Civil wars I

Francisco Villamil

War, peace, and political violence

UC3M, Fall 2024

Housekeeping

Presentation days:

- **October 31st**
- December 5th
- December 13th

- (**Max 4 per day**)

Civil wars

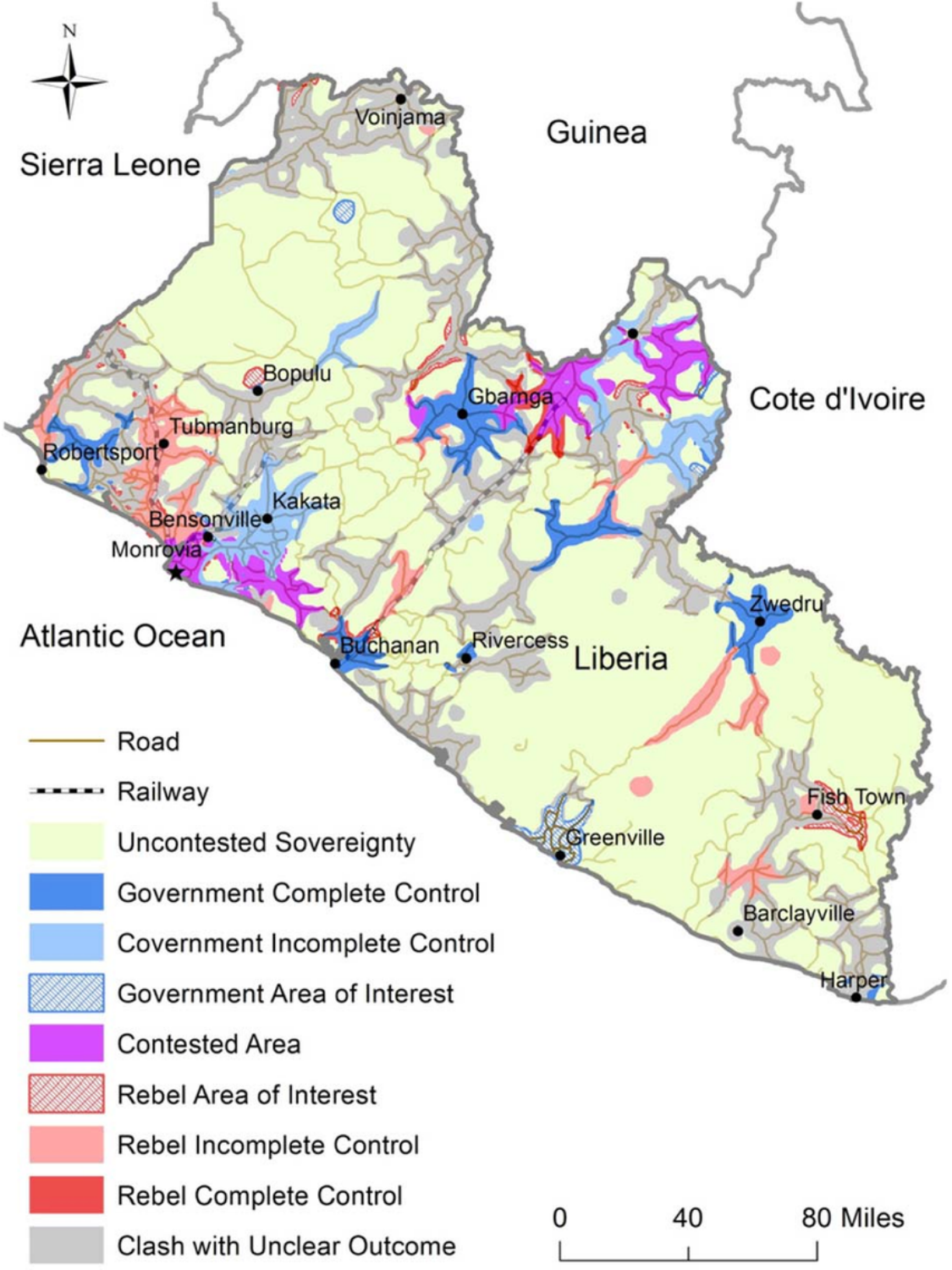


American Civil War

Civil wars



Liberian Civil War


N
Sierra Leone
Guinea
Cote d'Ivoire
Liberia
Atlantic Ocean
Voinjama
Bopulu
Gbarnga
Tubmanburg
Robertsport
Kakata
Bensonville
Monrovia
Buchanan
Rivercess
Zwedru
Fish Town
Greenville
Barclayville
Harper
Road
Railway
Uncontested Sovereignty
Government Complete Control
Covernment Incomplete Control
Government Area of Interest
Contested Area
Rebel Area of Interest
Rebel Incomplete Control
Rebel Complete Control
Clash with Unclear Outcome
0
40
80 Miles


Cabo Machichaco
Gijón
Ferrol
Santander
Gernica
San Sebastián
Irún
Gurs
Septfonds
FRANCIA
Bram
Agde
Vernet d'Ariège
Ribesaltes
El Barcarès
Sant Cebrià
Argelers
ANDORRA
La Coruña
Oviedo
El Mazuco
Bilbao
Durango
Ochandiano
Vitoria
Lugo
León
Burgos
Miranda de Ebro
Pamplona
Prats de Molló
Figueras
Vigo
Huesca
Valladolid
Zaragoza
Segre
Lérida
Granollers
Barcelona
Ebro
Belchite
Alcañiz
Segovia
Jarama
Guadalajara
Salamanca
Ávila
Madrid
Brunete
Teruel
Vinarós
Menorca
PORTUGAL
Talavera
Toledo
Castellón
Cáceres
Valencia
Palma
Porto Cristo
Badajoz
Mérida
Albacete
Játiva
Baleares
Castuera
Elda
Alicante
Barrancos
Albatera
Murcia
Lopera
Córdoba
Jaén
Sevilla
Cabra
Cartagena
Cabo de Palos
Granada
Almería
Cádiz
Málaga
Cabo Cherchel
Algeciras
La Línea
GIBRALTAR
Cabo Espartel
Ceuta
TÁNGER
La Palma
Canarias
Tetuán
Melilla
Larache
Sta. Cruz
PROTECTORADO
FRANCÉS

Civil wars



Troubles, Northern Ireland

Civil wars

News

Tamil Tigers show off air force

Sri Lankan rebel group releases photos of pilots posing with their new aircraft.





