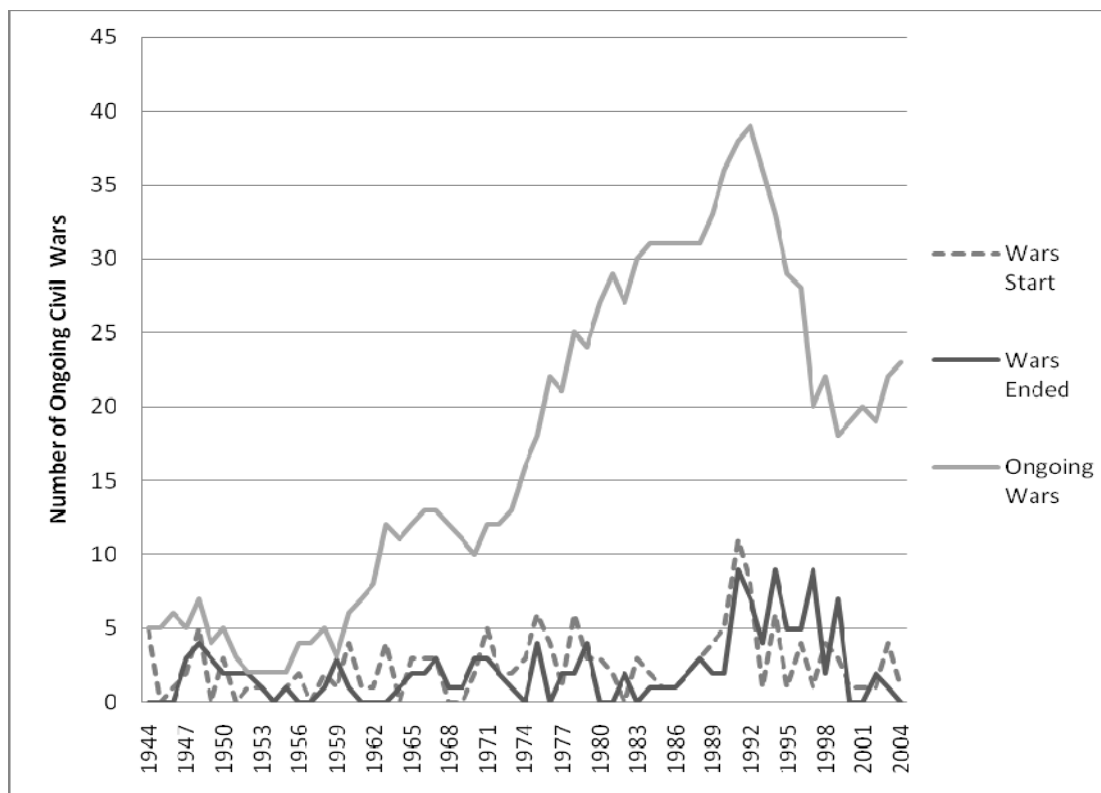
Our contribution is four-fold. First, we specify the impact of the Cold War (and its demise) on civil wars; we specify and isolate a key pathway and adduce additional implications about the temporal and spatial distribution of different types of civil wars. This is the first systematic account of the transformation of internal conflict. Second, we bring the international system back into the study of internal conflict by showing how system polarity impacts internal conflict; we show the relevance of the technology of rebellion and demonstrate that rather than being a plastic and modular technology that can be used by anyone, anywhere, anytime, insurgency is a historically contingent political phenomenon; we suggest that a full understanding of civil war onset requires a focus on both rebel and state capacity, rather than just the latter—and on the type of interaction between the two; and we treat civil war as an evolving and dynamic phenomenon which should be sensitive to historical trends. Third, we join the move toward theoretical and empirical disaggregation as a way of uncovering causal mechanisms and effects likely to be obscured in more aggregate research designs. Lastly, we suggest that policy makers should be aware of the variation in technologies of rebellion and the transformation of internal conflict after the end of the Cold War, especially in planning mediation, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

The paper is organized as follows: in the next section, we present the main empirical trends and puzzles and point to the inconclusive and contradictory views about the effect of the end of the Cold War on internal conflict. In section 3, we discuss the technologies of rebellion. In section 4, we show how the Cold War is connected to civil war onset via the pathway of technologies of rebellion. In section 5, we derive empirical predictions about the impact of the end of the Cold War, which we proceed to test in section 6. We conclude with a discussion of theoretical and policy implications.

2. Puzzles and Trends

Figure 1 tracks the total number of civil war onsets, terminations, and ongoing wars per year for the period 1944-2004.

Figure 1. Civil Wars Starting, Ending and Ongoing (1944-2004)



Ongoing civil wars increased steadily after the late 1950s and peaked in the early 1990s; civil war onsets peaked as well in 1991.² Immediately afterwards, however, the rate of civil war onsets declined,³ while the rate of terminations went up. These two trends converged to produce a significant decline of ongoing civil wars in the post-Cold War period. Analysts proceeded to interpret these patterns in three

² We rely on the standard definition of civil wars and the standard datasets extended up to 2004 (Sambanis 2001, Fearon and Laitin 2003). Civil wars are defined by the following criteria: 1) more than 1,000 war-related deaths during the entire war and in at least one single year of the war, 2) the war challenged the sovereignty of an internationally recognized state, 3) it occurred within the territory of that state, 4) the state was one of the principal combatants, 5) the rebels were able to mount an organized military opposition to the state (Sambanis 2001).

³ Although our data extend until 2004, the decline in the trend of civil war onsets has not been reversed (Harbom and Wallensteen 2007); in 2007 only four civil wars were active worldwide (Harbom, Melander and Wallensteen 2008).

distinct ways: by extrapolating short-term trends; by developing theoretical conjectures; and by analyzing long-term crossnational data.

Some analysts interpreted and extrapolated short-terms trends—an exercise that is highly sensitive to the timing of observations. The first and most immediate reaction to the initial spike of civil war onsets immediately after the end of the Cold War was that the new era spelled a “coming anarchy,” through the eruption of “new wars” (Kaldor 1999; Kaplan 1994). This interpretation was based on a handful of highly visible cases during the first post-Cold War period and was reinforced by reactions at the other end of the spectrum, when hopes that the end of the Cold War would lead to an outburst of international intervention were dashed and the “euphoria of the early 1990s” gave way to “frustration” and “disillusionment in mid-1990s” (Brown 1996:11). Despite the fact that the trend on which this argument was built proved short-lived, and later reversed itself, this view remains alive in the public sphere.⁴

Following this first wave of doomsday predictions, the emergence of a seemingly more robust downward trend in both civil war onsets and ongoing civil wars led to renewed sensitivity about a possible post-Cold War effect (Cramer 2007:53). Researchers associated with the Human Security Centre argued that this was an “extraordinary and counterintuitive improvement in global security.” They observed that by 2003 there were 40 percent fewer conflicts compared to 1992, and that the deadliest conflicts (those with 1,000 or more battle-deaths) had fallen by some 80 percent. They added that the end of the Cold War was the single most critical factor in this decline: because the two superpowers ended their interest in “proxy wars” in the developing world, the United Nations, along with other international agencies, donor governments and nongovernmental organizations, were free to play a new global security role that entailed active diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peacemaking, thus preventing new conflicts from taking place and brokering peace agreements to end those that had already erupted (Human Security Centre 2005). In other words, “the superpower military advisers moved out, and the Blue Helmets moved in” (Lacina 2004:192). As stated above, the divergence between these two interpretations is largely a function of the timing of their observations; the post-Cold War era appeared to be a disaster in 1992 but struck observers as a clear improvement by 2005.

⁴ Indeed, Kaplan persists. Writing recently about piracy in Somalia, he argued that “like insurgencies on land,” piracy “tends to increase in the lulls between conflicts among great states or empires. With the Soviet Union and its client states in Africa no longer in existence, and American influence in the third world at an ebb, irregular warfare both on land and at sea has erupted, and will probably be with us until the rise of new empires or their equivalents (Kaplan 2009:9).

The theorization of the post-Cold War effect was undertaken primarily by IR scholars. In contrast to students of civil wars who focused on domestic structural characteristics,⁵ they have been primarily concerned about interstate rather than intrastate conflict—either trying to understand the effects of shifts in system polarity on interstate conflict and global power relations (Goldgeier and McFaul 1992; Mearsheimer 1992), or their implications for theories of international relations (Lebow 1994). At the same time, many scholars turned their attention to domestic ethnic conflict (Brown 1996; Lake and Rothchild 1996); some connected the resurgence of nationalism to the end of the Cold War (Ellingsen 2000; Laidi 1994), while others challenged this connection (Ayres 2000).

It is possible to distinguish two theoretical priors in the theoretical literature: an optimistic one (the “conflict-suppression” school), arguing that the end of the Cold War heralded a more peaceful world and a pessimistic one (the “conflict-exacerbation” school), predicting mayhem across the globe. Perhaps the single most influential theoretical analysis linking the end of the Cold War to civil war is Huntington’s (1993) “clash of civilization” thesis. Huntington sought to formulate a “post-Cold War paradigm,” one that predicted the intensification of global conflict across “civilizational” lines, including more civil wars in countries straddling those civilizational divides. His theory, undoubtedly influenced by the spike of civil wars at the time of its formulation, provided a theoretical foundation for the alarmist predictions of the immediate post-Cold War. Nevertheless, both optimists and pessimists agreed that the end of the Cold War was bound to have important and uniform effects, though they differed about their direction (Stein and Lobell 1997:102).

Any assessment of the effects of the end of the Cold War requires an understanding of how the Cold War itself shaped internal conflict. This was a global phenomenon that dominated international politics after the end of the Second World War and until the collapse of the Soviet block and the Soviet Union in 1989-1991 (Hironaka 2005; Westad 2005; Gaddis 1997).⁶ A common and uncontroversial understanding of the connection between the Cold War and internal conflict links bipolarity and “proxy wars.” Given the stakes of a direct clash, the USA and the Soviet Union turned conflicts in the developing world into “proxy wars” so as to gain an advantage over their rival (Mott 2001; Gaddis 1997; Westad 1992). In other words, civil wars were the frontlines of the Cold War—its “hot wars.” The predictions of this account about the prospects for civil peace after the end of the Cold War are

⁵ A notable, but almost unique exception is Hironaka (2005), who examined the effects of the Cold War on the duration, rather than onset, of civil wars.

⁶ In fact, the origins of the Cold War can be located the midst of the Second World War, as mistrust between the USA and Britain on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other, grew while military clashes between communist and anticommunist factions were taking place in several countries.

indeterminate (Stein and Lobell 1997). Civil wars could decrease with the end of the superpower competition that fed them in the first place; but they could also be unaffected by it, or even explode, absent the “disciplining” effect of the two superpowers on the myriad of underlying conflicts.

To complicate matters, the end of the Cold War was accompanied by a number of related processes, such as the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and the formation of new states with contested boundaries, the eruption of ethnic conflicts, the inflow of cheap weapons from the former Soviet republics, the end of a global ideological struggle, and the weakening of client states following the reduction or withdrawal of superpower support. Some of these processes were contingent on the way the Cold War ended, while others were structural, related to the end of bipolarity. In fact, the complex and simultaneous occurrence of many, often contradictory, processes (Stein and Lobell 1997; Wallensteen and Axell 1993), led many seasoned observers to recommend caution in predictions. For instance, Huntington (1993:187) noted that global politics had become too complex to be stuffed into the two pigeon-holes of the Cold War era, while Jervis (1994:769-770) remarked that the post-Cold War world would be, structurally and cognitively, more complex than the previous era. Stein and Lobell (1997) highlighted a variable set of possible outcomes across geographical regions depending on the interaction of several factors, including the role of superpowers in stoking or reducing conflict during the Cold War, the depth of the Cold War, and the regional penetration of superpowers. These complexities help explain why despite the multitude of theoretical conjectures, the impact of the end of the Cold War on internal conflict did not become the object of systematic investigation.

