BY OTHER MEANS: COMBATANT CAPABILITIES, INSTITUTIONAL CHOICE, AND ELECTORAL COMPETITION AFTER CIVIL WAR

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Georgetown University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Government

By


Washington, DC
December 4, 2015
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ABSTRACT

Since the end of the Cold War, democratization has been treated in both theory and practice as a crucial element of peacebuilding after civil war, promising the transfer of social conflict from the battlefield to the ballot box. Yet even where a country avoids renewed violence, the post-conflict context has proven a particularly difficult one in which to build democracy. In some cases, robust political competition occurs over repeated elections, but in many others political life quickly becomes dominated by a single party. What accounts for this variation in the quality of democracy after internal armed conflict? This dissertation approaches the question by disaggregating democracy into three of its key components: the decision to adopt de jure democratic institutions, the presence of de facto competition at the national level, and the willingness of voters to hold incumbents accountable. Using cross-national statistical analysis and mixed-methods case studies of Mozambique and Sierra Leone, it argues that each of these outcomes is influenced in important ways by the legacies of the preceding conflict. The findings indicate that armed conflict frequently imposes high costs on a regime and creates incentives for incumbents to adopt democratic institutions, including multiparty elections. Whether these elections are competitive at the national level depends on the types of capabilities and resources that actors develop during conflict. Competitiveness is highest in cases in which multiple actors emerge from conflict with assets that can be converted from military to electoral use. While
such convertible assets can take many forms, organizational capabilities are particularly important. They allow sustained mobilization of a party’s core supporters, a key to success because violence during civil war has polarizing effects on the electorate. Overall, the dissertation contributes to the scholarship on post-conflict politics by demonstrating how decisions made by leaders during civil wars can have long-lasting political effects.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

If it takes a village to raise a child, it almost certainly also takes one to produce a dissertation of this type. Many people made this project possible. Without their support, guidance, insights, and generosity, the project would still just be an idea in the back of a notebook.

First and foremost, I am indebted to my committee. As chair, Marc Howard has overseen this project from its earliest stages and been a mentor for all aspects of my scholarly and professional development. His perspective and encouragement kept the project moving forward though the doldrums on numerous occasions. Desha Girod, Lise Howard, and Charles King have provided invaluable support, guidance, and criticism along the way. Each of them has challenged different parts of the project and pushed me to think more carefully and completely about my work. If this dissertation holds value, it is in no small part thanks to the guidance of these four.

Other faculty members at Georgetown and beyond contributed in important ways to the writing of this dissertation and my professional development more broadly. I am particularly grateful to Matt Carnes, Jim Vreeland, Irfan Nooruddin and Tom Flores for their advice and suggestions.

My colleagues in the graduate program at Georgetown were a constant source of encouragement, feedback, and support along the way. As the other comparativists in my cohort, Anjali Dayal, Michael Weintraub, and Meghan McConaughey have been study mates, sounding boards, critics, and friends from our first days on campus. This project has also benefitted over the years from conversations with many other current and former doctoral students in the program, particularly Paul Musgrave, Megan Stewart, Devin Finn, Fouad Pervez, Dave Buckley, Alex Berg, Meir Walters, Rebecca Gibbons, and Lindsay Pettingill.

Much of the qualitative research for the dissertation took place during fieldwork conducted in Sierra Leone and Mozambique. This work benefitted from the support of many people and organizations. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Michael Kargbo and the Centre for Policy Studies at the University of Sierra Leone for hosting me during my time in Freetown. I am also extremely grateful to John Alie Kargbo, as well as the staffs of the National Archives and Parliamentary Library. In Maputo, I am indebted to the excellent work of my research assistant, Regio Lipes Da Cruz Conrad. I am also grateful for the generous help of Inocêncio Fainda in navigating the offices and personalities of the Assembly. I am, of course, grateful to all of the interview participants who gave so generously of their time, experience, and reflections.

I would also like to thank the Harry S. Truman Good Neighbor Award Foundation and the Georgetown Government Department for the funding that made fieldwork possible. The American Political Science Association Centennial Center provided an excellent place for me to write and reflect during a crucial phase of the project.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their support in this process. My husband John has patiently endured all of the challenges it entailed, from months of separation while I finished my
fieldwork to many late nights and busy days. His support has been vital to crossing the finish line. Our daughter, Lena Marie, was born as the dissertation neared completion. She has been a motivation and an excellent writing companion from even before her arrival. I would also like to thank my parents, who have always served as models of intellectual curiosity and hard work. I am grateful to them, along with my siblings and in-laws, for their encouragement, enthusiasm, and babysitting as I worked towards producing a worthwhile piece of scholarship.

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband John and my brothers Nathan and Colin. Through their military service they have seen the costs of conflict first hand and it was for them that I started this journey.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On October 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2013, a spokesman for Mozambique’s primary opposition party declared that the 1992 General Peace Agreement (GPA) that had ended the country’s brutal civil war was officially dead, claiming that “Peace is over in the country… The responsibility lies with the Frelimo government because they didn’t want to listen to Renamo’s grievances” (BBC, 2013). These grievances, which had been the subject of debate for years and of dozens of rounds of dialogue in the previous months, largely amounted to a complaint that the Frelimo party had consolidated its hold on political life in Mozambique to the detriment of Renamo, the rebel group turned political party that has led the opposition since the conflict’s end. Dominating the electoral sphere, Frelimo has won every national-level election for twenty years, and its margin of victory has been substantial in most cycles.