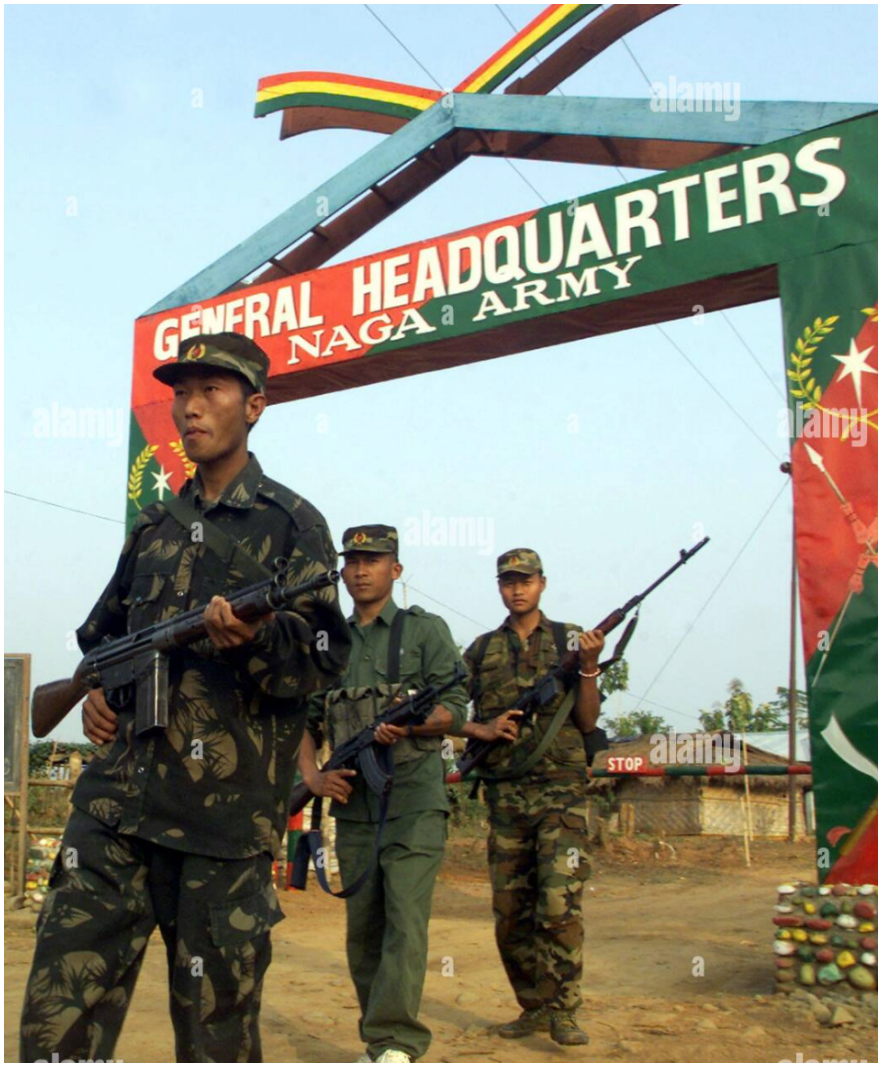
26 Mar 2007

The Tamil Tiger rebel movement has introduced the world to its new air force in the most dramatic way possible – by bombing Sri Lanka's main airbase.

Sri Lankan war

Civil wars





Nagaland conflict, India

Civil wars



Naxalites, India

Civil wars



Guatemala

So what is a civil war?

- What do all these have in common? And differences?

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- Basic idea: armed conflict *within* a sovereign state, fought between the government and a non-state challenger over opposite claims to sovereignty
  - → We usually refer to the challengers as *rebel groups*

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- How is the fighting?
  - → Warfare technology

Technologies of rebellion

- Not all rebel groups look the same
- Some actually don't even look like rebel groups (or the idea we usually have of them)
  - → e.g. Confederate States, Franco's Nationalists
- Same applies sometimes to the government forces
- Concept: technologies of rebellion
  - → What kind of fighting forces are the rebels capable of launching?
  - → Guerrillas? Conventional armies?

Technologies of rebellion

TABLE 1. Technologies of Rebellion in Civil War

		Military Technologies of the State	
		High	Low
Military Technologies of the Rebels	High	Conventional	[Successful military coup]
	Low	Irregular	Symmetric nonconventional

Balcells & Kalyvas (*APSR* 2010)

Technologies of rebellion

- Irregular wars

  $\approx$ 34% (1944–2004)

  (e.g. Nepal, Peru, etc)

- Conventional wars

  $\approx$ 54%

  (e.g. US, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syria)

- Symmetric non-conventional

  $\approx$ 12%

  (Somalia, CAR)

What is not a civil war?