Lastly, the crossnational literature on civil war onset was both more systematic and less theoretical: it did include the Cold War in the mix of variables examined, but did not theorize it. Analysts reached the conclusion that the end of the Cold War had no impact on the rate of civil war onsets and left it at that. Collier et al. (2003:96-98) reported no post-Cold War net effect on the overall risk of civil war onset; Fearon and Laitin (2003:77-8) failed to come up with any significant effect and concluded that “the prevalence of civil war in the 1990s was *not* due to the end of the Cold War and associated changes in the international system” and that states “have been subject to a more or less constant risk of violent civil conflict over the period.” Similar results were reported by Sambanis (2004) and Jung, Schlichte, and Seigelberg (2000:171) who concluded that the end of the Cold War was simply “no epochal shift.” Unlike other crossnational findings that generated considerable controversy (e.g. the effect of natural resources or ethnic fragmentation), the Cold War “non-effect” was the object of a broad consensus and generated no discussion.

Yet, this non-effect is puzzling. On the one hand, the end of the Cold War was associated with a regional outbreak of civil wars, especially in Eurasia (Zürcher 2007; Evangelista 1996) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Stedman 1996); at the same time, regional experts noticed a surprising reduction of civil wars in

Latin America (Chernick 1996; Castañeda 1993) and Southeast Asia (Findlay 1996). On the other hand, many seemingly intractable civil wars terminated with the end of the Cold War (Kanet 2006; Hironaka 2005). These developments are hard to explain outside the framework of the Cold War. If anything, the expectation just before the fall of the Berlin Wall was that “active Soviet and surrogate support of terrorist organizations, revolutionary insurgencies, and political destabilization campaigns is likely to continue at existing levels and contribute the LIC [low intensity conflict] challenges to the United States” (Shultz et al. 1989: xiii). Could it be that the high level of aggregation of crossnational studies missed these effects? Would a more explicit theorization of the Cold War uncover different dynamics? We argue that the absence of evidence of a Cold War effect is no evidence of absence. This effect can be best apprehended by identifying a specific pathway: technologies of rebellion.

3. Technologies of Rebellion

We begin by specifying how the Cold War might have affected civil wars. Moving beyond proxy wars, our starting point is that the Cold War raised the capacity of states worldwide—but it also had the same impact on rebel capacity. The two superpowers proceeded to infuse enormous military and economic assistance into allied (or client) states (Westad 2005)—but they also supported a wide range of rebel movements throughout the developing world. Although the United States supported some rebel movements, such as the UNITA in Angola or the contras in Nicaragua, the Soviet Union was much more likely to enter into alliances with Third World revolutionary movements, which were dominated by Marxist political groups (Westad 1992:461).

Our core argument is that during the Cold War, the rise in rebel capacity outpaced that of state capacity, leading to an eruption of civil wars that relied on the technology of insurgency or irregular war. More specifically, we argue that radical entrepreneurs with the support of the Soviet Union and its allies turned the time-honored guerrilla warfare into a much improved technology of rebellion which we call robust insurgency. Understanding the transformation of guerrilla warfare into robust insurgency and tracing its implications calls for a discussion of technologies of rebellion in civil war.

When most people in the United States speak of “civil war,” they automatically think of the American Civil War. This brings up images of well organized, uniformed armies marching in ordered fashion while artillery shells explode around them. These images are likely to be very different from those recalled by Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan veterans, who are likely to evoke an invisible foe avoiding direct contact while constantly ambushing them or poker-faced civilians with inscrutable loyalties. In fact, these veterans are likely to refer to “insurgencies” rather than civil wars. At the same time, many journalists, development workers, and humanitarian volunteers working in Africa today will probably

point to an altogether different experience of civil conflict, one populated by greedy militias preying on a defenseless civilian population in a context characterized by collapsed or predatory states.

These three vignettes are not mutually exclusive; rather, they suggest that the phenomenon we describe as civil war conceals considerable heterogeneity. Yet, most crossnational studies approach civil war as a homogeneous phenomenon, at least in the post-1945 period. This assumption has been challenged by recent research that disaggregates civil wars, primarily around the dimension of ethnicity (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009; Sambanis 2001; Fearon 2004).⁷ Indeed, despite its rich contribution to the study of war (e.g. Bellamy 1990), the analysis of warfare has been surprisingly absent from the civil wars literature.

We conceptualize the technology of rebellion as the joint military capacity of states and rebels engaged in armed conflict. Drawing on a typology by Kalyvas (2005), we distinguish between three technologies of rebellion in civil war, based on two dimensions at the outset of a civil war:⁸ the military capacity of states and that of rebels (Table 1). Conventional civil war takes place when the military capacity of states and rebels is matched at a high level; irregular civil war emerges when the military capacity of the rebels is low vis-à-vis the state; symmetric non-conventional war is observed when the capacity of states and rebels is matched at a low level. The fourth cell, where the capacity of the rebels outstrips the state's, effectively describes successful military coups rather than civil wars.

⁷Sambanis (2001) distinguishes between ethnic and non-ethnic wars; Wimmer, Cederman, and Min (2009) point to three types of ethnic war based on distinct causal mechanisms: a high degree of political exclusion along ethnic lines; competition between ethnic elites in power; and the level of state cohesion; and Fearon (2004) distinguishes five types of civil wars based on duration: three types of brief civil wars (those arising from military coups and popular uprisings, anticolonial wars, and those emerging from the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) and one type of long civil war (peripheral insurgencies relying on guerrilla warfare, made of two subtypes, “sons of the soil wars,” and conflicts driven by natural resources).

⁸ By “outset,” we refer to the point when a civil conflict has reached 1,000 battle-death fatalities per year, a threshold that places it into standard civil war datasets. This implies that by that point a civil conflict has already become a major armed conflict.

Table 1. Technologies of Rebellion in Civil War

		Military capacity of the state	
		High	Low
Military capacity of the rebels	High	Conventional	N/A [Successful military coup]
	Low	Irregular	Symmetric non-conventional

Irregular or guerrilla warfare is an expression of relative asymmetry between states and rebels: while rebels have the military capacity to challenge the state, they lack the capacity to confront it in a direct and frontal way.⁹ Put otherwise, states have the capacity to mount a devastating response to a direct armed challenge such that the rebels' only option is to fight asymmetrically. The resulting civil war is characterized by an irregular technology of rebellion, also described as "insurgency."¹⁰ It is a technology of military conflict characterized by small, lightly armed bands practicing guerrilla warfare from rural base areas (Fearon and Laitin 2003:75). Examples include civil wars in El Salvador (1979-1992), Peru (1980-1996), and Nepal (1996-2006). In those wars, rebels "hover just below the military horizon," hiding and relying on harassment and surprise, stealth, and raid (Simons 1999), but are frequently able to achieve territorial control in the state's periphery. The CIA estimated that less than one percent of nearly two million US and allied small unit operations conducted in Vietnam in 1966-68, resulted in contact with the insurgents (Ellsberg 2002:240), while an American officer said "that he had spent the entire year in Vietnam and never seen a single live Vietcong" (Herrington 1997:xv).¹¹

⁹ Total asymmetry is reflected in the absence (or immediate suppression) of an armed challenge.

¹⁰ There is a close relationship between irregular war and civil war (Kalyvas 2006; Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004). Irregular warfare is seldom used in interstate wars which are usually fought conventionally (Harkavy and Neuman 2001:18-9).

¹¹ A US captain who fought in Iraq during the invasion of that country and later during the insurgency, describes the difference between his two deployments in the field in a way that captures the distinction between conventional and irregular technologies: "The difference between the two deployments involved primarily the positioning of the enemy relative to ourselves. In the ground war, we had definitive lines of

When rebels are able to directly and frontally match states that deploy heavy weaponry such as field artillery and armor, we refer to a conventional technology of rebellion. In conventional wars, military confrontation is direct either across well-defined frontlines or in the clash of armed columns; clashes often take the form of set battles. Classic cases include the American Civil War (1861-1865) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). More recent examples include the conflict of Biafra in Nigeria (1967-1970), of Abkhazia in Georgia (1992-1994), of Nagorno Karabach in Azerbaijan (1991-1994), and of Croatia and Bosnia in ex-Yugoslavia (1992-1995). These conflicts saw the deployment of artillery and tanks in a landscape often characterized by trenches. The battle of Cuito Canavale, which took place in Angola in September 1987 between the pro-Soviet MPLA government and South African backed UNITA rebels, entailed clashes between heavily armored columns and is said to have been the largest conventional land battle in Africa since the Second World War (Chester 1992). Though not a necessary feature, conventional wars frequently entail uniformed armies operating with discipline. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which won the war in Rwanda in 1994, was renowned for its discipline (Block 1994). In Bosnia “virtually all of the fighting was done by professionally led, relatively well-organized citizen armies, and the contrary view is largely the product of mirror-imaging by Western officers who regularly disparaged the appearance, discipline, and professionalism of the armies involved. The myth of the so-called “paramilitaries” has persisted, although few, if any, major independent paramilitary units operated after 1992 (United States, Central Intelligence Agency 2002 xii-xv).

Lastly, some conflicts do not fit well into the irregular war/conventional war dichotomy. They diverge from irregular wars in that they seem to lack the asymmetry between state and rebels characterizing these conflicts. When states are unable (or, in a few cases, unwilling) to credibly and systematically deploy heavy weaponry and armor against equally ill-equipped insurgents, the two sides are matched at a low level of military capacity. This mutual weakness produces a type of warfare often described as “pre-modern” (Earle 1997:108) or “primitive” (Mueller 2004), lending itself to comparisons with pre-modern conflicts such as the Thirty Years’ War (Münkler 2005:2). The civil wars in Somalia (1991-ongoing) or the Central African Republic (1996-1997) are examples of a technology of rebellion

battle. Saddam Fedayeen elements did make things tricky, as they were running around in pick-up trucks and taxis wearing civilian clothes, but we still knew generally the enemy’s territory versus our own. Returning in 2004 with the insurgency in full swing, while driving around Mosul, we never were sure when and where we might be attacked. Some neighborhoods were definitively safer than others, but there was no enemy zone versus friendly zone as mentioned earlier. Except for the U.S. bases, where mortar attacks were frequent but largely harmless, there was no place where one might feel completely safe” (Berschinski et al. 2007:136).

that we call “symmetric non-conventional” (SNC), one that is often mistakenly described as guerrilla war. SNC civil wars tend to arise in contexts characterized by very weak or collapsed states. Consider the example of the civil war in Congo-Brazzaville (1993-1997). The elections that followed the collapse of the single-party, Soviet-type regime produced inconclusive and contested results. The military effectively collapsed in 1992 and party militias (bearing names such as Ninjas, Cobras, or Zoulous) emerged to control different areas of the capital city clearly delineated by checkpoints or *bouchons*. Even the president of the country relied on his own militias alongside the remnants of the old state army. By 1997, the armed actors involved in this conflict included the remnants of the old military, a new but very weak, military, several militias with unclear chains of command, foreign mercenaries, the remnants of Mobutu’s presidential guard from neighboring Zaire, and units of the Rwandan *Interhamwe* and the Angolan military. The fighting was primarily low-tech entailing the use of small arms; the various militias exercised limited state-building and made little effort to indoctrinate the population or mobilize it (Yengo 2006).¹²

4. Cold War and Civil War Onset: the Emergence of Robust Insurgency

Although guerrilla war is arguably as old as human history, robust insurgency is intertwined with the Cold War. The term “guerrilla” (small war) emerged during the native resistance to the Napoleonic armies who invaded Spain in 1807, and was later analyzed by Clausewitz in his famous treatise *On War*. Most of what is described as guerrilla warfare in the pre-Second World War period consists of indigenous resistance against colonial encroachment, which often took the form of a frontal clash between vastly unequal armies, thus leading to a high propensity of (crushing) victory for the stronger actor (Lyall and Wilson 2009; Arreguin-Toft 2005).