In April 2013, Renamo once again took up arms and engaged in a series of violent attacks on civilian and military vehicles along the country’s main highways and occasionally disrupted rail shipments of coal from the northern provinces. In response, Frelimo launched attacks on Renamo basecamps and detained several of its high-ranking members. Despite near-constant negotiation for over a year, the parties only managed to hammer out a final settlement in August of 2014.\footnote{Early provisions included a re-structuring of the Comissão Nacional de Eleições (the national election commission, responsible for overseeing the electoral process) and the Secretariado Técnico da Administração Eleitoral (the civil service body responsible for implementing elections). The final agreement includes provisions for integration of remaining Renamo fighters into the armed forces, an amnesty for all involved in the conflict, and international observers to monitor the final disarming and demobilization of Renamo.} By late 2015, many of the settlement’s terms had yet to be implemented and sporadic violence was once again making headlines.
This period of tension was a direct result of the gradual breakdown of institutionalized political competition in Mozambique and the entrenchment of Frelimo’s political dominance. Yet this eventual outcome was by no means an obvious one in the immediate aftermath of the war. Though the government had consistently branded Renamo as little more than bandidos armados (“armed bandits”) during the conflict, subsequent research has found that the group did make some efforts to forge a centralized organization and attract members from the population, particularly after South Africa’s apartheid regime began drawing down its support in the mid-1980s (Manning, 2002, p. 41). Moreover, Renamo received millions of dollars in assistance from the international community to facilitate its transformation from an armed group into a political party. While the group was able to capitalize on these assets and transform itself into the country’s primary opposition party, this has never actually translated into control of either the legislature or the presidency. Democratization might have provided the opportunity for the normalization of political conflict and the institutionalization of competition between the two parties. Instead, what we have seen in Mozambique is the gradual but steady re-consolidation of political power by Frelimo. Renamo became increasingly marginalized after the 1999 election (which it claims that it won but was fraudulently denied victory), and no third party has yet emerged to present a viable challenge on the national level. Renamo sees its prospects for gaining office electorally to be so remote that returning to the bush has seemed like the most viable option to provoke change.

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2 It is conventional to use the acronym RENAMO to refer to the organization as a rebel group prior to the signing of the 1992 General Peace Accord and the proper noun Renamo to refer to the organization as a political party thereafter. To avoid confusion, however, I use the proper noun throughout the dissertation.

3 The Movimento Democrático de Moçambique, a breakaway faction from Renamo, has had some success since 2009, but is not yet in a position to unseat either of the two main parties at the national level.
Mozambique’s post-conflict trajectory stands in stark contrast to the path taken by Sierra Leone, though the immediate post-conflict context was similar in some ways. Democratization was also an integral part of Sierra Leone’s plan for recovery but when the conflict was officially declared over and the first post-conflict elections held in 2002, the political scene was dominated by the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP). The SLPP and President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah were credited with ending the war, and President Kabbah was personally credited by many (rightly or wrongly) with having the professional connections in the international community that attracted the flood of foreign aid then entering the country. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which had managed to survive a decade of war as the main rebel group, funded by Liberia’s President Charles Taylor, lay in shambles. Its leadership was largely deceased or imprisoned and the new Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF-P) failed to retain or attract enough support to win a single seat in Parliament. The former ruling party, the All People’s Congress (APC) retained some support, but its excesses as a single-party government in the 1970s and 1980s were perceived by many to be responsible for the outbreak of war. It was certainly possible that the SLPP might have established the kind of political dominance that Frelimo has built in the twenty years following Mozambique’s conflict.

Despite this strong position in the immediate wake of the conflict, the SLPP was unable to keep its hold on power for long. In 2007, in just the second national election since the war’s end, the SLPP lost both the Presidency and the Parliament to a resurgent APC. Given its favorable position, why was the SLPP unable to follow in Frelimo’s path to consolidated political power? What accounts for the higher level of electoral competition in Sierra Leone?
The different trajectories followed by Sierra Leone and Mozambique represent two ends of the spectrum of democratization after civil wars’ end. Democratization’s success cannot be measured simply by the avoidance of renewed violence. In many cases, the decade after conflict provides the incumbent with a unique opportunity to consolidate political power and entrench his dominant position via elections. In a few cases, however, incumbents find their ability to do this far more constrained and elections become highly competitive, even resulting in turnover. This dissertation is motivated by these observations and attempts to account for this variation in the quality of post-conflict democracies by exploring key features of the conflict itself.

Democratic institutions have become nearly ubiquitous in the wake of civil war, particularly since 1989. Figure 1.1 shows the number of conflict episodes that ended in each year between 1945 and 2007. Between 1945 and 1989, many conflict episodes result in systems that are politically closed in the sense that they do not allow for legal opposition. After 1989, however, nearly all conflict episodes are followed by de jure multiparty systems in which opposition is at least formally permitted. The prevalence of these democratic institutions is even higher in post-conflict countries than in the rest of the world.