- It's *not* violence against civilians
  - → War $\neq$ violence
- It's *not* terrorism
  - → Although terrorism can be used within wars
- It's *not* genocide
  - → Any war involves sustained, bidirectional battle violence
- It's *not* non-state violence (e.g. communal riots)
  - → State/government is always one participant
- It's *not* ethnic conflict
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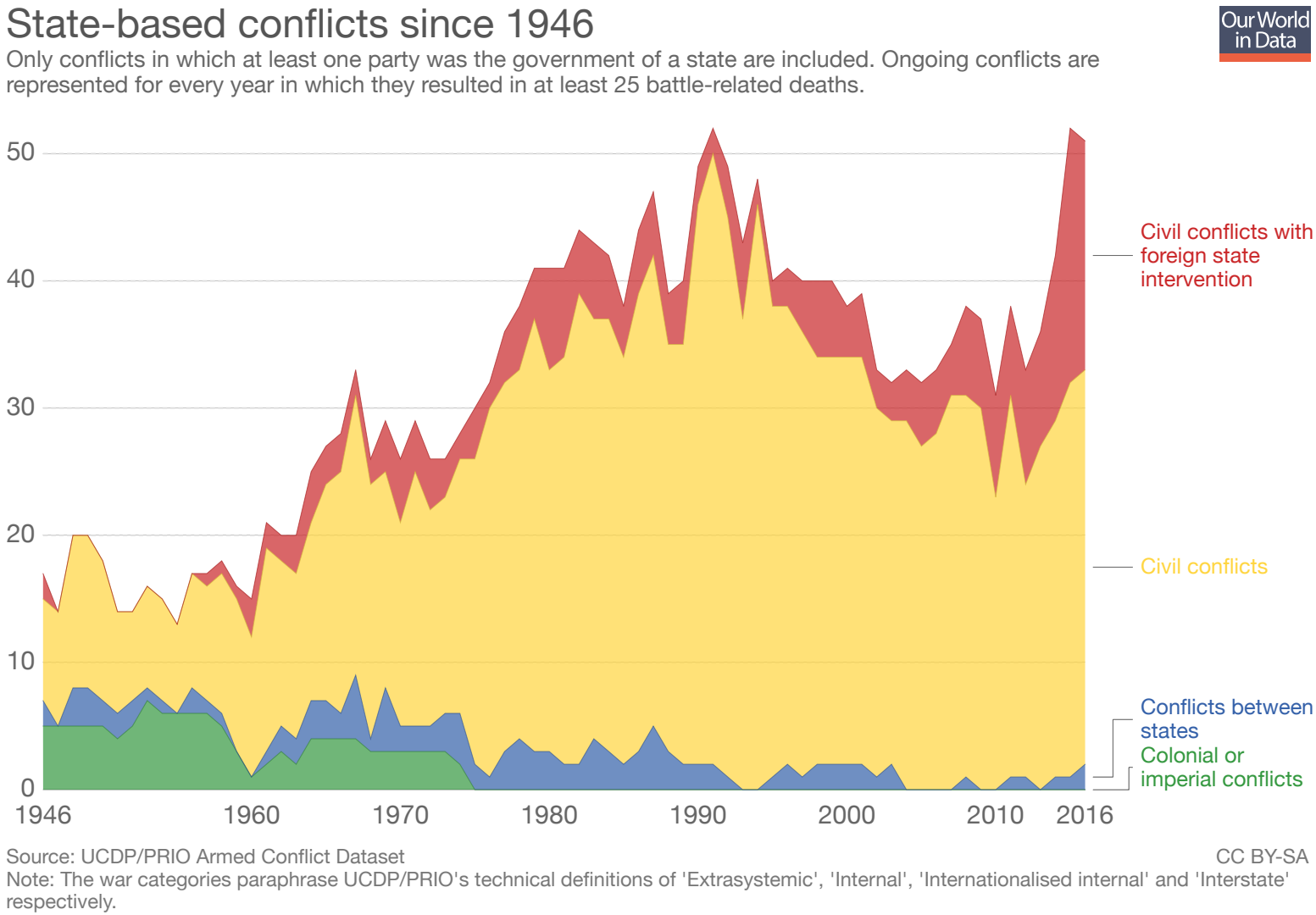
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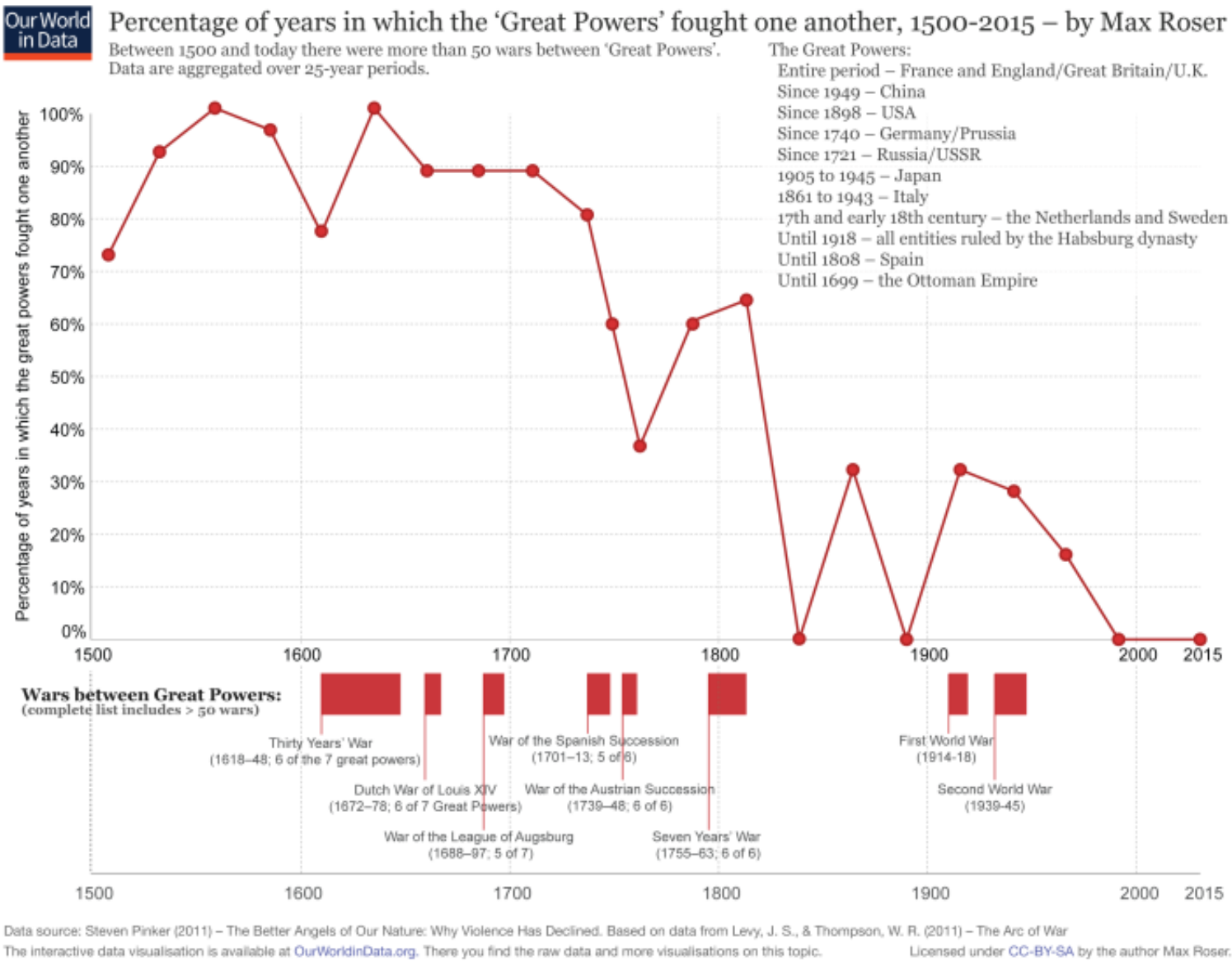
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Patterns of conflicts over time



Source: UCDP-PRIO & https://ourworldindata.org/

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- Onset of civil wars
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  - → How and when do they end?
- **Postwar politics**
  - → How do we avoid the relapse of civil wars? What are their consequences?
  - → The 'conflict trap'