In contrast, what became known as “people’s war” or revolutionary guerrilla warfare first emerged in the 1930s. It was honed by Mao Zedong in interwar China, “test-driven” by communist resistance movements in Europe and Asia during the Second World War, and reached its apex during the Cold War throughout the developing world. Although sharing the same moniker with traditional guerrilla war, this was a very different kind of war (Leites and Wolf 1970). As Beckett (2001:viii) explains, traditional guerrilla warfare was generally understood as a purely military form of fighting using classic tactics of ‘hit and run’ and employed by indigenous groups where a conventional army either had been

¹² It is possible to reduce this threefold distinction into a dichotomy between asymmetric and symmetric civil war, with the latter category containing both conventional and SNC wars. Nevertheless, we believe that the two categories of conventional and SNC war capture real and important differences. As we explain, whether the distinction is dichotomous or threefold does not affect our results.

defeated or had never existed. Rarely, he argues, did its primarily unsophisticated practitioners display any wider comprehension of the potential of irregular models of conflict in the way that became commonplace after 1945, when guerrilla warfare became “revolutionary” and was “termed insurgency.” In fact, this periods coincides with a remarkable reversal in the outcomes of irregular wars: whereas roughly before the Second World War, states, “strong actors” and “great powers” routinely defeated irregular armies, this pattern reversed itself following the Second World War, with insurgents increasingly more likely to force a “draw” or defeat their stronger foes (Lyall and Wilson 2009; Arreguin-Toft 2005). We argue that robust insurgency is linked to the Cold War via three reinforcing components: material support, beliefs, and organizational doctrine.

First, whereas traditional guerrilla warfare depended on the mobilization of local resources with the occasional support of a neighboring state, robust insurgency benefited from extensive and multifaceted superpower support. It is well known that a central aim of Soviet foreign policy was to train and motivate, directly or through surrogates, budding insurgents throughout the developing world (Westad 2005; Mott 2001). The Soviet Union provided weapons and training to leftist insurgencies immediately following the start of the Cold War (the initial beneficiaries included the Chinese and Greek Communists) and turned the Third World into a foreign policy priority from the early 1950s on (Kanet 2006:334). Once China turned communist, it entered the fray as well, while various surrogates (most notably Cuba, Libya, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization) played an important role in both training and support.¹³ Indeed, material assistance exploded after the mid-fifties (Mott 2001).

Nevertheless, the concept of “proxy wars” is a poor description of Soviet policy, as it only stresses the mechanical infusion of material resources into rebel movements; often, it even implies a purely instrumental relationship between opportunistic rebels who pretended to believe in socialism in order to receive Soviet weapons. Although opportunism was certainly present, it did not exhaust the range of motivations; and although material support typically included weapons, it extended to multiple forms of assistance, training, and in many cases the provision of on-the-ground advisers.¹⁴ Most

¹³ For example, the civil war in South Yemen entailed the participation of “Cubans, Syrians, PLO units, and some personnel from Eastern Europe.” (Kirkpatrick 1989:8).

¹⁴ “For the Soviet Union, supplying arms is not necessarily the best tool for aiding and controlling an NLM [National Liberation Movement]. The most effective policy consists of political training and indoctrination. The Soviet Union therefore concentrates on education the leaders of NLMs how to take power and hold it by means of Leninist tactics. It instructs and trains them outside their country so that Soviet officers are not involved in political scandals. Between 1965 and 1972, members of the MPLA,

importantly, assistance and support were channeled through transnational social movements. Thousands of radical activists built supra-regional and even global contacts and networks while training in Soviet-funded military camps and universities, the most famous of which was the “Patrice Lumumba Friendship University” in Moscow.¹⁵ The centrality of social movements helps differentiate robust insurgency from traditional guerrilla warfare. Whereas the latter was based on the mobilization of primarily conservative, local sentiments and/or local patronage tribal and kin networks, the former mobilized transnational revolutionary networks; these would link-up with traditional rural networks but assume the leadership.¹⁶

Beliefs constitute the second critical component of robust insurgency.¹⁷ After all, the Cold War was also an ideological competition on a global level (Stein and Lobell 1997:109) whose cognitive frames and ideologies “aroused passionate ideological commitments among combatants, both domestically and internationally (Hironaka 2005:123). The power of beliefs was well understood by counterinsurgents (Kirkpatrick 1989:7; Olson 1989:19) and is worth stressing, as recent research has tended to systematically “recode” Che Guevaras into Charles Taylors.¹⁸

ANC, and SWAPO, among others, trained in the Soviet Union. These leaders included Sam Nujoma of SWAPO and Oliver Tambo of the ANC” (Dzhirkvelov 1989:271).

¹⁵ The University’s first vice-rector and a number of its staff were KGB officers whose objective was to recruit revolutionaries from the student body (Andrew and Mitrokhin 2005:432). The Higher Party School for foreigners also played a key role in educating radical leaders from around the world, in programs ranging two years to two months (Dzhirkvelov 1989:271).

¹⁶ This is a point stressed by Carl Schmitt (2007:30) who distinguishes between two ideal types of irregular fighters: the traditional “defensive-autochthonous defenders of home” and the “aggressive international revolutionary activist.” Modern revolutionary guerrilla war, he argues, reached its fullest expression when it connected these two (Schmitt 2007:30).

¹⁷ We are referring to the beliefs of rebel leaders, cadres, and activists. Rank-and-file fighters and sympathizers were typically motivated by a variety of heterogeneous concerns, of which ideology may have been among the least important (Kalyvas 2006). Also, while some rebel entrepreneurs were keen to disguise narrow or opportunistic goals under the cloak of socialist revolution in order to gain access to external support, many were genuinely inspired and empowered by these beliefs. This was the case with several “national liberation” movements which blended nationalism with both Marxist ideology and revolutionary guerrilla principles—such as the Eritrean EPLF (Eritrean Popular Liberation Front) and the Kurdish PKK (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers’ Party).

¹⁸ Hirshleifer (2001) and Collier (2007), among others, have stressed the predatory character of civil war and have castigated their description as an enterprise that could possibly be motivated by justice-seeking.

Beliefs mattered in three ways. First, as ideas: the perception that a credible counter-hegemonic model of political and social organization was available and could be attained captured the imagination of millions. The specific ideas, as well the labels used, varied but usually included concepts such as national liberation, decolonization, developmentalism, “third-worldism,” and Marxism. Second, beliefs were important as a source of motivation: they mobilized the energy of many “first movers” who were willing to invest tremendous effort, significant risk, and enormous deprivation for the cause of revolution. Lastly, beliefs mattered as perceptions about the feasibility of radical change via armed struggle: subordinate or weak actors could successfully take on stronger actors if they learned exactly how to deploy the technology of robust insurgency. Radical change became a matter of training which, in turn, required the right doctrine.

The last component of robust insurgency was organizational doctrine. The equation of revolutionary theory with the organizational principles of irregular war was an important innovation whose global breakthrough came with the Cuban Revolution “which put the guerrilla strategy on the world’s front pages” (Hobsbawm 1996:438). Writing in 1973, Wolin (1973:354) remarked how “the military mode of thinking has all but supplanted the political mode in revolutionary circles. Whenever one turns... one finds sophisticated discussions of tactic, firepower, guerrilla warfare, and combat techniques.” The writings of Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, Régis Debray, and Amilcar Cabral, among others, were widely disseminated and read by thousands of activists and sympathizers in the developing world, especially among the educated urban youth. They all pointed to the possibility of global, radical political change that would begin in the periphery and take the form of a revolution waged via guerrilla warfare.¹⁹ The examples of China, Cuba, and Vietnam suggested that, despite occasional setbacks,

Ironically, and a testament to the power of radical beliefs during the 1960s, is the fact that Collier himself was tempted by the revolutionary winds of his youth—however briefly. “I was a student at Oxford in 1968,” he recounts (2007:ix); “I remember joining something called the Oxford Revolutionary Socialist Students, a name now beyond parody. But it all seemed simple then.”

¹⁹ Around these principles grew a rich global discussion about the best way to organize, fight, and win. Proponents of Che Guevara’s *foco* theory emphasized the voluntaristic action of a party vanguard that would catalyze popular discontent through highly visible actions from the periphery; supporters of Carlos Marighela’s theories argued in favor of urban guerrilla that would strike directly at the center; the readers of Võ Nguyên Giáp pointed to the long term process of building a proficient insurgent military force; and so on. It would be, perhaps, only a slight exaggeration to say that the organizational principles of revolutionary guerrilla warfare achieved in their temporal context a functional equivalence with that of present-day corporate management principles: they were a thriving intellectual enterprise on a global

guerrilla warfare was both a feasible and successful path to political and social change. Leftist guerrilla movements made it a point to invite hundreds of journalists and activists from across the world, thus socializing them in the ways of armed struggle.²⁰

Despite its emphasis on action, irregular war was never a simple military tactic, akin to insurgent “special forces” storming their way to power. Instead, rebel entrepreneurs learned that the key to success lay in the patient formation of a highly structured political organization, typically a party, in control of a disciplined armed wing. The objective was to acquire and govern territory. On the one hand, organization guaranteed discipline in the absence of which rebels could never hope to withstand, even more defeat, the state’s military superiority. On the other hand, territory constituted a key resource for armed struggle. Effective administration and mass mobilization in liberated areas were essential foundations for the development of armed struggle under conditions of military inferiority. This amounted to revolutionary state-building (Kalyvas 2006), which was absent in traditional guerrilla warfare.

In sum, the Cold War combined material support, beliefs, and organizational principles to turn robust insurgency into a credible and effective technology of rebellion. Beliefs were sustained and reproduced by examples of successful irregular wars that were based on these organizational principles; in turn, both the dissemination of beliefs and the implementation of organizational principles required training, assistance, and weapons. Although it was possible for each of these factors to operate alone (some leftist insurgencies were able to emerge and even succeed in the absence of external support, while some rightist insurgencies relied more on external support and less on beliefs), the combination of all three was critical at the aggregate level and explains how rebel capacity was raised decisively during the Cold War.

The United States responded to this challenge by supporting rebels fighting against pro-Soviet regimes; much more common was its support for governments professing anticommunism. US military assistance to friendly regimes boomed and the US invested in the development of a technology of counterinsurgency tailored to match revolutionary guerrilla war (e.g. Leites and Wolf 1970). Military

scale with its gurus, global best sellers, universities, summer schools (or camps), and practical applications.

²⁰ One example out of many: as a young man, the leader of the National Resistance Army (NRA) in Uganda Yoweri Museveni, along with several future leaders of this organization, spent time in the liberated zones of Mozambique where he was directly exposed to the philosophy and practice of the guerrilla movement FRELIMO [Frente de Libertação de Moçambique]. This exposure is acknowledged as having shaped his approach to irregular war (Kasfir 2002:2-3).

personnel from many countries were trained in the United States, and the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia became notorious.²¹ The end result was also the rise of state capacity during that period.

Because capacity was raised for both states and rebels, the asymmetry characterizing the relation of governments and rebels remained fundamentally in place: states were still military superior to rebels. Our claim, therefore, is that the Cold War turned the “deep weakness” of rebels, which either prevented a rebellion from reaching the stage of civil war or kept it at the low levels of traditional, peripheral warfare, into a “relative weakness:” one that allowed the most skilled rebels to mount effective military challenges against stronger states using robust insurgency—and not infrequently, with success.

5. The Impact of the End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War put an end to superpower competition, the Soviet Union itself, and the abundant provision of material support to rebel forces across the world. Byman et al. (2001) document a dramatic shift in the sources of insurgent support during the post-Cold War era toward diasporas, refugees, and neighboring states, most of which were as poor as the states facing insurgencies and certainly could not contribute training—a poor substitute for superpower support. Clearly, the end of the Cold War hurt rebels in a decisive way; among them, it hurt disproportionately the revolutionary types. For, the end of the Soviet Union also signaled the collapse of the belief in radical social and political change (Przeworski 1991:100) as well as its possible achievement through revolutionary war. Suddenly, radical activists across the developing world awoke in a world without Marxism. If our analysis is correct, the end of the Cold War should have led to a decline in irregular war.