Politically transforming war-torn societies into inclusive democracies has become a large part of broader international efforts at peacebuilding – a term that came into use following Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s seminal document An Agenda for Peace (1992). Peacebuilding as an approach to conflict complements and even replaces more traditional peacekeeping missions. Whereas the latter is largely intended simply to prevent a recurrence of violence, peacebuilding is far more ambitious, seeking to remove the causes of conflict through economic, political, and social transformation of societies ravaged by violence. “Institution building” after conflict now
frequently includes prioritization of building “democratic governance” and strengthening the rule of law (see, e.g., United Nations Peacebuilding Commission 2009). In 2010, the United States Agency for International Development alone spent over $1.5 billion in the areas of Good Governance and Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation and of the top twenty countries receiving its assistance, the majority had experienced major internal conflict in the past two decades (United States Agency for International Development 2011). Democracy is the political system of choice for this approach to conflict resolution because it offers former combatants and divided societies an inclusive structure in which to pursue their political objectives through peaceful electoral—rather than military—competition.

**Figure 1.1 Conflict Terminations by Post-Conflict Institutional Form**

*Figure shows the number of conflict episodes terminating in each year based on the institutional form of the political system that is in place one year after the end of conflict. Closed systems are those in which multiple political parties are not legal, as in one-party or no-party systems. Multiparty systems are those in which the legal system formally allows multiple parties. Data are from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).*
Yet the presence of democratic institutions is not the same as the presence of *de facto* democracy. Figure 1.2 shows the same set of conflict terminations as Figure 1.1, but instead distinguishes between democracies and non-democracies based on criteria that go beyond simple institutional evaluation. From this data, it is clear that democratic institutions are not always accompanied by democratic outcomes. In order for democracy to contribute to the transformation of conflict by normalizing political competition, it must include formal institutions of political competition, elections that can at least sometimes be won by the opposition, and a voting population that is able and willing to reinforce both.

**Figure 1.2 Conflict Terminations by *De Facto* Democratic Status**

*Figure shows the number of conflict episodes terminating in each year based on the de facto form of the political system that is in place one year after the end of conflict. Data are from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).*

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4 This is based on the definition of democracies laid out by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010). It includes systems in which the executive and legislature are both elected, multiple political parties are legal and have representation in the legislature, and electoral turnover occurs.
To understand why the quality of post-conflict democratization varies so widely, I look at each of these three features. Research reveals that all three aspects of democracy are heavily influenced by the experience of violence and the way that leaders are constrained or enabled by its legacies. Conflict’s many costs create incentives for the adoption of the *de jure* institutions of democracy, but whether these institutions are *de facto* competitive depends on the number of actors who are able to use the conflict to develop organizations, skills, and support bases that can be converted to use in electoral rather than military competition. Organizational capacity proves particularly important because voting populations tend to become polarized through their exposure to violence, leaving political parties’ ability to get voters to the polls as a major source of electoral competition.

**Examining Democracy via its Constitutive Parts**

While they are unquestionably connected, each of the three features of democracy noted above deserves examination on its own terms. Prior studies of post-conflict democratization have tended to treat democracy as a conceptual aggregate and approached democratization as any movement towards its ideal type. For studies of democracy’s effects on the stability of peace, such an approach may be appropriate. To better understand the success or failure of democratization itself, however, this approach is subject to a number of potential pitfalls. All of democracy’s parts may not go together, particularly in the context of weak institutions and social cleavage that follows large-scale violence. An electoral system may be adopted to promote an inclusive and representative legislature alongside restrictions on speech that would constitute a violation of political rights but prevent the dissemination of messages that might reignite
conflict. Civil society may emerge but be restricted from having any impact on issues covered in a negotiated settlement. Elections may be held but be manipulated by an incumbent unwilling to cede power to erstwhile rebels.

This last example is particularly problematic. As discussed more extensively in Chapter 2, the scholarly literature on democratization has identified an entire category of regimes in which the formal institutions of democracy are paired with other features and practices that tilt the political playing field to the advantage of the incumbent. These “hybrid regimes” have been the subject of extensive research in recent years. These studies have identified a number of ways in which the institutions of democracy can be useful to authoritarian incumbents who have no intention of relinquishing power. Elections, legislatures, and multiparty systems can all benefit the incumbent and stabilize his hold on power when combined with various forms of coercion and manipulation. This combination of democratic institutions and authoritarian practices has proven relatively stable in many cases, suggesting that hybrid regimes are their own regime type. The adoption of democratic institutions thus cannot be taken to signal the initiation of a more extensive process of democratization. Studies that look at “democracy” as an aggregate concept would err in treating it as such. The approach taken here seeks to avoid this problem.

To this end, the project disaggregates the concept of democracy in two ways. First, I study democratization on the basis of one of its defining features: competition for national elected office. This is in no way the entirety of what makes a system democratic. In the classic parlance of Robert Dahl, this is a study of contestation and specifically electoral contestation.⁵ It

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⁵ For Dahl’s conceptualization of democracy, or “polyarchy,” as a political system with high levels of both public contestation and popular participation or inclusiveness, see Chapter 1 of *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (1971).
does not consider other arenas of contestation in a system and largely assumes a minimum level of participation by the population, though these are areas that would also be worthy of separate study. In narrowing the scope of the study from democracy to electoral competition, I aim to increase the precision of the findings. The dissertation also takes one further step in disaggregation in drawing a distinction between *de jure* competition and *de facto* competition. The former is examined by looking at the adoption of the institutions of democratic competition. In the latter, I examine electoral competition via the occurrence of electoral turnover (cross-nationally) and the margin of victory in national elections (in the case studies). This again allows for greater precision.