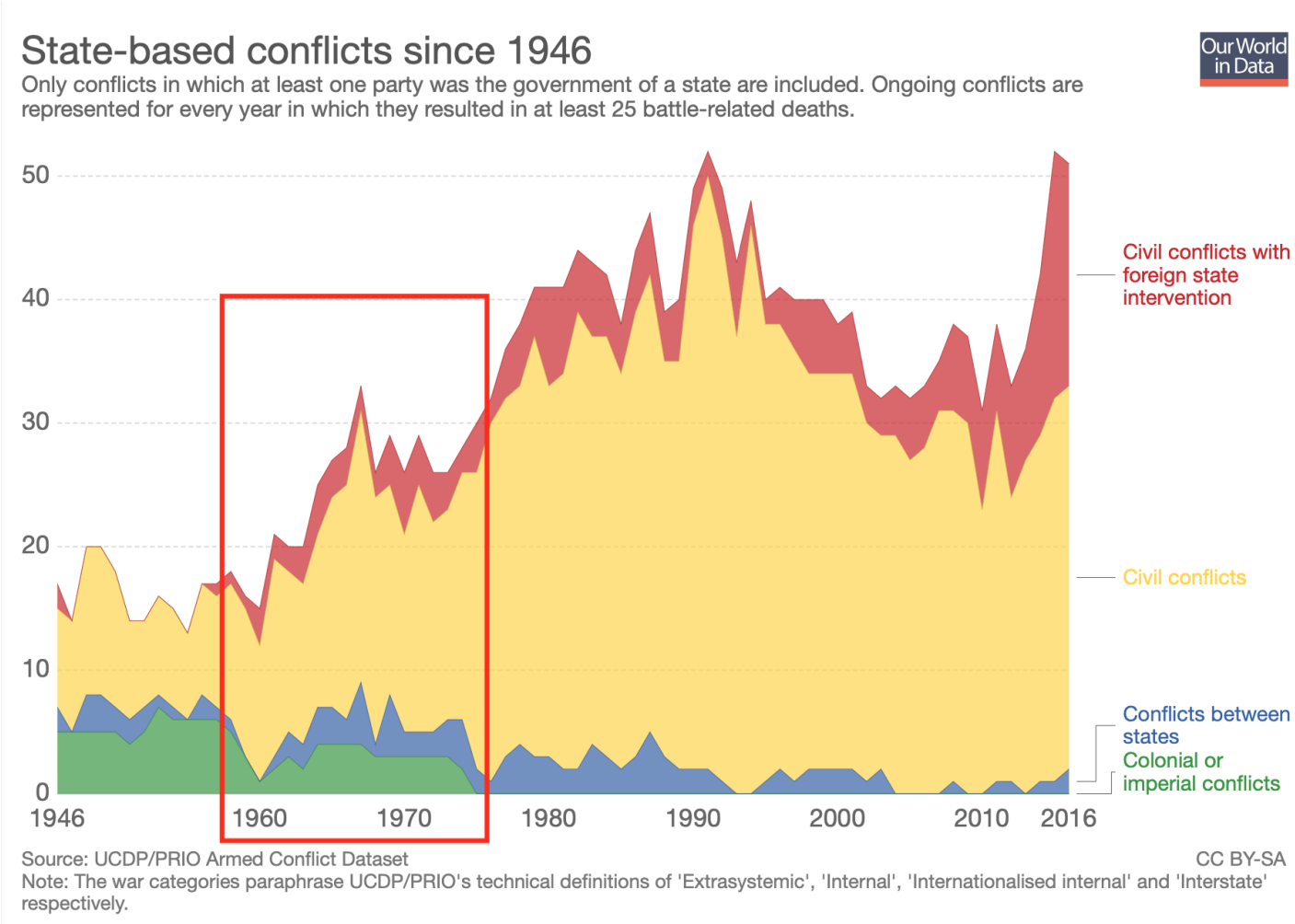
Understanding civil wars



Duelo a garrotazos (Goya, ca. 1820)

- Civil wars were traditionally seen as irrational mass violence

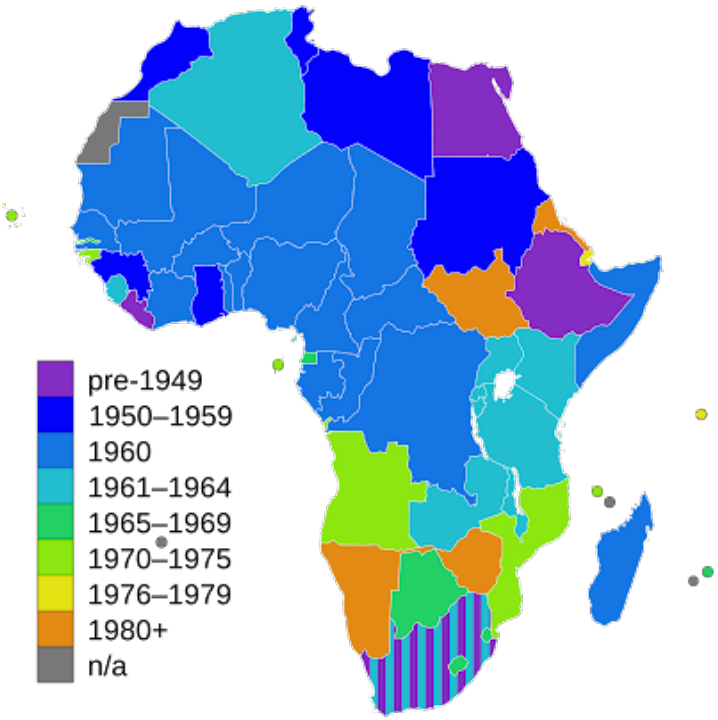
Context



- Increase of civil war incidence after the 1960s

Context

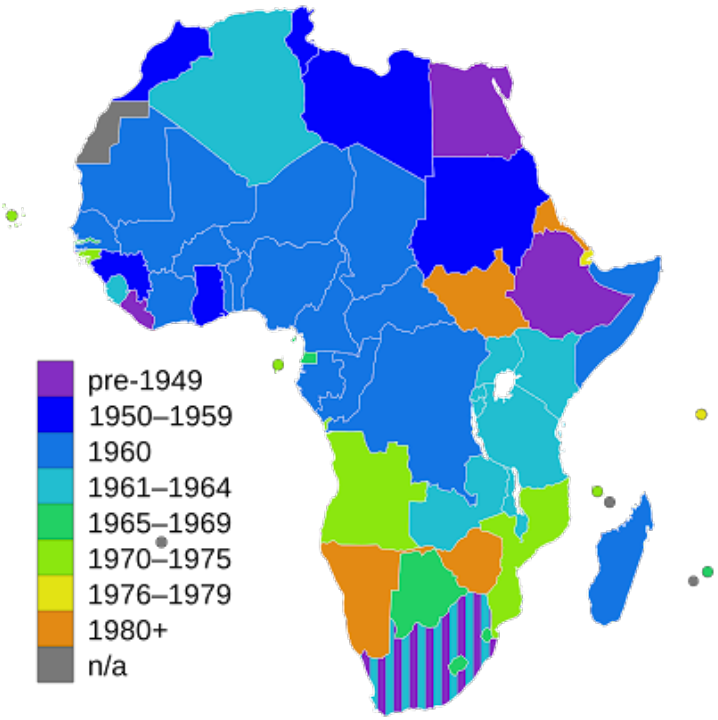
- Role of decolonization from 1960 on
- Newly independent countries followed Western-style form of state rule
  - → Centralized administrations, clear territorial borders (e.g. Organisation of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 1963)



Decolonization in Africa

Context

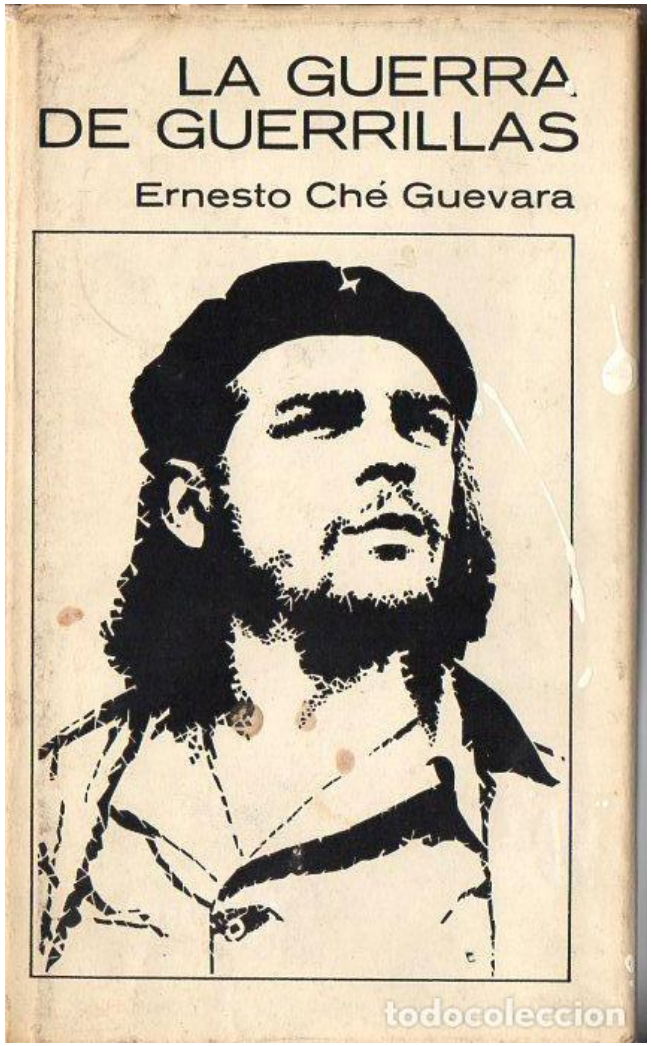
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- Weak states and political inequality