The end of the Cold War also hurt states. With the Soviet threat gone, the United States lost interest in propping up client states in the developing world and divested itself from many weak states, thus weakening them further (Hale and Kienle 1997:5); things were even worse for Soviet client states

²¹ The Soviet Union helped primarily rebels and the US was behind governments, but in a few cases these roles were reversed. In countries such as Angola, Nicaragua or Afghanistan, the Soviets supported friendly governments (typically victorious former rebels) while the United States worked with rebels—many of whom were former Marxists. By 1989, the United States was contributing over \$50 million in aid to UNITA (nearly 10% of the entire Angolan economy), while in 1986-87 the Soviet Union gave close to \$1 billion in military support to the government, and a total of \$4 billion in the previous decade (Hironaka 2005:24).

(Kanet 2006:343).²² With superpower support reduced or gone, states had to rely primarily on their own domestic, or residual, capacity. Such capacity was notoriously wanting in Sub-Saharan Africa (Herbst 2004; 2000; Reno 1999; Clapham 1996; Stedman 1996) and had required enormous efforts to prop-up in the first place.²³ States with low residual capacity faced daunting prospects as they became vulnerable to low capacity rebels who could challenge them directly—rather than through the painstaking process of organization, indoctrination, and peripheral state-building required by the technology of robust insurgency. Thus, our analysis suggests that states whose residual capacity was low should experience a higher likelihood of symmetric non-conventional civil war following the end of the Cold War.

Along with these two structural effects, namely the decline in rebel and state capacity, an additional effect of the Cold War was the dissolution of states such as the USSR and Yugoslavia and the division of existing armies into competing factions that could fight against each other conventionally. Hence the expectation of a higher likelihood of conventional civil wars in the post-Cold War era, associated with the formation of new states.

Table 2 illustrates how the three processes activated by end of the Cold War resulted in different outcomes.²⁴ Consider three capacity thresholds affecting both states and rebels. The first threshold α

²² Data from USAID (2009) shows a decrease in total US Military Assistance to third countries since the early 1980s. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimates that world military expenditures dropped from \$1.1 trillion in the late 1980s to \$740 billion in 1997. There was also a drastic reduction in international arms sales: from 1986 to 1995, they plummeted 55 percent (SIPRI 2008).

²³ The Soviet Union became actively involved in Sub-Saharan Africa which came second after the Middle East in the volume of Soviet Assistance it received; during the 1956-1988 period, it received 23 billion dollars (Mott 2001:52). In 1974 there were approximately 3,600 Soviet advisers only in Somalia (Andrew and Mitrokhin 2005:449). Such aid may have been militarily effective in the short term but did not strengthen weak states in the long term. In fact, Clapham (1996) argues the opposite for African states. An exasperated KGB agent reported how he found DISA, the Angolan version of the KGB, to be in “primitive” condition: “One could sense poverty and scarcity everywhere, even in the external appearance of senior heads. The level of education of the leaders, too, was then extremely low. ... After the ceremonial introductions, I began, at the request of the Minister, to outline some of our assessments of current problems of the international situation. I had barely spoken two words before the leading personnel of the ministry began to sink into a sweet sleep” (in Andrew and Mitrokhin 2005:467).

²⁴ We are grateful to Referee 1 for his/her suggestions in that respect.

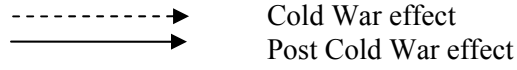
defines the level beyond which civil peace is robust: call it the robust peace threshold (A).²⁵ Here the Cold War was irrelevant and the concept of “long peace” (Gaddis 1989) is perfectly appropriate. The second threshold β defines the level above which either states or rebels are able to field a conventional army with heavy artillery and armor: call it the conventional capacity threshold. Lastly, threshold γ defines the level below which rebels cannot mount a challenge against an organized state: call it the rebel capacity threshold.

As discussed above, we argue that the Cold War lifted rebel capacity above γ in some states, thus increasing the probability of irregular war (B). In contrast, the end of the Cold War and the decline of robust insurgency pushed many potential rebels below the rebel capacity threshold γ , thus reducing the number of states that would have been vulnerable to irregular war (C). Note that irregular civil war erupts in B rather than C even though the level of state capacity remains the same for both: this variation is driven exclusively by rebel capacity. At the same time, the end of the Cold War caused a collapse of state capacity below γ in states whose residual capacity was low. In those states, rebels with low capacity such that it would have prevented a credible challenge beforehand, now became able to take on these weakened states by means of a symmetric non-conventional war (D). Lastly, the emergence of new states that followed the end of the Cold War allowed rebels to rise to the level of conventional organization above α and face off state forces on a level field by means of a conventional war (E).

Table 3. Cold War and Technologies of Rebellion

	A Robust Peace	B Irregular War	C Peace	D SNC	E Conventional War
State					
α					↓
β		State ↑	State		State & Rebels ↑
γ		Rebels ↑		↓	
			Rebels ↓	State & Rebels ↓	

²⁵ If state capacity is operationalized with GDP per capita, this threshold would take the value of \$6,243 per capita income: no country in our sample above this level experiences a civil war no matter what technology of rebellion is available.



To summarize: according our analysis, civil peace and civil war can be function of state capacity alone (A, D), of rebel capacity alone (B, C), or of both state and rebel capacity (E). Our analysis produces clear empirical predictions while acknowledging multiple pathways. We incorporate these theoretical insights into crossnational analysis to uncover the hitherto concealed Cold War effect.

6. Empirics

Our analysis yields a number of empirical predictions and implications. First, we expect to observe a decline of irregular civil war onsets following the end of the Cold War, along with a rise in SNC and conventional civil war onsets. As a corollary, we also expect the geographic distribution of technologies of rebellion to roughly reflect the residual capacity of states and the emergence of new states: insofar as states in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Eurasia, and Latin America were generally of higher residual capacity compared to those in Sub-Saharan Africa, we expect a decline in irregular war onsets in the former along with an increase in SNC war onsets in the latter. Likewise, because new states emerged primarily in Eurasia, we expect a rise of conventional civil war onsets in that region. We also attempt to pinpoint the causal mechanisms that underlie this analysis and expect states and rebels in irregular and conventional civil wars to be of higher capacity compared to rebels and states in SNC civil wars.

Our empirical strategy consists of (a) descriptive statistics from a dataset of civil wars covering the 1944-2004 period; (b) estimations of the likelihood of each of the three types of civil war (given the onset of a civil war) on a set of independent variables, including a dummy capturing the end of the Cold War and different measures of state capacity (using the same dataset of wars); and (c) estimations of the likelihood of each type of war compared to each other, as well as compared to civil peace, on a broader set of independent variables (using a panel dataset covering the 1944-1999 period). We also analyze, through multivariate parametric and non-parametric techniques, a set of implications and extensions.

We have coded all wars in the standard civil war datasets (Sambanis 2001, Fearon and Laitin 2003) following our typology of warfare and using the coding procedures detailed in the Appendix. Consistent with our theoretical framework, the main dimension over which we have classified civil wars is the military capacity of state and rebels as proxied by the type of weaponry used in the first two years

of the war, heavy weaponry indicating high capacity and light weaponry indicating low capacity. We classify all civil wars in three categories: Irregular, Conventional and SNC.²⁶

Table 4 provides the general trends for types of civil war onset during the period 1944-2004. Focusing on the entire period, we can easily see that irregular civil war is the dominant type of civil war, hence the emphasis placed on it by theories of civil war appears justified. However, it is hardly the only type of warfare and accounts for slightly over half of all civil wars (53.06%). Conventional civil wars are much more common than generally thought (33.33%). As for SNC wars, they account for slightly over 13% of all civil wars. Dividing the data into two distinct periods, the Cold War (1944-1990) and the post-Cold War period (1991-2004),²⁷ suggests that the end of the Cold War is associated with an important shift in the dominant technology of rebellion. While irregular warfare dominates the Cold War period (65.35%), conventional warfare dominates the post-Cold War period (47.83%). The proportion of SNC civil wars goes up after the end of the Cold War, matching irregular wars.²⁸ Indeed the most striking pattern is the collapse of irregular war after the end of the Cold War (Figure 2). This pattern is robust to normalization (onsets by year), as indicated by Figure 3.

²⁶ Following common practice, we do not code “successful coups”, as they do not reach the level of civil war.

²⁷ We establish 1991 as the cutoff year, as this corresponds to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. We have estimated the same multinomial / logit regressions in the paper, with different dummies for Cold War (we have explored cutoff points from 1985 to 2000) and find that the critical year for conventional and irregular war is 1991, and the critical year for SNC is slightly earlier: 1989. Hence, we have decided to keep the 1991 cutoff point which we consider to be the theoretically relevant, but also because it is the critical cutoff point for two out of the three categories of war.

²⁸ Setting the cutoff year in 1989 does not change the picture. Before 1989, 65.22 % of all civil wars were irregular, 28.26% were conventional and 6.52 % were SNC. After 1989, 32.73% were irregular, 41.82% were conventional and 25.45% were SNC.

Table 4. Civil War Onsets by Technologies of Rebellion (1944-2004)

Technology of Rebellion	N (1944-2004)	% (1944-2004)	N (1944-1990)	% (1944-1990)	N (1991-2004)	% (1991-2004)
Conventional	49	33.33	27	26.73	22	47.83
Irregular	78	53.06	66	65.35	12	26.09
Symmetric non-conventional	20	13.61	8	7.92	12	26.09
Total	147	100	101	100	46	100