**The Argument**

The goal of this dissertation is to explain why it is that post-conflict democracy is highly competitive in some cases, but leads to political systems dominated by a single actor or party in many others. At the broadest level, I argue that institutionally democratic systems after violent conflict become competitive only where no single actor is able to monopolize the political resources and capabilities that allow for the mobilization of electoral support, and that the source of many of these assets is the conflict itself. More specifically, a competitive electoral system requires three components, all of which I argue are influenced by the preceding conflict: an institutionally competitive system, national electoral competition by political parties with comparable capabilities, and a connection between these parties and a population whose preferences leave open the possibility of competitive election results. While they are all connected, each component is itself treated as an outcome of interest.
The presence of democratic institutions is a threshold condition for the possibility of electoral competition in any context. Observational data indicates that these institutions are widespread after armed conflict and even more prevalent among post-conflict countries than the rest of the world. The first puzzle to be addressed, then, is why so many countries adopt or maintain the institutions of democracy after major conflict. The key to understanding this prevalence is the costliness of conflict. Closed regimes that do not permit a legal channel for opposition are costly to maintain, requiring high levels of coercion and/or material cooptation to preserve the system. Armed conflict imposes both material and ideational costs on an incumbent government, depleting its financial resources as well as its claims to legitimacy. Unless new resources that are not affected by conflict become available, an incumbent must look for a new way of stabilizing the political system in hopes of preserving his position. Democratic institutions allow incumbents to do just this by expanding the number of interests and actors with a stake in the political system. The incumbent can claim to be responsive to public demands and paint himself as the bringer of democracy. In other cases, the costliness of the conflict may simply damage the incumbent’s hold on power to the point that societal demands for democratization have a higher likelihood of success, resulting in “democratization from below.” In both cases, the costs of war serve as the catalyst for the adoption of the institutions of electoral competition.

The adoption of these institutions, however, does not guarantee that elections will be *de facto* competitive. For this, I argue that we need to examine the relative assets of those actors who emerge to contest elections as political parties. Armed conflict puts pressure on groups to develop skills, organizations, resources, and networks of support that enable them to pursue their
political and military goals. Taken together, these can be thought of as the assets of a group. Some of these assets are specific (in the economic sense) to the conduct of war. Military hardware and tactical fighting skills are not much good for pursuing political aims by other than violent means. Many groups, however, develop assets that are convertible from military to electoral use. They build support networks among diaspora communities, formulate and promote populist ideologies, and organize political wings that specialize in mobilizing local civilians. These assets can help groups achieve their goals during conflict, but they can also be carried forward and used on the campaign trail. If multiple actors in conflict develop these assets, post-conflict elections are much more likely to be competitive. If only one group does, or develops a much greater stock of convertible assets, that group will come to dominate the political space and elections will be uncompetitive.

The organizational capabilities of political parties are particularly important because of the effect that exposure to violence has on voting populations. While the prior scholarly literature is divided on whether we should expect individuals exposed to violence during conflict to be more likely to act as swing voters or as polarized partisans, the findings in the following chapters indicate that the latter is more likely. The experience of violence polarizes populations insofar as it creates both loyalty to one side and, more importantly, hostility to another. Individuals who have lost family members or been personally traumatized by conflict are unlikely to ever consider voting for the party they view as responsible. Because of this, electoral competition results not from the changing allegiances of swing voters, but from the ability of parties to turn out their supporters. This reinforces the dissertation’s focus on the influences of conflict on parties’ capabilities.
To summarize, in the chapters that follow I argue that the quality of post-conflict democratization is not primarily determined by structural factors such as the overall level of economic development or by external factors such as the quality of international democracy promotion efforts. Instead, I argue that it is heavily influenced by processes that occur and decisions that are made during the conflict itself. The costliness of conflict incentivizes the adoption of democratic institutions, but it does not guarantee their competitiveness. Instead, competition is driven by the wartime distribution among actors of assets that can be converted from military to electoral use. The capabilities of parties to mobilize their supporters at election time are particularly important because conflict polarizes the electorate, leaving far fewer swing voters who might be an alternative source of competition. For democratization to play its hypothesized role in peacebuilding, it needs to keep elites committed to the system and offer the possibility that incumbents can be held accountable. The electoral competitiveness that would ensure both of these functions is only likely to occur when its foundations are laid during the conflict itself.

**The Post-Conflict Context is Different**

At its most basic level, there is no clear reason why the argument advanced in this dissertation should apply exclusively to political systems emerging from violent conflict. After all, the competitiveness of any democracy depends on the politically-relevant capabilities of the parties who contest elections. Nevertheless, the focus on post-conflict systems is justified for a number of reasons.
First, and not trivially, democratization has been used by the international community as a key part of a broader approach to building peace after violent conflict. Democracy, as discussed above, is supposed to keep elites committed to the political system and offer the population a means of political participation that allows them to hold leaders accountable for their actions. From a simple policy perspective, it is worth understanding the context in which these efforts take place and the ways in which their success is constrained by local factors.