Decolonization in Africa

Context

- Spread of revolutionary insurgencies
- Role of ideological global context
  - → Cold War and US/USSR rivalry



Early studies

- Early studies on revolutions
- Focus on grievances, inequality
- That was the prevailing way of studying this before the 1990s
- Even if they were **not studied as** 'civil wars,' but as '**peasant rebellions**' or '**social revolutions**'
  - → Mixing onset with outcome, etc



Cuban Revolution

Early studies

- Things started to change in the 1990s
- The end of the Cold War
- Yugoslavia, Rwanda and the role of ethnicity
- Ancient hatreds, 'clash of civilizations', etc



Siege of Sarajevo

Research on 'civil wars'

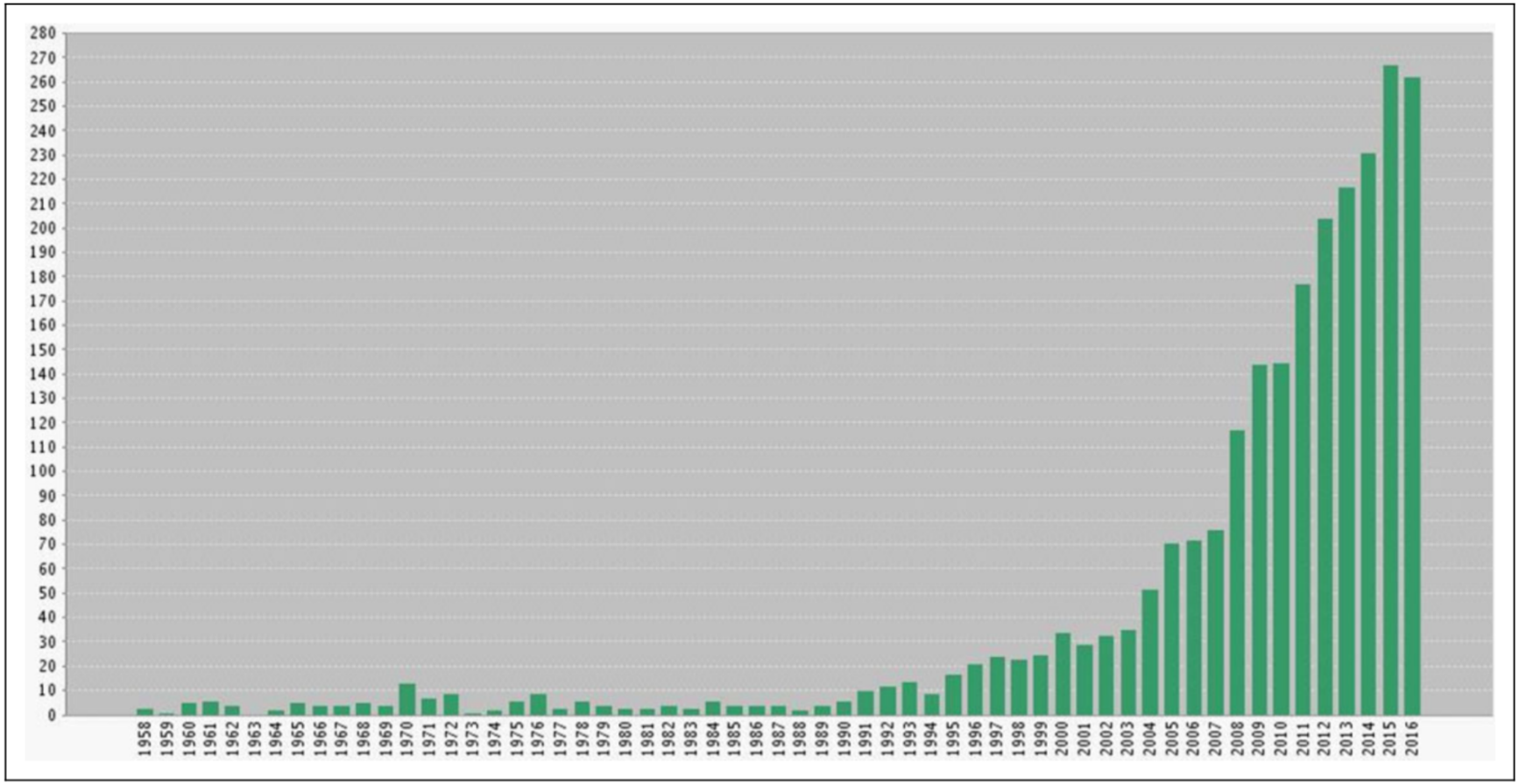
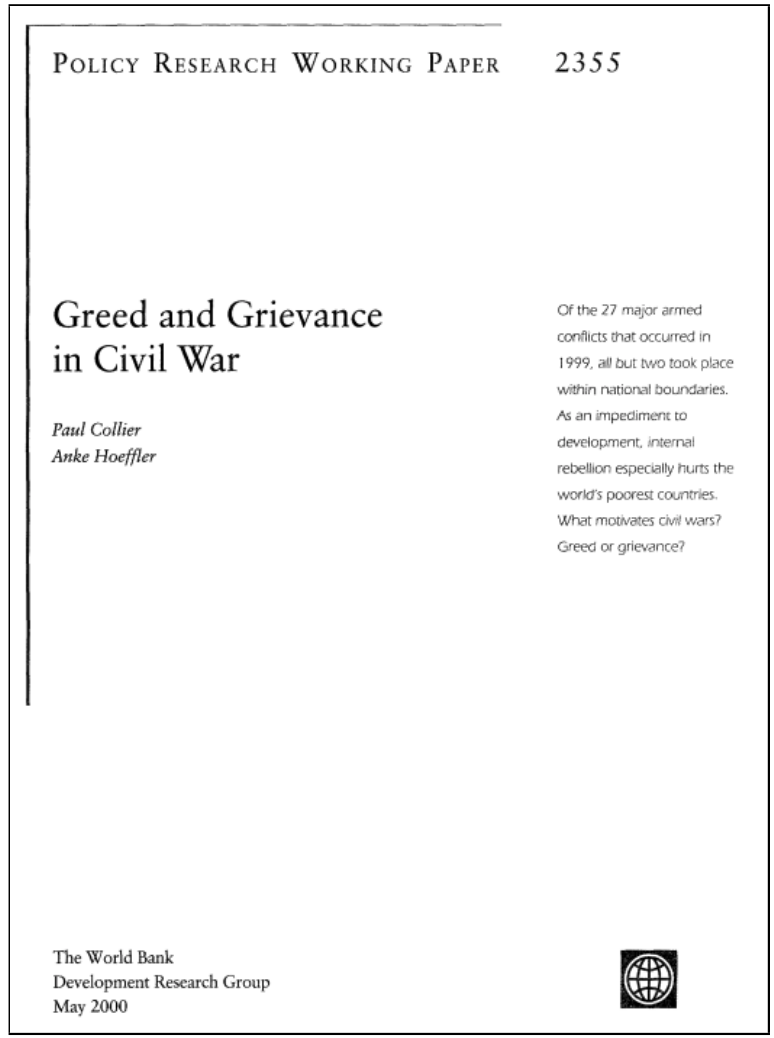


Figure 1. Number of "civil war" articles published in political science, economics, and sociology journals. *Source*: *Web of Science*.