Figure 2. Irregular Civil Wars as a Proportion of All Civil Wars, by Decade

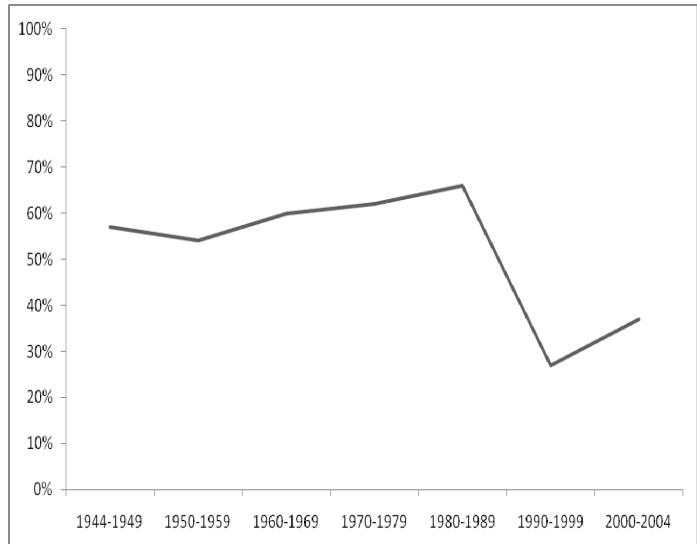


Figure 3. Normalized Occurrence of Warfare Type, Pre- and Post-Cold War

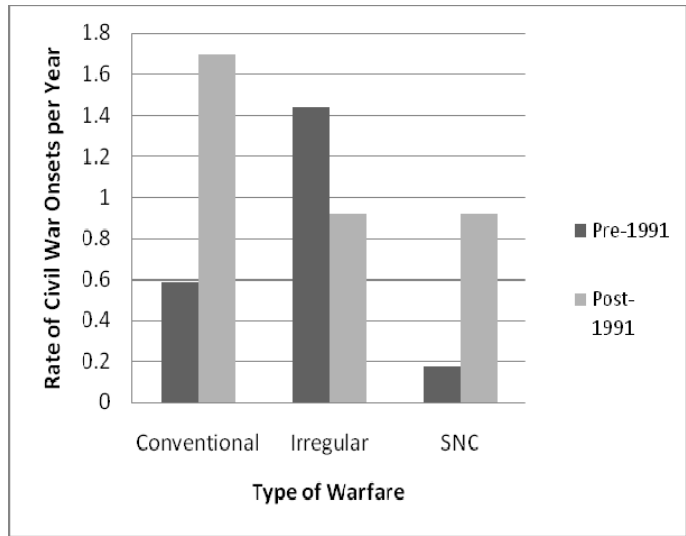
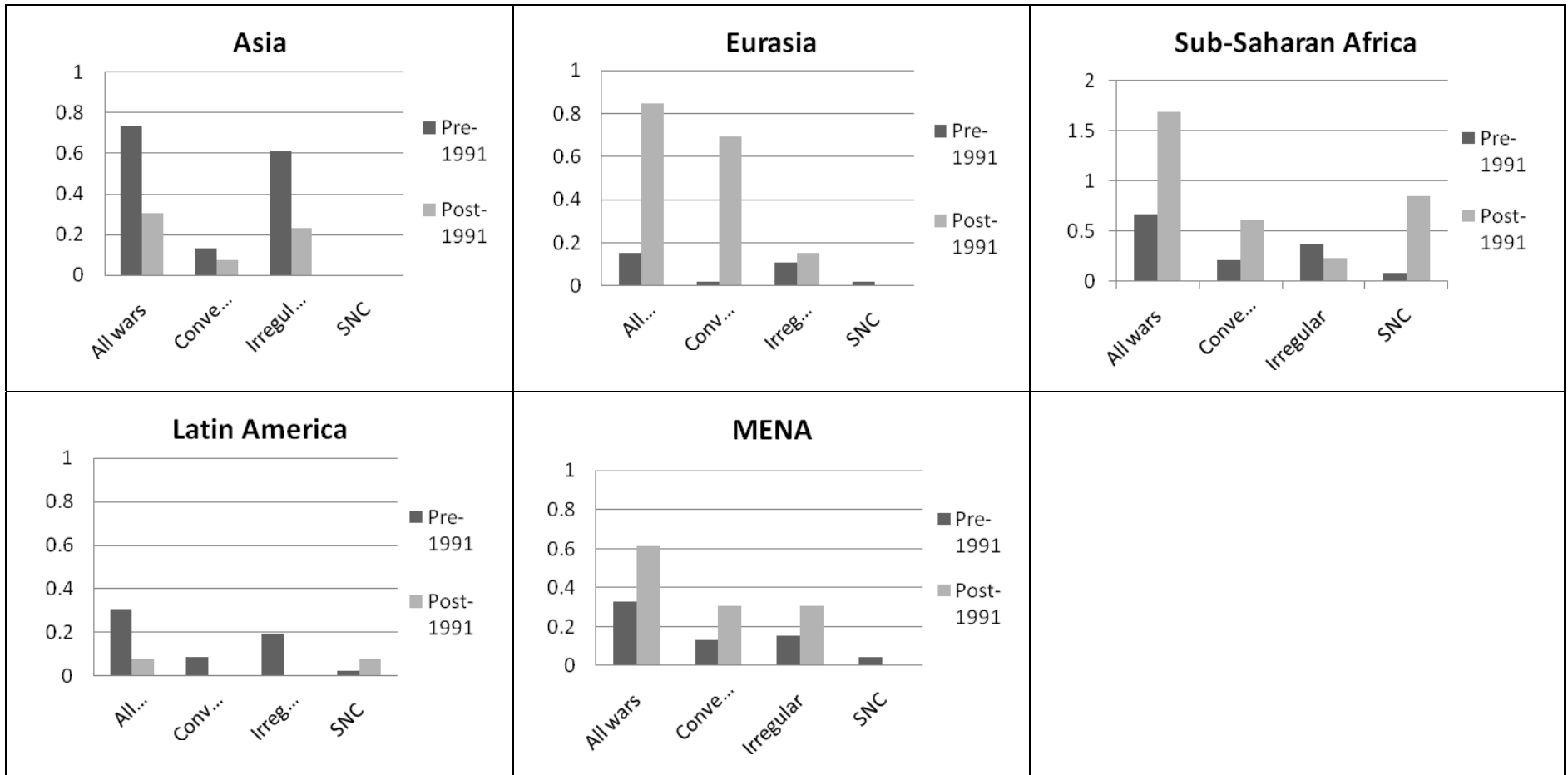


Figure 4 displays the normalized pre- and post-Cold War trends separately for each world region and suggest systematic patterns of geographic variation that are largely consistent with the case study literature and our theoretical expectations.²⁹ Overall, civil wars moved away from Asia and Latin America and toward Eurasia, Sub-Saharan Africa and, to a lesser extent, Middle-East, North Africa (MENA). In Asia and Latin America, the decline of irregular war is steep, coincides with the precipitous decline of civil wars altogether, and could be ascribed to the decline of the factors that produced the ascendancy of robust insurgency: as Castañeda (1993) pointed out about Latin America, the era of armed politics and guerrilla insurgencies was over. Indeed, the residual capacity of states in these regions is high enough to deal with low-tech rebels. In contrast, Eurasia experienced a rise of conventional civil wars linked to processes of new state formation, division of conventional military arsenals, and frequent third party intervention (Evangelista 1996). Sub-Saharan Africa also experienced an increase of conventional civil wars, also linked with third party intervention, but primarily a rise of SNC civil wars in states with a low residual capacity. As Stedman (1996:236) points out, these conflicts are closely connected with the end of the Cold War which “undermined the external sources of support for Africa’s patrimonial regimes and left some with no legs to stand on.” Lastly, the MENA region does not conform to our expectations, as both conventional and irregular wars rose in the post-Cold War period in an area populated by states with relatively high residual state capacity. We return to this exception in the conclusion.

²⁹ We also perform a set of regressions with regional dummies that are overall consistent with these descriptive findings. They however convey some estimation issues due to a lack of degrees of freedom, so we do not include them here.

Figure 4: Civil War Onsets by World Region, Pre- and Post-1991 (Normalized by Year)



Having established the main trends, we perform two different sets of confirmatory tests: first, an analysis of the determinants of each of the three types of war given a civil war onset. We have constructed a dataset that includes 147 civil war onsets covering the period 1944-2004.³⁰ The dependent variable is technology of rebellion or type of civil war, as defined above.³¹ All regressions include a post-Cold War dummy variable, *Post 1991*,³² which we expect, everything else equal, to be positively associated with both the onset of conventional and SNC civil wars, and negatively associated to irregular civil wars. Also, we expect variables measuring the military capacity of states to be positively related to conventional and irregular wars, and negatively related to SNC.³³ Since new states result from processes of partition of old states which also entail the partition of their armed forces, we expect an indicator of *New state* to be positively associated to conventional wars. Finally, we expect measures of external superpower intervention to be associated to irregular civil wars during the Cold War period.

Our list of independent variables includes the following: (1) *Population*, a variable controlling for the size of the country. Highly populated countries may be more likely to experience irregular wars because they have less control over their territory;³⁴ (2) *Ethnic Fractionalization*, which we include to account for potential differences in warfare driven by ethnic cleavages;³⁵ our prior is that there should not be an association between this variable and type of warfare; (3) *GDP per capita*; following our analysis, we expect this variable to be positively associated with irregular and conventional civil wars and

³⁰ The dataset is based on those of Sambanis (2001) and Fearon and Laitin (2003). Additional sources are detailed in table A.1 of the appendix. We use these datasets with 1,000 battle-deaths threshold, and not datasets with lower thresholds (i.e. PRIO-Uppsala) because we intend to speak to a well established civil war literature, which has used this threshold, and because our argument is about conflicts that have already reached a considerable level of intensity. Also, consistent with current practice, we do not include “coups” as part of the analysis because they do not reach the threshold of civil war.

³¹ The variable *Type of warfare* takes values 1 for “Conventional”, 2 for “Irregular” and 3 for “SNC.”

³² The “Post 1991” dummy takes value 1 for all years between 1991 and 2004, including both of them.

³³ Unfortunately, we have no reliable data for the military capacity of rebel groups that we can use to test our hypotheses.

³⁴ Following standard practice in the literature, we measure it with the log of population of the country, lagged one year.

³⁵ Kaufmann (1996) argues that ethnic civil wars are more likely to be fought conventionally compared to non-ethnic civil wars. We have also included two indicators of ethnic war coded by Sambanis (2001) with the same results. The results are included in the Appendix.

negatively associated with SNC wars;³⁶ (4) *Rough Terrain*, which we expect to have a positive effect on irregular war vis-à-vis the others; mountainous terrain favors this technology of warfare (Fearon and Laitin 2003);³⁷ (5) *New state*, which we expect to have a positive effect on the occurrence of conventional civil wars vis-à-vis the others; (6) *Military Personnel*, a proxy for the strength of the military of a state, which we expect to increase the likelihood of conventional and irregular civil wars vis-à-vis SNC wars;³⁸ (7) *Trade*, a measure of the magnitude of trade flows (imports plus exports) as a percentage of GDP (a standard proxy for globalization³⁹). While there is very weak empirical evidence supporting the idea that globalization (i.e. increased commercial and financial openness of states) has any effect on the likelihood of internal conflict (Hegre et al. 2003; Fearon and Laitin 2003), it may be argued that the end of the Cold War is in fact capturing the effect of the growing economic integration in the post-Cold War period⁴⁰ which, following Kaldor's (1999) conjecture would be positively associated to the rise of "new wars". The latter may very well overlap with SNC wars. Thus, we include this variable in order to test for this rival hypothesis; (8) *US Military Assistance*: a dummy variable for countries that received any US military assistance in the year before the outbreak of conflict.⁴¹ Again, we expect this measure of superpower intervention to be positively associated with irregular wars vis-à-vis the others.⁴²

We estimate four nested models: a first model (M1) including a vector of our main covariates, a second one (M2) adding military personnel to M1,⁴³ a third one (M3) adding trade to the M2,⁴⁴ and a

³⁶ We include Fearon and Laitin's (2003) lagged measure of GDP, but we also run a set of robustness test with alternative measures, detailed in Table 2 of the Appendix.

³⁷ We include Fearon and Laitin's (2003) measure of Rough Terrain.

³⁸ We include the measure from COW 3.02 (Singer et al 1972), in thousands, lagged one year.

³⁹ Sachs and Warner (1995); Garret (2000); Dutt and Devashish (2002). We use the World Bank (2007) indicator.

⁴⁰ Sachs and Warner (1995) show that the share of open economies in the world increased in the early 90s, especially because of the opening of the post-Communist and developing economies. Garret shows that world trade as a percentage of world GDP "increased from around one-third of world output in the early 1970s to almost 45 percent in 1995" (Garret 2001:7-8).

⁴¹ USAID (2009).

⁴² Unfortunately, we lack a reliable parallel measure of Soviet military aid. Good, yearly, data on Soviet military assistance to other countries remains unavailable (Klare and Andersen 1996).

⁴³ Data on military personnel is not available for 18 cases in our sample. We include this variable in a separate model in order not to lose leverage. We run a second test with military expenditures (also from COW 3.02) and the results are consistent.

fourth one (M4) adding US Military Assistance to M1.⁴⁵ The estimated coefficients for conventional and SNC wars (irregular warfare is the reference category) are depicted in Table 5.

⁴⁴ We decided to include trade in a separate model because we have 58 missing cases for this variable. Information is missing for many wars taking place before 1960, as well as for wars taking place in new states for which we lack a lagged indicator. The high correlation of trade with GDP per capita (0.4) and country size (-0.38), raises concerns of collinearity. Both Hegre et al. (2001) and Fearon and Laitin (2003) have warned on the inclusion of this variable in civil war regression models.

⁴⁵ We do not include this variable in the same regression with trade and military personnel because it correlates highly with both of them.