Second, despite the aspirations of many international actors, the post-conflict context is an especially unlikely environment for high-quality democracy to emerge in the short- to medium-term. High-level conflict degrades state institutions, sometimes to the point of statelessness. Rarely do post-conflict countries have the sort of autonomous institutions necessary for the rule of law that democracy demands. Violence also polarizes populations, depriving post-conflict society of the types of social ties that allow for civil society development or a sense of common identity. It not just the average voter who experiences this type of polarization. War also sows deep distrust among the leadership of competing parties who have often been trying to kill one another until quite recently. The risk of defection from the political system is high and the ability of such individuals to reach the compromises necessary for democratic governance is limited. Despite all of these challenges, democratic institutions are adopted even more frequently in post-conflict states than in others. The disconnect between the theoretical unfavorability of democracy and its widespread adoption after major armed conflict suggests that war alters the process of democratization in ways deserving examination.

Finally, even if the broad building blocks of political competition are the same as in non-conflict cases, the process by which competition emerges will be different in post-conflict cases.
Democratic competition may require multiple actors who are relatively evenly matched in their political capabilities, regardless of the context in which democratization takes place. Post-conflict cases are different, however, in that those capabilities are acquired in the context of war. Only in this context can a party literally fight its way to a place on the ballot, even if it lacks much at all in the way of convertible assets. In this sense, we should see higher variation in the quality of opposition in post-conflict cases than in others. Moreover, the development of combatant capabilities is subject to different incentives and pressures in conflict than the development of political capabilities in other contexts. This matters for understanding the possible pathways available to participants in any given conflict, as well as for policymakers who might wish to influence the political outcomes of war.

**Methodology & Plan of the Dissertation**

The dissertation relies on a multimethod approach to answer the question of why some countries develop competitive elections after civil war when so many do not. As discussed above, it begins by drawing a distinction between the formal institutions of democratic competition and the *de facto* competitiveness of the political system and considers each of these outcomes on their own. I begin by examining the threshold question of why post-conflict countries often adopt these formal institutions, but do not always do so. I use cross-national statistical analysis to identify broad relationships between the costliness of conflict and the likelihood that multiparty institutions will be in place following an episode of violence. Anecdotal qualitative evidence from several cases helps to illustrate the way that these relationships play out. More extensive examinations of the process in Sierra Leone and
Mozambique—both “on the line” cases with regards to the theory on the adoption of democratic institutions—shows the different mechanisms by which conflict costliness translates into the adoption of democratic institutions. In the case of Sierra Leone, pressure for democratization came from domestic actors outside the regime who were inspired and/or empowered by the circumstances of conflict and able to push out a military government that could no longer afford to maintain its closed system. In Mozambique, the incumbent government attempted to relégitimize its position in the face of declining support by coopting the democratization process. These cases show the two main mechanisms by which costly conflicts increase the likelihood that democratic institutions will be in place after conflict.

These institutions do not guarantee that the political system will actually exhibit a high level of competitiveness. To understand the sources of competitiveness after armed conflict, I again take a multimethod approach. Cross-national statistical analysis again establishes the broad relationships between convertible capabilities and more competitive post-conflict electoral systems. This component uses survival analysis and data on rebel capabilities to look at the likelihood of electoral turnover after conflict. Sierra Leone and Mozambique then provide case studies that serve two functions. First, the two cases both present hard tests of the theory. In the case of Sierra Leone, the incumbent government at the end of the conflict was unquestionably politically dominant. The RUF had failed to build meaningful convertible capabilities and the APC had been out of power for a decade. Yet turnover occurred in the country’s second post-conflict elections. Given the extensive international involvement in the country’s recovery and the limited distribution of convertible capabilities, Sierra Leone is an unlikely case in which to find support for the theory. To the extent that the case does generate such support, it provides a
strong argument in favor of my theory. In the case of Mozambique, the difficulty of the case comes from a surprisingly high level of competition early on, followed by increased dominance by the incumbent party. This is a hard case because Renamo was widely viewed as having very few convertible capabilities, so the early level of competition is surprising given the expectation of my theory. It is also a hard case because of the way that the level of competition varies over time. My main independent variable—the wartime distribution of convertible capabilities—is a constant in the post-conflict periods under study. We might therefore expect that variation over time cannot be explained by my theory. Here again, supportive evidence from Mozambique would serve as a much stronger endorsement.

The two case studies serve a second function insofar as they make up for some of the methodological shortcomings of the cross-national analysis. One of the shortcomings of the statistical analysis conducted is its reliance on limited data. Data is only available on rebel convertible capabilities in conflict. This does not account for the capabilities and resources of the incumbent government or of non-combatant organizations. Yet the theory suggests that both might be important. Sierra Leone demonstrates how organizations outside the major factions of war can still be empowered by conflict processes. Mozambique shows how government weakness can affect the political competitiveness of a post-conflict system, even in the absence of a highly capable rebel group.

A third aspect to the project is the question of voter preferences. Is competition the result of swing voters being “up for grabs” at election time or because parties are equally able to mobilize existing support? I use sub-national statistical analysis of election returns in both Sierra Leone and Mozambique to examine this question. The sub-national analysis in each case is
designed to provide further evidence of key issues from the qualitative analysis. It leverages existing data on violence patterns and election returns in both cases to show how exposure to conflict affected voter behavior, laying the local-level foundations that aggregate into national-level outcomes.