How it started: the role of development economists

- Civil wars as a development problem
- What drives civil wars?
- First quantitative analyses of CW onset
- New explanation: greed
  - → Greed vs. grievance debate



Paul Collier & Anke Hoeffler (2000)

The *greed* perspective

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The *greed* perspective

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- Collier & Hoeffler argued that grievances do not explain anything because they are always present
- Grievances are just used by greedy rebels who think a civil war is a good opportunity to get rich
- Microeconomic perspective: civil wars erupt if the the opportunity cost of violence is low (poverty) and the expected gains are high (natural resources & looting)

Empirics in Collier & Hoeffler model

Key variables:

- **Male secondary schooling:** opportunity cost of joining insurgency
- **Primary commodity exports:** expected gains
- **Social fractionalization:** should capture grievances

- Analyzing determinants of onset in country-year data

Table 3: Greed Model

	1	2	3	4	5
male secondary schooling	-0.036 (0.011)***	-0.037 (0.011)***	-0.028 (0.012)**	-0.027 (0.012)**	
ln GDP per capita					-0.822 (0.288)***
(GDP growth - 3*population growth) t-1	-0.080 (0.036)**	-0.074 (0.036)**	-0.084 (0.036)**	-0.086 (0.036)**	-0.101 (0.035)***
primary commodity exports/GDP	34.088 (8.186)***	34.109 (8.423)***	32.147 (8.497)***	32.058 (8.465)***	22.923 (6.903)***
(primary commodity exports/GDP) ^{2}	-67.792 (18.683)***	-67.172 (18.679)***	-62.307 (18.954)***	-62.091 (18.962)***	039.192 (14.710)***
ln population	1.026 (0.191)***	0.960 (0.194)***	0.832 (0.198)***	0.832 (0.197)***	0.574 (0.146)***
social fractionalization	-0.0002 (0.0001)**	-0.0003 (0.0001)***	-0.0003 (0.0001)***	-0.0003 (0.0001)***	-0.0003 (0.0001)***
geographic dispersion	-3.517 (1.142)***	-3.888 (1.181)***	-3.384 (1.200)***	-3.289 (1.180)***	-1.568 (1.051)
mountainous terrain	0.019 (0.009)**	0.013 (0.009)	0.014 (0.010)	0.015 (0.010)	0.012 (0.009)
previous war dummy		1.016 (0.405)***	0.252 (0.527)		
Peace duration			-0.004 (0.002)**	-0.004 (0.001)***	-0.004 (0.001)***
n	691	691	688	688	747
no of wars	43	43	43	43	47
pseudo R^2	0.25	0.27	0.29	0.29	0.26
log likelihood	-120.98	-117.63	-114.32	-114.43	-129.44

Notes: All regressions include a constant. Standard errors in parentheses.
***, **, * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent level, respectively.

Collier & Hoeffler (2000)

The *greed* perspective: context



Liberian Civil War (Ben Curtis)

- End of the Cold War and the big ideologies
- The New Wars: resource-rich countries, warlords, brutality, no ideological motivations...

Examples



FARC and cocaine in Colombia

Examples



Taliban and opium in Afghanistan

Examples?

Afghanistan is the world's opium king. Can the Taliban afford to kill off their 'un-Islamic' cash cow?

By Kara Fox, CNN

Updated 0426 GMT (1226 HKT) September 29, 2021



A farmer harvests opium sap from a poppy field in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province in May 2020.

(CNN) — When the khaki-colored landscapes of Afghanistan are transformed by a patchwork of pink, white and purple each spring, farmers rejoice. Their cash crop of poppies is ready for harvesting.

- By the way, how could we explain this?
  - → (i.e. Taliban trying to erradicate opium trade after getting power)

Implications

- Greed perspective is actually quite common (not only for civil wars)
- Not only about an academic debate on the causes, but with **major implications for conflict resolution**



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  - → Which ones?



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  - → Which ones?
- Related: Causes of onset ≠ organizational behavior
  - → Onset vs individual recruitment
  - → Taliban and oppium example



Refining *greed* model: opportunity

American Political Science Review Vol. 97, No. 1 February 2003

Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War

JAMES D. FEARON and DAVID D. LAITIN *Stanford University*

An influential conventional wisdom holds that civil wars proliferated rapidly with the end of the Cold War and that the root cause of many or most of these has been ethnic and religious antagonisms. We show that the current prevalence of internal war is mainly the result of a steady accumulation of protracted conflicts since the 1950s and 1960s rather than a sudden change associated with a new, post-Cold War international system. We also find that after controlling for per capita income, more ethnically or religiously diverse countries have been no more likely to experience significant civil violence in this period. We argue for understanding civil war in this period in terms of insurgency or rural guerrilla warfare, a particular form of military practice that can be harnessed to diverse political agendas. The factors that explain which countries have been at risk for civil war are not their ethnic or religious characteristics but rather the conditions that favor insurgency. These include poverty—which marks financially and bureaucratically weak states and also favors rebel recruitment—political instability, rough terrain, and large populations.

- Stressing *opportunity* instead of greed
- Most influential explanation on civil war

  (most cited article in the main PolSci journal)

Fearon & Laitin's model of insurgency

- It's not about greedy rebels calculating how to get rich
- Focus on the '**technology of insurgency**': factors that improve the capacity of rebels to launch an armed conflict using "small, lighly armed bands practicing guerrilla warfare from rural base areas"

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- It's not about greedy rebels calculating how to get rich
- Focus on the '**technology of insurgency**': factors that improve the capacity of rebels to launch an armed conflict using "small, lighly armed bands practicing guerrilla warfare from rural base areas"
- Implication: civil war erupts when the state is weak (& up for grabs by political opponents)

Fearon & Laitin's model of insurgency

What makes these rural insurgencies more likely?

- Poverty
  - → no capacity to police & easier for the rebels to recruit
- Rough terrain
  - → easier for the rebels to organize, hide from the state
- Political instability
  - → disorganized center of power, less capacity to control
- Large populations
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  - → again, more difficult to control and easier rebel recruitment
- F&L argued **ethnic and religious divisions had no effect**

Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

- So why did we have so much war in the 1960s and 1990s?

Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

- Focus on the '**resource curse**': countries that depend on natural resources are more likely to suffer insurgencies and conflict

Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

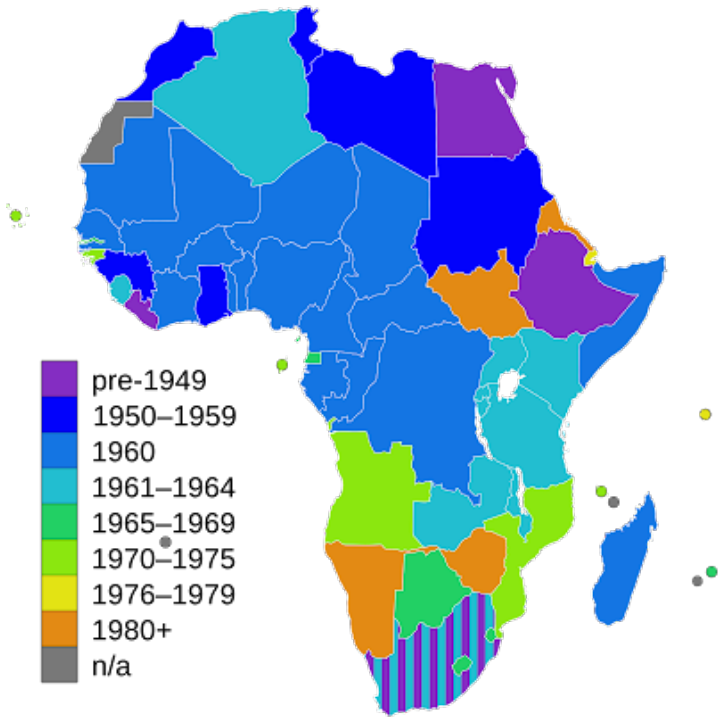
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- Fearon & Laitin's **opportunity model**: resource-rich countries don't need to develop tax extraction and public services, leading to bad governance and weak institutions