Table 5. Multinomial Logit Analyses of Determinants of Type of War (1944-2004)

Conventional	M1	M2	M3	M4
Population (Log)	-0.199 (0.16)	-0.307* (0.18)	-0.450* (0.26)	-0.232* (0.14)
Rough Terrain	0.001 (0.00)	0.001 (0.00)	0.001 (0.00)	0.001 (0.00)
Ethnic Fract.	-1.079 (0.87)	-1.205 (0.90)	0.619 (1.14)	-1.171 (0.83)
GDP capita	-0.045 (0.17)	-0.086 (0.19)	-0.594 (0.48)	-0.080 (0.17)
Post 1991	1.765*** (0.57)	1.556** (0.62)	1.489* (0.77)	1.879*** (0.58)
New State	0.861 (0.61)	2.137 (1.32)	1.362 (1.25)	0.492 (0.60)
Military Pers.	-----	0.000 (0.00)	0.001 (0.00)	-----
Trade	-----	-----	-0.002 (0.02)	-----
US Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	-1.113** (0.46)
Constant	1.487 (1.38)	2.601 (1.58)	3.296 (2.80)	2.473* (1.35)
SNC	M1	M2	M3	M4
Population(Log)	-0.564*** (0.18)	-0.443* (0.25)	-0.425 (0.33)	-0.585*** (0.18)
Rough Terrain	-0.016 (0.01)	-0.018 (0.01)	-0.067** (0.03)	-0.017 (0.01)
Ethnic Fract.	-1.022 (1.15)	-1.462 (1.43)	-2.113 (2.36)	-1.012 (1.16)
GDP capita	-0.476 (0.29)	0.152 (0.42)	-0.359 (0.79)	-0.516* (0.31)
Post 1991	2.382*** (0.72)	3.127*** (0.84)	4.059*** (1.11)	2.339*** (0.74)
New State	-0.097 (1.23)	-32.2*** (1.25)	-41.77 (0.00)	-0.057 1.19
Military Pers.	-----	-0.020** (0.01)	-0.016** (0.01)	-----
Trade	-----	-----	-0.023 (0.02)	-----
US Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	-0.014 (0.62)
Constant	4.591*** (1.49)	3.448* (1.95)	5.245 (4.08)	4.873*** (1.64)
N	135.000	122.000	76.000	135.000
chi2	46.846	2484.857	.	47.030
Aic	244.724	217.343	135.413	241.537

Robust Standard Errors in Brackets
 Legend: * p<.1; ** p<.05; *** p<.01

The results in Table 3 point to a strong and significant effect of the end of the Cold War on the type of civil war onset, in the expected direction. Compared to irregular wars, conventional and SNC wars are much more likely to erupt after the end of the Cold War. The coefficient of Post 1991 remains robust in all the models.⁴⁶ Our main negative findings are also consistent with our expectations: Trade and Ethnic fractionalization do not differentiate the three types of war. Also, Rough Terrain does not have an effect on the type of warfare (this is only significant in one of the models, for the SNC category). Indeed, many of the Eurasian conventional civil wars were fought in states with very rough terrain. As we expected, irregular wars are more likely in larger countries.

Contrary to our expectations, we find that the variable New State has no significant effect on conventional war vis-à-vis irregular war. The post 1991 dummy is probably capturing this effect for the postcommunist states that became independent that year.⁴⁷ We find a negative effect of US Military Assistance on conventional civil wars vis-à-vis irregular wars, which is consistent with our hypothesis that superpower support is associated to the latter type of warfare. Importantly, the non-significance of the coefficient for military personnel on conventional wars suggests comparable levels of military capacity to those of states experiencing irregular wars, which is also consistent with our analysis.

SNC wars differ from irregular ones in that they are more likely to take place in smaller states and countries with smaller militaries—as expected.⁴⁸ Though negative, US Military Assistance is not significant, suggesting that states facing SNC wars are not differentiated in terms of US assistance from those facing irregular wars. Finally, GDP per capita is negative, but significant in only one specification (model 4).

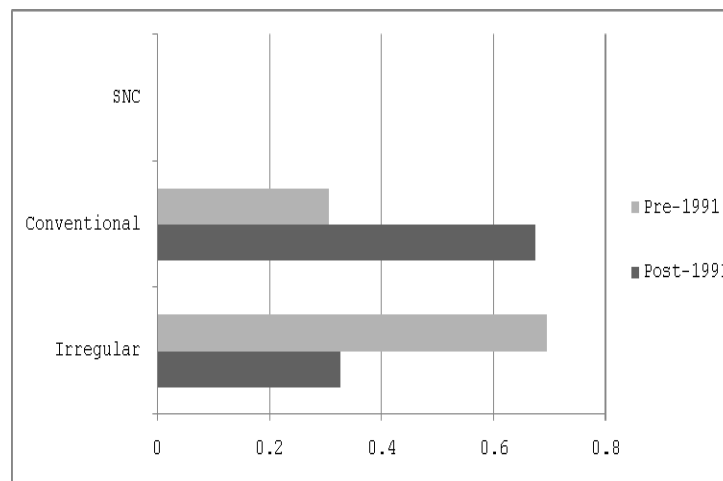
⁴⁶ If instead of analyzing the three categories of warfare separately, we pooled together the two symmetric types (SNC and conventional), we would again observe that the end of the Cold War has a positive effect on symmetric civil wars.

⁴⁷ New State is significant, together with 1991, when we run robustness tests with alternative measures of GDP per capita, for which we do not have data for the postcommunist states that became independent in 1991 (Tables in the Appendix). Thus, there is an independent effect of these two variables in conventional civil wars.

⁴⁸ While New State has a positive effect on SNC in model 2, almost all wars taking place in new states are either conventional or irregular (except for Congo in 1960). Thus, the result in this model is driven by this one case. In order to make sure that the results are not biased due to an overidentification problem, we ran the same regressions without this variable; the coefficients for the remaining variables do not change substantively.

To illustrate the substantive effect of the end of the Cold War, we provide the predicted probabilities of a civil war using each one of these technologies of rebellion, before and after 1991 (Figure 5).⁴⁹ The likelihood of a civil war being irregular decreases from 0.69 (in the pre 1991 period) to 0.32 (in the post 1991); conversely, the likelihood of a civil war being conventional increases from 0.3 (in the pre 1991 period) to 0.67 (in the post 1991 one). Thus, there is a sort of substitution effect between irregular and conventional civil wars before and after this year. SNC wars display very small predicted probabilities, both in the pre and post 1991 period (from 0 to 0.0001), suggesting that the Cold War had a major impact in the shift away from irregular and toward conventional civil war.

Figure 5. Predicted probabilities of each Type of Warfare, Pre and Post 1991



We now estimate the likelihood of onset of each of the three types of civil war both vis-à-vis each other and compared to civil peace. We run “duration dependent discrete hazard logits” (Beck et al. 1998)⁵⁰ on a panel dataset covering 161 countries and all years between 1944 and 1999.⁵¹ In addition to estimating the likelihood of onset of each of our types of civil war, we also estimate the onset of civil wars in general (i.e. not disaggregated by technology of rebellion). Although we do not have a general

⁴⁹ Figure 5 is derived from model 2 in Table 3, setting all the remaining variables at their sample mean.

⁵⁰ This method is more adequate than ordinary logit or dynamic probit because it allows control for duration dependence on the data. The estimation of robust standard errors (clustered by country) permits to account for spatial dependence (Beck and Katz 1997). The coefficients of these regressions have to be interpreted as in an ordinary binary logit. Further details on this model are provided in the Appendix.

⁵¹ We relied on Fearon and Laitin’s (2003) dataset as a template, although we did add our Type of war and some additional variables in it (sources listed in the Appendix).

theory of civil war onset, we are interested in comparing the results of civil war onset to the results of each of our civil war types.

We again run four nested models for each of the dependent variables. A first set of models include the standard variables in the literature on civil war onset, to which we add military personnel (Models 1 and 2). In addition to Population, Rough Terrain, Ethnic Fractionalization, and GDP per capita, the main vector of covariates includes *Religious fractionalization*, *Oil exporter*, *Democracy*, *Anocracy*, and *Non-contiguous territory*.⁵² We include these variables to be consistent with the existing literature, but we do not have priors on their effect on each of our dependent variables. Hence, our focus will be again on the variables that are relevant for our theory.

As before, population is a standard control, which we expect to have a positive effect on all types of conflict, given that most populous states have lesser degree of control of their territories (Fearon and Laitin 2003). Consistent with our previous analysis, this should be higher for irregular wars. Following the existing literature and our theoretical framework, we expect rough terrain to enhance the likelihood of onset of irregular civil wars, and to have no effect on any of the other types. Insofar as it picks ethnic cleavages, ethnic fractionalization should increase the likelihood of conventional onsets, but should have no effect on the other types. GDP per capita should decrease the likelihood of all types of civil war; yet, we should also expect its effect to be greater with regard to SNC wars. The relation of military personnel to civil peace is complex. The military capacity of the state should increase the likelihood of peace--and decrease the likelihood of all types of war--insofar as it pushes states over the α threshold.⁵³ Military capacity should also decrease the likelihood of SNC civil wars, insofar as it pushes states over the β threshold. The prediction is mixed for conventional and irregular wars: on the one hand, a large military should decrease the likelihood of these conflicts but, if a state is below the α threshold, we should observe an association between larger militaries and both irregular and conventional wars, compared to SNC wars.⁵⁴

Models 1 and 2 include the main vector of covariates listed above; these two models differ in the way they account for time duration: we use the variable *Peace years* and cubic splines with three knots in model 1, and a series of time dummies (created from Peace years) in model 2. Using these time dummies allows greater flexibility --so including them provides greater robustness-- but it conveys greater optimization problems, so we use the cubic splines in the remaining models. A third model includes

⁵² The description and sources for these variables are given in tables 2 and 4 in the Appendix.

⁵³ Also, countries at peace may require a lower level of military force since peace is generally robust.

⁵⁴ In a way, we have observed the latter in the multinomial logit analyses above --although the universe of cases were civil war onsets, so we did not consider countries at peace.

lagged trade (as a percent of GDP per capita) as an independent variable; this, again, allows testing for the rival hypothesis on globalization. Model 4 includes a lagged dummy for US military assistance, which again we expect to have a positive effect on irregular war and not to have any effect on the other types of war.⁵⁵

We run all four models for irregular, conventional, SNC and civil war onset. Tables 6-9 depict the results of all regressions. In Table 6 we present the results for irregular wars; consistent with our expectations and previous results, the post-Cold War dummy is negative and significant in all models: the likelihood of irregular war decreases after 1991. Also, consistent with Fearon and Laitin (2003), GDP per capita has a robust negative effect on the onset of irregular wars, and Oil exporter has a positive effect. Yet, Rough Terrain, a crucial variable in Fearon and Laitin’s framework loses statistical significance, suggesting that perhaps this effect was not driven by irregular wars. More relevant for us, military personnel has a significant although very small substantive effect on irregular wars –thus indicating that irregular wars are likely in countries with bigger militaries. This is an interesting finding as it shows that a size of the military may not prevent the outbreak of a rebellion though it may impact the technology of rebellion used. Finally, the dummy for US military aid has a positive effect on the likelihood of irregular war onset: this is consistent with the results of Table 3, and supports our assumption about superpower support.

Table 6. Logit Analyses of Determinants of Irregular Civil War Onset (1944-99)

	M1 Logit Spline I	M2 Logit Dummy(a)	M3 Logit Spline II	M4 Logit Spline III
Population	0.059 (0.11)	0.045 (0.11)	0.071 (0.12)	0.213** (0.1)
Rough Terrain	0.076 (0.12)	0.078 (0.12)	0.115 (0.13)	0.070 (0.11)
Oil Exporter	0.759** (0.35)	0.805** (0.36)	0.602 (0.43)	0.717** (0.35)
Ethnic Fract.	0.800 (0.55)	0.803 (0.55)	0.540 (0.64)	0.303 (0.55)
Religious Fract.	-0.264 (0.84)	-0.162 (0.88)	0.201 (0.95)	0.522 (0.79)
Democracy	0.560 (0.52)	0.561 (0.53)	0.088 (0.58)	0.361 (0.48)
Anocracy	0.970***	0.985***	0.739*	0.740**

⁵⁵ Models 3 and 4 do not include military personnel: again, we include military personnel, trade and military assistance in separate models in order to avoid multicollinearity.