To summarize, the research design for the dissertation is three-part. Cross-national statistical analysis establishes the broad patterns of relationships between variables suggested by the theory. National-level qualitative analysis generates complementary evidence in support of the theory, either by illuminating the mechanisms behind these relationships or by extending the analysis beyond the limitations of available data. Sub-national statistical analysis then provides additional evidence that supports the local-level foundations of national-level outcomes.

Research for the project involved the accumulation and combination of several off-the-shelf data sets for statistical analysis, as well as four months of fieldwork split between Sierra Leone and Mozambique. The fieldwork allowed for the acquisition of data for the sub-national analysis, as well as semi-structured elite interviews of party leaders, elected officials, members of election management bodies, civil society leaders, and members of the international community working on democracy assistance in various forms. I interviewed 88 individuals in Sierra Leone, Mozambique, the United States, and Canada. These interviews, along with informal conversations and observations in the field, media reports, election observation reports, and authoritative secondary sources provide the basis for the qualitative analysis in the project.
Plan of the Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 builds on prior scholarship to generate the theory and its main hypotheses. This theory-building work draws on scholarship from civil war, democratization, and political economy studies to present a novel theory of the relationship between conflict processes and subsequent democratization outcomes. Chapter 3 takes up the question of why democratic institutions are so widespread after episodes of armed conflict. This chapter combines cross-national statistical analysis with an examination of the transition to multiparty politics in both Sierra Leone and Mozambique. Chapters 4 through 6 then address the question of de facto competitiveness within these institutions.

Chapter 4 provides cross-national survival analysis of electoral turnover in post-conflict episodes, finding that rebel convertible capabilities significantly affect the prospects for incumbent defeat at the polls. It also presents a brief case study of El Salvador to illustrate the means by which rebel capabilities translate directly into electoral competition. Chapter 5 then presents evidence from Mozambique to assess changes in the level of electoral competition over time. Combining national-level qualitative analysis and sub-national statistical analysis, the chapter argues that Frelimo’s relative weakness at the end of the war provided the opportunity for early elections to be highly competitive, while Renamo’s failure to develop a distinct political organization during the war led to its inability to sustain competition over the longer term.

Chapter 6 turns to the case of Sierra Leone to examine a case in which politics became highly competitive after conflict, despite the failure of the main rebel group to sustain itself as an effective opposition party. Again combining national-level qualitative analysis and sub-national statistics, this chapter finds that conflict creates some constituencies and resources that can be
taken advantage of, even by groups that were not involved in the later stages of conflict. The APC was able to do just this and pose a successful challenge to an incumbent SLPP that had been unable to forge a unified political or military organization during conflict. Chapter 7 reviews the overall findings of the dissertation before discussing their implications for policy and potential avenues for future research.
CHAPTER 2: A THEORY OF CONFLICT LEGACY AND ELECTORAL POLITICS

“Politics is the continuation of war by other means.”
- Michel Foucault

This dissertation is fundamentally concerned with understanding variation in the quality of political regimes that follow internal armed conflict and the ways in which the legacies of war affect these outcomes. In particular, the focus is on why, despite institutional similarities, some systems are consolidated into electoral authoritarian regimes dominated by one party or individual while others develop much more politically competitive systems. As discussed in the introductory chapter, this question requires that we examine the institutions of democracy, the parties who contest elections within those institutions, and the connection between party elites and the voters that determine the ultimate outcomes of those contests. Each of these three components of democratization is influenced by the legacies of war in ways that are meaningful and distinguish the post-conflict setting from other cases of democratic development.

This chapter develops a theory that provides the basis for the empirical research presented in Chapters 3 through 6 of the dissertation. It begins by reviewing the historical and intellectual foundations of the emphasis on democratization as a means of peacebuilding. Democracy has not always been associated with social and political stability, and classic works have often operated from the assumption that democratization could only meaningfully take place after major disputes over questions such as the boundaries of the state and political community had already been resolved. Only with the end of the Cold War did democracy come

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6 See Foucault’s “Society Must Be Defended” Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976 (Foucault 1997, 17)
to be seen as part of the process of resolving these disputes. In the majority of cases, however, this relationship has not held.

The first section of the chapter thus examines the reasons that democracy might be thought to serve as a method of positive peacebuilding. It then identifies foundational problems with the way that democratization has been approached by scholars and practitioners in the post-conflict context. Key among these problems is the failure to appropriately disaggregate the concept of democracy.

The chapter then goes on to examine three of the crucial components of democracy: the choice of de jure democratic institutions, the presence of de facto political competition among parties, and the existence of a voter base willing to remain committed to the system and hold leaders accountable for their actions. Prior research has given us good reasons to believe that the legacy of conflict affects all three of these components. These chapter sections build on this scholarship to generate general hypotheses about the relationship between internal conflict, the adoption of multiparty politics, electoral competition and dominance at the national level, and the competitiveness of elections at the local level. Taken together, these suggest that the costliness of conflict makes the maintenance of closed political regimes more difficult, generating incentives for the adoption of more inclusive, multiparty institutions as a second-best strategy. Whether these institutions actually generate competitive contests for power depends on the types of resources and capabilities with which actors emerge from conflict. Where multiple actors build capabilities that can be converted from battlefield to political use, elections are predicted to be more competitive. In other cases, elections are likely to be dominated by one
side for extended periods. How long such outcomes last is likely to be driven, in part, by the polarizing effects of conflict on voters themselves.