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- Collier & Hoeffler's **greed model**: they are easy to loot
- Fearon & Laitin's **opportunity model**: resource-rich countries don't need to develop tax extraction and public services, leading to bad governance and weak institutions
- Particularly much worse in countries with rough terrain and peripherical regions
  - → Remember Tilly's model of state creation? if you have oil or diamonds, no need to develop state structures for taxation

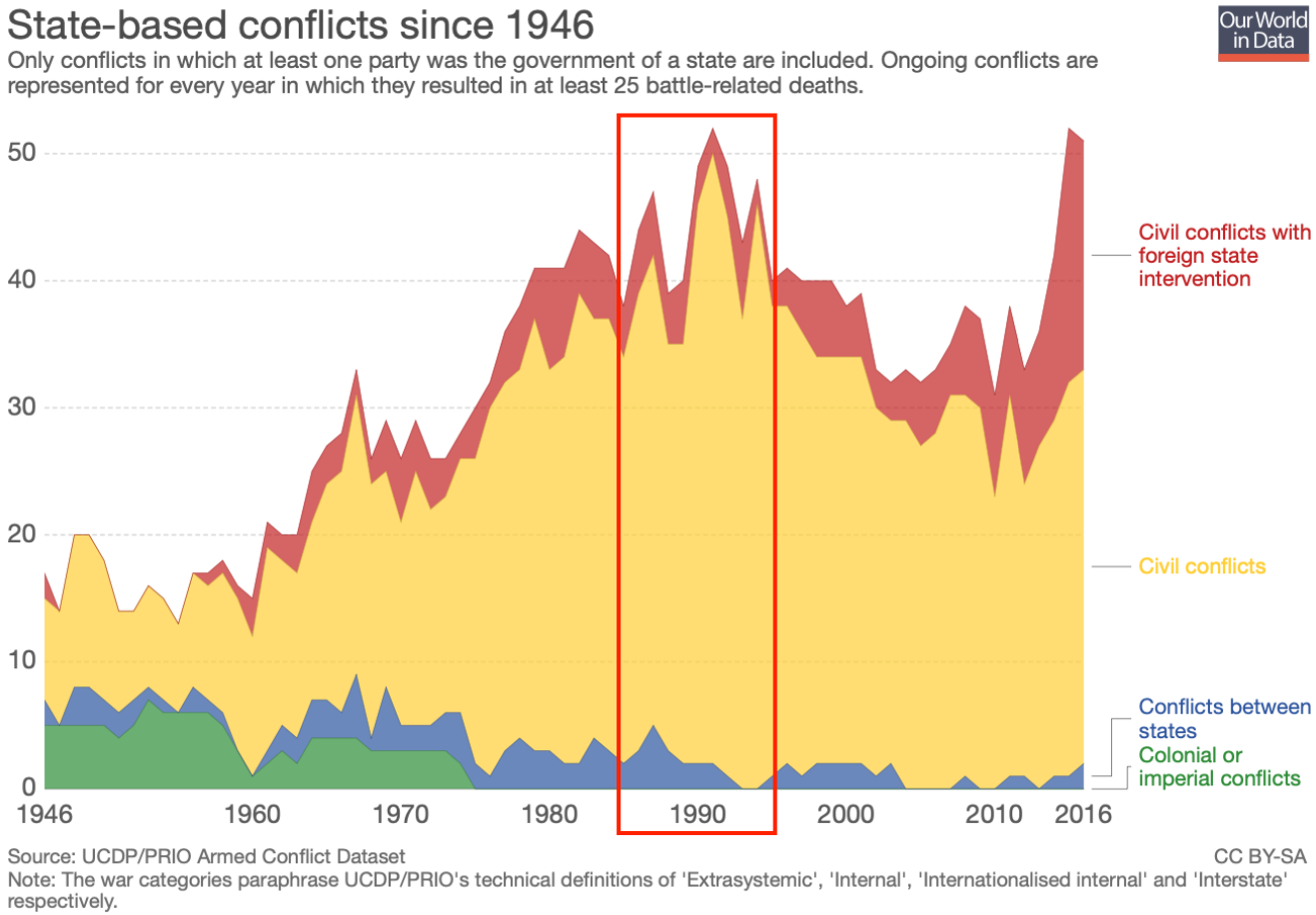
Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

- That should be the **main reason** behind the post-1960 increase in civil war
- **Not** because of grievances related to the decolonization process, but because these states were 'half-baked'
- (Same argument applies to Latin America, according to them)



Decolonization in Africa

Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses



- What about the 1990s?

  → civil war incidence *appeared* to rise after the end of the Cold War

Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

- Previous explanations on the role of the international system or the rise of multi-ethnic countries

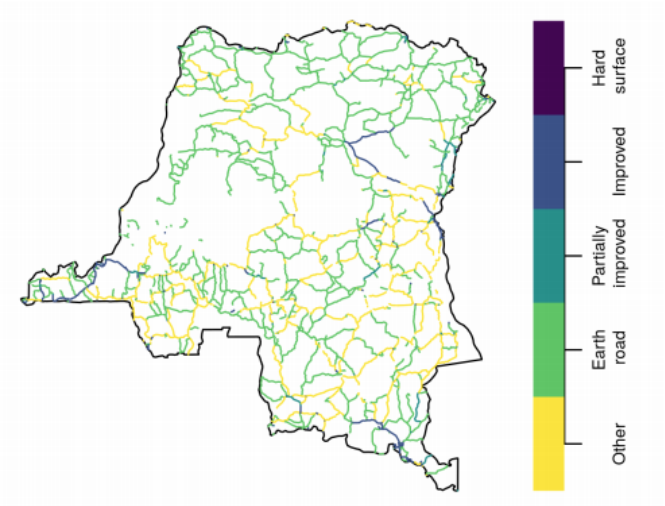
Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

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- Fearon & Laitin: it's not new wars but the **consequence of many protracted conflicts that have not still ended**, brought about by the new weak states created in the decolonization waves of the 1950s and 1970s