	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.42)	(0.36)
GDP capita	-0.463***	-0.475***	-0.366***	-0.378***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Non contiguous	0.254	0.254	0.205	0.131
	(0.44)	(0.44)	(0.53)	(0.41)
Post 1991	-0.837*	-1.465**	-0.970**	-0.995**
	(0.47)	(0.74)	(0.48)	(0.45)
New State(c)	-----	-----	0.962	0.962
			(0.90)	(0.71)
Military Pers.	0.00034**	0.00036**	-----	-----
	(0.0016)	(0.0016)		
Trade	-----	-----	-0.004	-----
			(0.00)	
USA Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	0.819***
				(0.32)
Peace years (Irr)	-0.038		-0.144	-0.079
Spline1 (b)	-0.000		-0.001	-0.000
Spline2 (b)	0.000		0.001	0.000
Spline3 (b)	-0.000		-0.000	0.000
Constant	-5.525***	-1.991	-4.897***	-6.939***
	(1.18)	(1.64)	(1.70)	(1.33)
N	5048.000	3479.000	3276.000	5219.000
chi2	48.451	179.645	60.162	84.384
Aic	518.607	523.611	397.378	562.659

(a) 22 dummies dropped due to outcomes being perfectly predicted. 31 temporal dummy variables in specification not shown.

(b) Coefficients of peace years cubic spline segments.

(c) In Models 1 and 2, new state predicts failure perfectly. Dropped of the equation.

Table 7 includes the results for of the analyses for conventional civil wars. In this case, the post-Cold War dummy is only significant in Model 4; the New state variable is, however, highly significant in all models; in fact, substantively, this is the most relevant variable explaining the onset of conventional civil wars.⁵⁶ We suspect that Post 1991 and New State may be capturing the same effect (in fact, if we run the regression without the latter, the former becomes significant). As before, both Oil and GDP per capita are significant variables, but Rough terrain is not. Trade is, again, a non-significant variable.⁵⁷ Contrary to irregular war, neither Military personnel nor US military assistance have a significant effect on conventional civil war onsets. While the latter is consistent with our theory, the former is not—we expected military personnel to have a similar effect as in irregular onsets. At the same time, however, this

⁵⁶ In Table 10 below, we can see that this variable takes the highest marginal effect.

⁵⁷ Yet, if we do not include New State, Trade takes a significant negative sign. This is probably because these wars took place mostly in postcommunist countries that did not open their economies until the mid-1990s (Sachs and Warner 1995).

result resonates with the observation of multiple channels through which state military capacity impacts on civil war. All in all, conventional civil wars seem to be highly contingent on the specific processes that accompanied the end of the Cold War and led to the creation of new states.⁵⁸

Table 7. Logit Analyses of Determinants of Conventional Civil War Onset (1945-99)

	M1 Logit Spline I	M2 Logit Dummy(a)	M3 Logit Spline II	M4 Logit Spline III
Population (Log)	0.020 (0.25)	0.026 (0.25)	0.320 (0.23)	-0.121 (0.14)
Rough Terrain	0.026 (0.11)	0.033 (0.11)	0.363* (0.20)	0.130 (0.12)
Oil Exporter	0.940* (0.54)	0.983* (0.55)	0.364 (0.71)	0.969** (0.48)
Ethnic Fract.	-0.294 (0.72)	-0.286 (0.7)	0.687 (0.86)	-0.134 (0.61)
Religious Fract.	1.284 (1.06)	1.331 (1.03)	2.623** (1.21)	1.057 (0.92)
Democracy	-0.341 (0.82)	-0.378 (0.8)	-0.652 (1.29)	-0.584 (0.76)
Anocracy	0.146 (0.51)	0.129 (0.51)	1.304** (0.61)	0.306 (0.43)
GDP capita	-0.245* (0.15)	-0.248* (0.15)	-0.330 (0.25)	-0.222* (0.13)
Non contiguous	-0.175 (0.57)	-0.110 (0.57)	0.257 (0.70)	0.109 (0.48)
Post 1991	0.469 (0.64)	0.417 (0.72)	0.497 (0.60)	0.932* (0.50)
New State	1.807* (1.07)	16.839*** (1.41)	4.894*** (1.35)	2.509** (0.98)
Military Pers.	-0.001 (0.00)	-0.001 (0.00)	-----	-----
Trade	-----	-----	0.004 (0.01)	-----
USA Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	-0.432 (0.40)
Peace Years (Conv)	-0.089 (0.18)		0.500* (0.29)	0.013 (0.19)
Spline1 (b)	-0.002		0.004	-0.001
Spline2 (b)	0.001		-0.002	0.001
Spline3 (b)	-0.001*		0.001	-0.001
Constant	-5.401** (2.61)	-3.96* (2.38)	-13.698*** (2.63)	-5.056** (2.02)
N	5100.000	2026.000	3276.000	5219.000
chi2	28.826	.	117.985	51.986
Aic	323.956	307.189	166.464	355.125

⁵⁸ For a discussion on the role of coups in the outbreak of conventional civil wars, see Balcells (2009).

- (a) 40 dummies dropped due to outcomes being perfectly predicted. 17 temporal dummy variables in specification not shown.
- (b) Coefficients of peace years cubic spline segments.

Table 8 includes the results for SNC civil war onsets. The small number of cases of this type of war in the panel dataset complicates the estimation, and leads to large standard errors;⁵⁹ most of the coefficients turn out to be non-statistically significant.⁶⁰ In this context, it is interesting to observe that the post-Cold War dummy is statistically significant in Model 2 (again, the model with greater flexibility) and that it goes in the hypothesized direction: the likelihood of SNC war increases in the post-1991 period. In Model 3, Trade is statistically significant, and it takes a negative sign, probably indicating that the countries mostly affected by SNC wars have low trade flows. This also suggests that, contrary to the “new wars” thesis, these wars erupted in places that were not affected by processes of trade liberalization and global integration. Finally, US military assistance is a significant variable with a positive sign—a puzzling result given what we know about state failure.⁶¹

⁵⁹ There are a total of 13 SNC onsets in the panel; we lose 7 cases because of the shorter time span.

⁶⁰ We have also used the King and Zeng (2001) rare events logit, but the results do not change substantially from those obtained with the BTSCS regression.

⁶¹ This is probably driven by a few cases such as Somalia (1988), where US military assistance and civil war onset are closely intermixed and where the abrupt switch of US policy (long term assistance followed by a cut off right after the onset of the civil war) impacted state breakdown and the type of warfare that took place shortly afterwards.

Table 8. Logit Analyses of Determinants of SNC Civil War Onset

	M1 Logit Spline I	M2 Logit Dummy(a)	M3 Logit Spline II	M4 Logit Spline III
Population (Log)	0.254 (0.36)	0.462 (0.38)	-0.368 (0.35)	-0.207 (0.20)
Rough Terrain	-0.067 (0.16)	-0.115 (0.16)	-0.070 (0.29)	-0.085 (0.15)
Oil (c)	-----	-----	-----	-----
Ethnic Fract.	-1.353 (0.94)	-1.543 (0.96)	0.542 (1.96)	-0.824 (0.97)
Religious Fract.	5.089 (3.14)	5.874 (4.06)	2.921 (2.91)	5.518** (2.74)
Democracy	-0.648 (1.11)	-0.284 (1.09)	0.569 (0.79)	-0.163 (0.96)
Anocracy	0.252 (0.66)	0.884 (0.76)	-0.894 (1.05)	0.582 (0.66)
GDP capita	-0.352 (0.28)	-0.453 (0.34)	-0.776 (0.82)	-0.534 (0.35)
Non-contiguous (d)	0.905 (2.21)	0.880 (2.46)	-----	-0.042 (1.61)
Post 1991	0.900 (0.81)	1.253* (0.68)	2.091 (1.36)	0.391 (0.75)
New state (e)	-----	-----	-----	1.478 (1.97)
Military Pers.	-0.022 (0.01)	-0.028 (0.02)	-----	-----
Trade	-----	-----	-0.044** (0.02)	-----
USA Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	2.133*** (0.79)
Peace Years (SNC)	-0.058 (0.26)		-0.151 (0.46)	0.028 (0.26)
Spline1 (b)	-0.000		-0.002	0.001
Spline2 (b)	-0.000		0.001	-0.001
Spline3 (b)	0.000		-0.000	0.000
Constant	-8.843*** (2.90)	-9.376** (3.91)	-2.272 (6.49)	-7.066* (4.15)
N	4401.000	794.000	2165.000	4556.000
chi2	416.626	65.194	587.857	393.342
Aic	155.713	121.593	99.121	164.265

(a) 48 dummies dropped due to outcomes being perfectly predicted. 8 temporal dummy variables in specification not shown.

(b) Coefficients of peace years cubic spline segments.

(c) Oil drops predicts failure perfectly and drops of the equation in all four models. Of all 13 SNC onsets, only one takes place in an oil exporter state (Congo).

(d) In Model 3, new-contiguous predicts failure perfectly. It is dropped of the equation.

(e) In Models 1, 2 and 3, new state predicts failure perfectly. It is dropped of the equation.

Table 9 includes the results of the regressions with civil war onset, as coded by Fearon and Laitin (2003).⁶² It reproduces the main finding of the literature (Collier et al. 2003; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Sambanis 2001), namely the absence of effect of the end of the Cold War on the likelihood of civil war onset, and it confirms the relevance of disaggregating the technology of rebellion which allows us to uncover an otherwise concealed effect.

Table 9. Logit Analyses of Determinants of Civil War Onset

	M1 Logit Spline I	M2 Logit Dummy(a)	M3 Logit Spline II	M4 Logit Spline III
Population (Log)	0.149 (0.11)	0.156 (0.10)	0.172 (0.11)	0.219*** (0.08)
Rough Terrain	0.090 (0.08)	0.094 (0.08)	0.183* (0.10)	0.114 (0.08)
Oil	0.629** (0.29)	0.624** (0.30)	0.631* (0.34)	0.652** (0.28)
Ethnic Fract.	0.220 (0.40)	0.223 (0.39)	0.397 (0.48)	-0.047 (0.37)
Religious Fract.	0.542 (0.61)	0.527 (0.61)	0.257 (0.73)	0.638 (0.59)
Democracy	0.298 (0.36)	0.282 (0.36)	0.022 (0.41)	0.113 (0.34)
Anocracy	0.668*** (0.26)	0.658** (0.27)	0.634** (0.30)	0.551** (0.24)
GDP capita	-0.330*** (0.09)	-0.330*** (0.09)	-0.288*** (0.10)	-0.323*** (0.09)
Non-contiguous	0.191 (0.29)	0.190 (0.29)	0.374 (0.37)	0.277 (0.28)
Post 1991	0.269 (0.31)	0.154 (0.34)	0.445 (0.34)	0.275 (0.29)
New state	0.925 (0.80)	0.558 (0.83)	2.338*** (0.80)	1.973*** (0.52)
Military Pers.	0.000 (0.00)	0.000 (0.00)	-----	-----
Trade	-----	-----	-0.008 (0.01)	-----
USA Mil Ass	-----	-----	-----	0.453* (0.24)
Peace Years	0.102 (0.16)		0.165 (0.25)	0.048 (0.16)

⁶² There were some discrepancies between these authors' coding of civil war onsets and Sambanis's (2001). We have coded type of war onsets considering both datasets. For civil war onset, yet, we use Fearon and Laitin's variable.

Spline1 (b)	0.002		0.003	0.001
Spline2 (b)	-0.000		-0.001	-0.000
Spline3 (b)	0.000		0.000	0.000
Constant	-6.249***	-4.249***	-6.527***	-6.777***
	(1.16)	(1.49)	(1.42)	(1.03)
<hr/>				
N	5100.000	4117.000	3276.000	5219.000
chi2	42.592	86.846	55.613	70.452
Aic	872.446	881.455	583.977	931.750
<hr/>				

(a) 17 dummies dropped due to outcomes being perfectly predicted. 36 temporal dummy variables in specification not shown.

(b) Coefficients of peace years cubic spline segments.

The results in Table 9 are overall quite consistent with Fearon’s and Laitin’s findings, with the single exception of Rough Terrain is not showing up as significant in most of our models. Table 10 summarizes the marginal effects of all the variables for the three types of civil war, and civil war onset, using models 4 in Tables 6-9 which permits an easy comparison of the effects across variables. While the end of the Cold War cannot explain the onset of civil wars in general, it does explain the onset of irregular and conventional wars –in both cases, it has a quite considerable substantive effect. As noted, the non-significance of this variable on SNC (which has the expected sign) is very likely driven by of the small number of cases of this type in the panel dataset.