After laying out the theory in these three sections, the chapter briefly identifies two alternative explanations that also have some grounding in prior scholarship. The first possible alternative is that post-conflict political outcomes are largely the result of pre-conflict forces. In this explanation, the experiences and dynamics of conflict are epiphenomenal to more deeply rooted structural or social conditions. If this explanation is correct, then the study’s focus on conflict’s effects and processes—or even its limitation to post-conflict cases as opposed to all cases of democratization—is misplaced. The second alternative explanation follows the literature’s broader emphasis on the relationship between international actors and post-conflict democratization writ large. Under this alternative, the political outcomes of conflict are contingent on the willingness and ability of the international community to influence elite decision-making through means such as foreign aid or peacekeeping. If this alternative is correct, then the study’s focus on competition between domestic actors would fail to take adequate account of crucial influences. Both of these alternatives will be considered in each of the empirical tests of the main theory.

**Peace-by-Democracy and its Discontents**

As noted in the introduction, democratization came to be seen as an integral part of robust peacebuilding efforts in the years following the end of the Cold War. A central challenge of recovering from civil war is not only terminating the conflict itself, but also preventing conflict recurrence in future periods. Civil wars are known to have high rates of recidivism, particularly
where they are ended by peace agreements (Licklider 1995). From this perspective, there are good theoretical reasons to think that democracies might make a more complete “recovery” after conflict. Democracies have been found by some to be less vulnerable to civil war onset than some other regime types (Hegre, Ellingsen, et al. 2001) and have lower levels of mass political violence overall (Rummel 1997). Directly relevant to transforming social conflict, highly democratic governments engage in fewer violations of human rights than other regime types (Davenport and Armstrong II 2004).

Democratic institutions are thus expected to have the capacity to offer representation to diverse groups, providing an opportunity to voice concerns and negotiate differences over policy. Democracies can also provide elites with incentives to remain within the political system. Because it guarantees future contests for power in the form of regular elections, democracy theoretically lowers the stakes of any given election and allows the loser to extend his time horizons to take the value of future potential victories into account. This reduces the incentive to try to overthrow or work outside the regime institutions (Przeworski 1991, 17). Moreover, democratization may reduce the incentives for non-elites to participate in violence. Democracies provide opportunities for individuals to voice their political grievances and may even perform better than other regime types in reducing income inequality (Reuveny and Li 2003).

With all of these general features of democracy, the emphasis on building regimes featuring democratization and rule of law as a means of conflict resolution and prevention seems valid. However, not all scholars have been equally optimistic about the ability of democracy to

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7 The precise relationship between regime type and civil war onset in particular remains contested due to a variety of issues ranging from the construction of the main datasets on democratization to the close relationship between democracy and economic development. See Hegre (2014) for an extensive review of the literature on this issue.
resolve existing social conflicts. Among the classic works expressing skepticism of the power of democratization to ease social conflict is Samuel Huntington’s *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968). Huntington’s warning that economic development would mobilize competing social forces that would destabilize a country in the face of an inclusive political system has become one of the classic critiques of theories of political development in which all good things go together. Building on Huntington’s work, Roland Paris (1997, 2004) issued a more direct critique of liberalization as key to peacebuilding. He argued that the inherently competitive and conflictual nature of democracy and capitalism create large challenges that risk undermining the very peace that peacebuilding efforts are meant to protect. Engaging in liberalization prior to robust institution-building is thus a dangerous course of action. Other scholars have also focused on the relationship between post-conflict democratization and the stability of peace. The holding of elections soon after war’s end has been found to increase the risk of conflict relapse under many conditions (Brancati and Snyder 2012, Flores and Nooruddin 2012) and democratization more generally can inhibit the economic recovery that is key to sustaining peace in the longer run (Flores and Nooruddin 2009). Moreover, combatants who anticipate that external intervention will lead to elections in which they are disadvantaged have incentives to continue fighting rather than settle on and adhere to a negotiated peace (Metternich 2011).

Yet even when countries manage to avoid relapse into renewed conflict, efforts at building democracy as a central component of peacebuilding are not always successful. Instead of a return to war, many countries see the (re)establishment of political dominance and

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8 Indeed, as far back as Aristotle some thinkers have been skeptical of democracy’s ability to produce optimal governance. Contemporary scholars have emphasized the degree to which the process of democratization (even where it does not follow a civil war) is fraught with opportunities for violent mobilization (Snyder 2000, Cederman, Hug and Krebs 2010).
authoritarianism, even where elections are regularly held. This presents a different puzzle than that of stability: why do some countries emerge from civil war with competitive electoral politics, while others maintain or establish political systems dominated by a single group? Most scholars of civil war have been inclined to ask this question in terms of the success or failure of democratization after conflict (Wantchekon and Neeman 2002, Wantchekon 2004, Roeder and Rothchild 2005, Jarstad and Sisk 2008). Yet the field lacks consensus on why democratization is more successful in some cases than others. Some have focused on the mode of conflict termination (Mukherjee 2006, Toft 2010), while others have looked at international intervention (Doyle and Sambanis 2006, Fortna 2008) or institutional design (Roeder and Rothchild 2005). Still others focus on structural characteristics, such as the level of economic development (Fortna and Huang 2012) or class competition (Wood 2000).