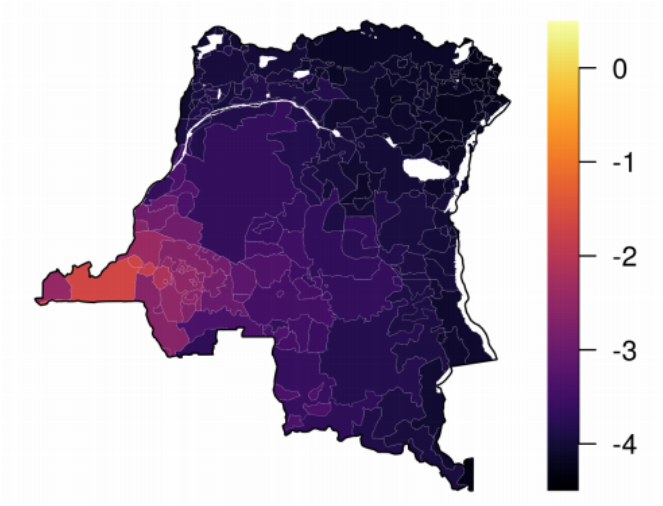
Fearon & Laitin's diagnoses

- Previous explanations on the role of the international system or the rise of multi-ethnic countries
- Fearon & Laitin: it's not new wars but the **consequence of many protracted conflicts that have not still ended**, brought about by the new weak states created in the decolonization waves of the 1950s and 1970s
- Implication? We should focus on the technology of insurgency, the *domestic* conditions that favor rebellion, but not on the international level or on cultural, ethnic, or religious differences

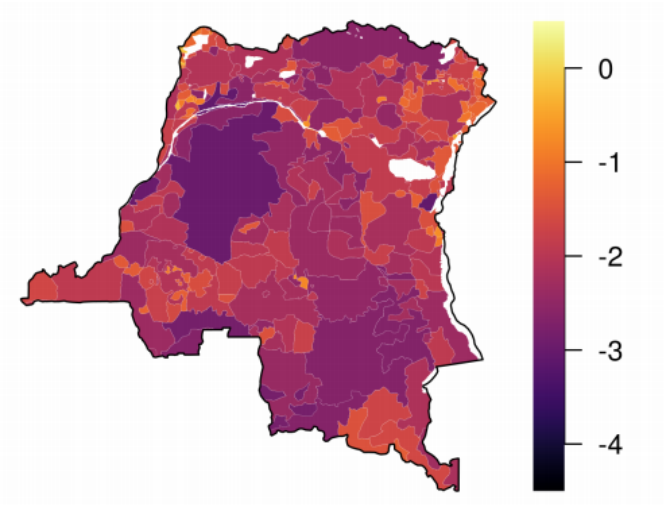
Extensions



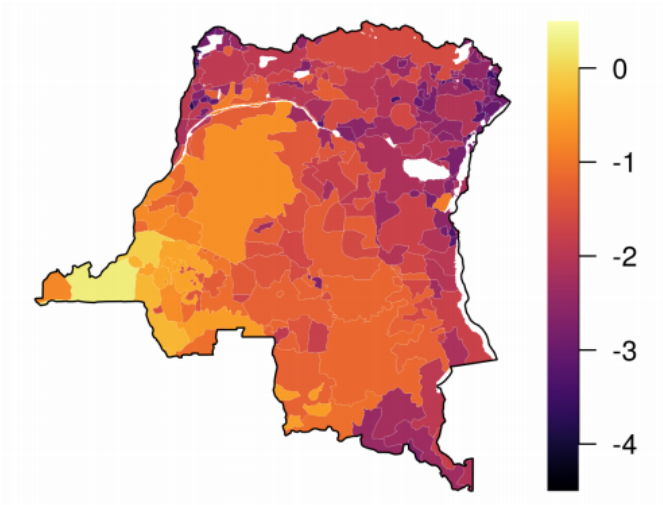
(a) Road network



(b) State access



(c) Internal connectedness



(d) Relational state capacity

Extensions

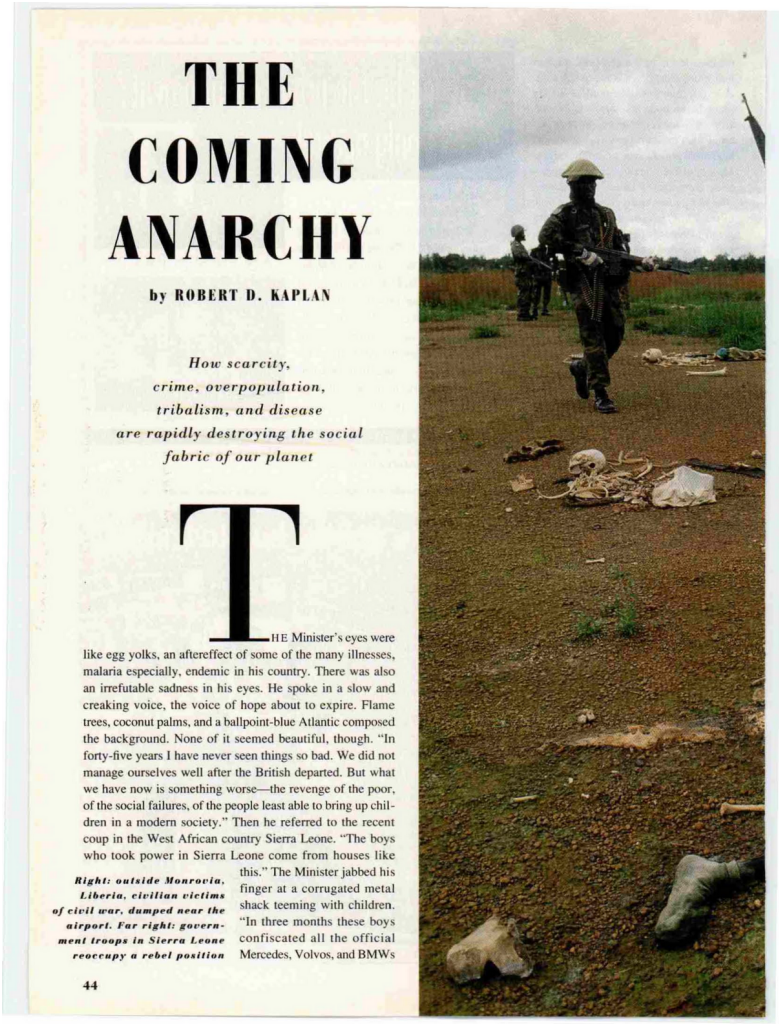
- Concept of **relational state capacity**
- Empirical methods
- Reference:
  - → Carl Müller-Crepon, Philipp Hunziker, and Lars-Erik Cederman (2021) Roads to Rule, Roads to Rebel: Relational State Capacity and Conflict in Africa. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65(2–3): 563–590.

Next week

- About how we learned the way grievances and inequality also matter
- And on other aspects of civil wars: duration, international factors...

Next seminar

- Robert D Kaplan, 'The coming anarchy' (*The Atlantic*, 1994)
- Pessimist view on Post-Cold War international security



THE COMING ANARCHY

by ROBERT D. KAPLAN

How scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet

THE Minister's eyes were like egg yolks, an aftereffect of some of the many illnesses, malaria especially, endemic in his country. There was also an irrefutable sadness in his eyes. He spoke in a slow and creaking voice, the voice of hope about to expire. Flame trees, coconut palms, and a ballpoint-blue Atlantic composed the background. None of it seemed beautiful, though. "In forty-five years I have never seen things so bad. We did not manage ourselves well after the British departed. But what we have now is something worse—the revenge of the poor, of the social failures, of the people least able to bring up children in a modern society." Then he referred to the recent coup in the West African country Sierra Leone. "The boys who took power in Sierra Leone come from houses like this." The Minister jabbed his finger at a corrugated metal shack teeming with children. "In three months these boys confiscated all the official Mercedes, Volvos, and BMWs

Right: outside Monrovia, Liberia, civilian victims of civil war, dumped near the airport. Far right: government troops in Sierra Leone reoccupy a rebel position

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