Table 10. Marginal Effects of Covariates

%StdX	Irregular	Conventional	SNC	All Civil Wars
Population	35.8**	-16.0	-25.7	37.0***
Rough Terrain	10.8	20.9	-11.8	18.0
Oil Exporter	27.0**	38.1**	----	24.3**
Ethnic Fract.	9.2	-3.8	-21.3	-1.4
Religious Fract.	12.1	26.1	236.3**	15.0
Democracy	18.2	-23.7	-7.4	5.4
Anocracy	36.6**	13.8	27.6	26.1**
GDP capita	-73.4***	-54.1*	-84.9	-67.7***
Non-contiguous	5.3	4.4	-1.7	11.5
Post 1991	-31.3**	42.1*	15.7	10.9
New state	15.7	46.1**	25.0	34.7***
US Mil. Ass.	49.8**	-19.2	186.2***	25.0*
Peace Years	-67.7	21.0	50.3	98.3

%StdX = percent change in odds for a standard deviation increase in the value of the independent variable

To summarize, the panel analysis confirms the impact of the end of the Cold War on the onset of the three types of civil war. The analysis also confirms the negative impact of GDP per capita on the likelihood of onset of all three types. We also find that the formation of new states is conducive to conventional civil wars and US military assistance targets states with irregular civil wars. The absence of an effect for Trade, Democracy, and Ethnic Fractionalization undermines alternative hypotheses related to globalization, democratization processes, or ethnic conflict. The fact that Anocracy has a positive effect on irregular warfare alone also challenges the conjecture that “hybrid regimes” are generally associated with the outbreak of civil wars (Hegre et al. 2001). Overall, the results are broadly consistent with the

results from the multinomial logit analysis and supportive of our hypotheses on the effect of the end of the Cold War on the onset of the three types of conflict.

Implications and Extensions

Our analysis generates three implications. First, given the leftist nature of robust insurgency not only should we observe that US military assistance is higher in states facing the prospect of irregular wars compared to other two types of civil wars, but also that it is higher for states facing irregular wars during the Cold War compared to states facing irregular wars following the Cold War. Second, Marxist rebellions against non-Marxist states should be an important part of all irregular civil wars during the Cold War. Third, the “price” of peace should vary between the two periods: the robust insurgencies of the Cold War should be associated with higher state military capacity.

First, our argument about the leftist nature of robust insurgency implies that (a) US military assistance should be more strongly associated with irregular wars than the other two types; and (b) the association between US military assistance and irregular wars should be tighter during the Cold War than after its end.⁶³ The analysis in the previous section (Table 5) confirms (a); to test for (b), we examine separately two sub-samples covering the Cold War (1950-1990) and post-Cold (1991-2004) periods. Table 11 displays the results of a multinomial logit analysis on the two time periods with irregular war as the reference category. We find that US military assistance has a differential effect on the likelihood of each type, depending on the period: it is positively and significantly associated with the onset of irregular civil war (compared to conventional civil war) during the Cold War, but not during the post-Cold War period. US military assistance has no effect on SNC civil wars (as compared to irregular wars), in either period.

Table 11. Multinomial Logit Analyses with US Military Assistance by Cold War and Post Cold War

	Period	
	(1950-1990)	(1991-2004)
Conventional		
Population	-0.247*	-0.103
Rough Terrain	-0.007	0.002
Ethnic Fract.	-1.776**	1.331
GDP capita	-0.324	0.215

⁶³ Our conjecture being that US military assistance during the Cold War was likely associated to shoring up states threatened by Soviet-supported insurgencies (outcome B in our theoretical model).

New State	0.042	35.036***
US Mil. Ass.	-1.171**	-0.492
Constant	3.485**	0.571
SNC		
Population	-0.824*	-0.393
Rough Terrain	0.003	-0.051**
Ethnic Fract.	0.117	-0.807
GDP capita	-0.162	-0.816
New State	0.622	2.927*
US Mil. Ass.	0.752	0.353
Constant	4.916*	5.799*
N	99	36
Chi2	21.643	3191.979
Aic	171.785	80.395
Robust Standard Errors in Brackets		
Legend: * p<.1; ** p<.05; *** p<.01		

Second, our analysis implies that Marxist rebellions against non-Marxist states should be an important part of all irregular civil wars during the Cold War. Obviously, Marxist insurgencies should decrease substantially during the post-Cold War period. We have classified all the civil wars in our dataset by dyads, according to the ideological orientation of incumbents and insurgents (Marxist/non Marxists).⁶⁴ The distribution of dyads between types of conflicts, and by time periods, is as follows.

Table 12. Ideological Orientation & Technologies of Rebellion

	Conventional		Irregular		SNC		Total
	Pre 1991	Post 1991	Pre 1991	Post 1991	Pre 1991	Post 1991	
Marxist Rebels vs. Marxist States	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Marxist Rebels vs. Non-Marxist States	4	0	25	1	1	0	31
Non- Marxist Rebels vs. Non- Marxist States	19	22	28	11	7	12	99
Non- Marxist Rebels vs. Marxist States	3	0	11	0	0	0	14
Total	27	22	66	12	8	12	147

⁶⁴ See the Appendix for 1) the coding procedures; 2) the complete list of coding of these dyads.

As expected, Marxist rebellions take place almost exclusively during the Cold War; evidently, Marxist insurgencies vanish in the post-Cold War period (the Maoist insurgency in Nepal is the only such onset). More interesting is the fact that these rebellions tend to cluster in the irregular war category. Prior to 1991, 80% of Marxist rebellions (against non Marxist governments) were fought as irregular wars; just 13% were fought as conventional wars and only one case takes the form of SNC war. In contrast, non-Marxist insurgencies are distributed across all three technologies of rebellion, as well as across the two time periods. Interestingly, the less numerous non-Marxist insurgencies confronting Marxist states during the Cold War also cluster in the irregular war category, suggesting a diffusion effect during the later 1970s and the 1980s (Radu 1990:7).⁶⁵ Altogether, 56% of all irregular wars during the Cold War involve Marxist rebels and/or states, compared to 26% of conventional wars and 12% of SNC wars.

Third, what can be described as the “price” of civil peace should vary between the two periods: the robust insurgencies of the Cold War should have inflated military investment—civil peace during the Cold War should have been more costly. We can test this implication indirectly by comparing levels of military personnel in the countries not undergoing a civil war before and after 1991. Table 13 shows a comparison of means test for the two subsamples distinguished by period. The average size of military personnel in peaceful states is significantly lower in the post-1991 compared to the pre-1991 period. While this can also be the result of a pressure to demilitarize (which is not independent of the end of the Cold War), it is also fully consistent with our argument: it suggests that, on average, militarily weaker states have a higher likelihood to be peaceful in the post-Cold War period compared to the Cold War.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Indeed, many non-Marxist insurgents started out as Marxists (e.g. Jonas Savimbi in Angola) and first learned their trade while fighting in Marxist insurgencies (e.g. Edén Pastora in Nicaragua). In his description of anti-Marxist insurgencies, Radu (1990:14) remarks that “some of the most successful anticommunist insurgents today have been influenced by Communist insurgent strategies,” speaks of “the paradox of Communist methods being used against Communist regimes,” and refers to “the deep appeal of Leninism, particularly in its Third World incarnations.”

⁶⁶ If we run the same comparison of means test for non-peaceful countries, the mean levels of military personnel also show to be greater in the Cold War period. Yet, the mean differences between the groups are not as statistically significant (they are significant at the 95% level and not at the 99% level).

Table 13. Comparison of Mean Levels of Military Personnel in Countries at Peace, by Period

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.
Pre 1991	4990	194.918	9.19	649.7141
Post 1991	1714	102.641	5.85	242.3271
Combined	6704	171.3258	7.024	575.1556
Diff		92.276	16.06433	
Diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = 5.7442 Degrees of freedom = 6702 Pr(T > t) = 0.0000				

7. Conclusion

Our empirical results lend support to our main conjecture: the end of the Cold War is associated with an important transformation of civil wars: away from irregular war and toward conventional and symmetric non-conventional civil war. This shift is clearly visible and robust to multivariate analysis and implies that far from being a modular and plastic technology, irregular war is linked to bipolarity and the Cold War. Our empirical analysis provides no support for alternative hypotheses and suggests that the causal mechanisms we posit, namely the combination of shifting superpower support for states and rebels and the residual capacity of states are key factors in this transformation.

Although research on civil wars has recently turned its sight to the international *dimension* of civil wars, including the role of neighborhood contagion (Hegre and Sambanis 2006, Buhaug and Gleditsch 2008), refugees (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006), and diasporas (Collier and Hoeffler 2004), it has surprisingly neglected the international *system*. By identifying an important and overlooked transformation of civil wars, we are able to reconcile the theoretical link of system polarity and internal conflict with the empirical findings of the recent crossnational literature. We also question the central assumption of a major theory of civil war onset, namely the equation of civil war with insurgency (Fearon and Laitin 2003)—an assumption that has major implications for the interpretation of the effect of GDP per capita on civil war onset. Our analysis places natural scope-conditions on existing theories of rebellion that are based primarily on state weakness and redirects the theoretical focus on the role of multidimensional external support (as opposed to mere financing), beliefs, and war doctrines. We suggest that a full understanding of civil war onset requires a clear understanding of the complex relationship between state and rebel capacity. Our analysis also implies that policy makers should be aware of the variation in technologies of rebellion and the transformation of internal conflict after the end of the Cold War, particularly as they plan international mediation, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

If our analysis is correct, robust insurgency has peaked. Like its revolutionary predecessor in history, the mass urban insurrection modeled after the French Revolution, robust insurgency was historically dependent on an international context characterized by bipolarity and global ideological competition. Contemporary civil wars are more likely to be conventional or symmetric non-conventional wars.

How about irregular civil wars in the post-Cold War era? An examination of these conflicts suggests that they come in two major types. The first one consists of minor, peripheral wars, akin to what Fearon (2004) calls “sons of the soil” insurgencies (e.g. Aceh, Thailand, Cabinda in Angola); they do not threaten power at the center and can be contained or resolved without major international repercussions. The second type consists of insurgencies that display a radical Islamist outlook (e.g. Egypt, Algeria, Iraq, Chechnya, Tajikistan, Afghanistan). These cluster in the Middle East and North Africa, the region we found in our analysis to be the most resistant to post-Cold War dynamics. Because of present US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, these insurgencies have justifiably received considerable attention; in turn, this attention may have reinforced the perception that insurgency is a transhistorical phenomenon.

It is true that one transnational social movement has tried to resurrect robust insurgency in the post-Cold War era: the radical Islamist or jihadi movement. It combines, uniquely so far, a transnational social movement (along with the obligatory training camps), revolutionary beliefs both in the sense of a global counter-hegemonic ideology and the willingness to take up arms in order to implement it, and an organizational doctrine of revolutionary guerrilla warfare, formulated by Abu Mus’ab al-Suri, the Che Guevara of jihad.⁶⁷ However, jihadism still lacks the support of a powerful external sponsor.⁶⁸ The result has been a wave of military defeats (Bronson 1996),⁶⁹ which has forced Al-Suri and other theoreticians of jihad to recommend a shift away from insurgency and toward transnational urban terrorism (Lia 2008). In short, the fact that even radical Islam has failed so far to carry out a strategy of robust insurgency demonstrates how hard it is to replicate this technology of rebellion outside its historical context. Our analysis suggests that, while US policy makers are certainly right to be concerned

⁶⁷ His magnum opus, *The Global Islamic Resistance Call* has widened the appeal of jihadism to new audiences, “especially among young, well-educated Westernised Muslims who seem to be motivated more by a mixture of leftist radicalism and militant pan-Islamic nationalism than by religiosity” (Lia 2008:27).

⁶⁸ Indeed, the most successful Islamist armed movement so far has been the Lebanese Hezbollah which has been fully and consistently supported by Iran.

⁶⁹ Afghanistan is an exception. The Taliban victory in 1991, an outcome of conventional war, was largely due to Pakistani assistance (Rashid 2001).

about ongoing insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, they should not be blinded by them into thinking that these conflicts represent the future of warfare.

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