Even within these studies, findings are contradictory almost as often as they are cumulative. One possible explanation for the lack of consensus is that framing the observed variation in post-conflict politics in the terms of democratization may hinder our understanding of fundamental processes at work in the consolidation of post-war political systems. Democracy is a complex concept and is multifaceted in nearly all scholarly definitions. Even the most parsimonious of the classic definitions of democracy contain more conditions than are often recognized. Schumpeter defines democracy as “that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote” (Schumpeter 1975 [1942], 269). Though often treated by scholars of democracy as a minimalist definition, this does still have a number of key dimensions: democracy must be institutionalized, it must be the means by which power to make political
decisions is obtained, it must be competitive, and it must be rooted in the popular vote. The majority of scholarship that studies democracy after conflict does not consider the differences among these (or any) of democracy’s constituent parts. This is concerning, given that research that has distinguished among different elements of democracy has found that not all of its components move together. International peacekeeping, for example, may actually hinder some aspects of democratization after civil war, though not others (Fortna 2008). To really understand the dynamics of establishing a political regime in the wake of civil war, we may thus have to disaggregate democracy. One of the major contributions of this project is its attempt to do just this.

Indeed, such disaggregation can be highly productive. As scholars of comparative authoritarianism have noted, the formal institutions of democracy have increasingly been combined the world over with practices and informal institutions that create an uneven electoral playing field, resulting in “hybrid” regimes that are a distinct regime type in and of themselves (Carothers 2002, Diamond 2002). The change from a closed authoritarian regime (such as a military dictatorship) to a hybrid one (in which elections are held but fundamentally manipulated) is thus distinct from genuine democratization. This is particularly important because hybrid regimes are not simply “transitional” cases, but are instead often fairly stable (Brownlee 2009). Such regimes have largely displaced more closed forms of authoritarian rule and electoral regimes have become the world’s modal political system (Roessler and Howard 2009). To speak of more or less successful democratization, especially in moments of profound transition and regime-building, risks overlooking the fact that certain elements of democratic
systems can be extremely useful to non-democrats seeking to consolidate a fragile political system.

Scholarship on hybrid regimes has suggested that some forms of limited liberalization can actually help to preserve essentially nondemocratic regimes. Creating multiparty parliaments and holding elections can win international support for incumbent leaders (Ottaway 2003), provide a limited forum for making targeted concessions to social groups (Gandhi 2008), or help to give incumbent parties information about their popular support and to maintain loyalty among their own cadre (Magaloni 2006, 2008). These findings are particularly supportive of the approach underlying this dissertation because they emphasize the need to look at the ways in which actors operate in and around political institutions to achieve their goals. This forces us to take their incentives and strategies seriously and acknowledge the possibility that the failure of liberal democracy to emerge after civil war may well be the success of some groups in consolidating their control over the levers of government. In looking for “democracy” or “democratization” as aggregate concepts, we seriously risk conflating the efforts of democrats and the strategies of those seeking to contain the political competition that they cannot eliminate. Focusing more narrowly, such as on how and why some actors are successful in dominating elections over time, may actually tell us more than focusing on the failure of democracy.

When we consider democratization in the post-conflict context, what we are primarily interested in is often the development of politically competitive systems after civil war, the better to shift contestation from the battlefield to the ballot box. Crucially, competitiveness is not just an institutional structure. Giovanni Sartori emphasized this in his classic treatment of party systems by distinguishing between competition as an institutional structure and competitiveness
as describing a “particular state of the game” (1976199). We can define competitiveness as the degree to which the outcomes of contests for power are *ex ante* uncertain, in practice as well as in form. A competitive election is thus one in which actors are uncertain of the winner until the votes are counted.\(^9\) The emergence of such systems requires a minimum of three things: formal institutions that permit for the *de jure* competition of multiple political parties, *de facto* competition between multiple parties capable of obtaining office, and an electorate whose votes are distributed among such parties. While the processes that drive these three components are related, they are distinct and should be treated as such. It is to each of these that we now turn.

**Choosing Elections: De Jure Institutions of Competition**

The threshold question for the establishment of electoral competitiveness is the adoption of a formal legal framework that institutionalizes multiparty elections as the means by which political office and decision-making power are obtained. As discussed in the introduction, the adoption of such institutions is commonplace after conflict today, but this has not always been the case and current patterns might be thought of as puzzling. After all, it is a common assumption in the discipline that political actors will consolidate power to the greatest extent possible (Downs 1957). Multiparty systems, even those that fall short of common standards of democracy, are more politically open and pose greater within-system risk to the incumbent than more closed regime types. Yet in the context of conflict, the decision to adopt multiparty

\(^9\) Tools such as accurate polling data may reduce uncertainty even in closely contested elections, but they can never eliminate it entirely and their ability to predict results accurately diminishes as competitors become more evenly matched. Widespread electoral manipulation, on the other hand, drastically reduces the competitiveness of the contest, though a perfectly free and fair elections can also be dominated by one side.
elections is often made at least in part by the incumbent himself. Why are multiparty electoral regimes nearly ubiquitous after conflict today?

While democracy is an unquestionably powerful normative idea that motivates many actors, it is not clear that these elections amount to a true wave of democratization. Even non-democrats frequently select this institutional form. As previously discussed, scholarship on hybrid regimes has emphasized that multiparty electoral systems can be extremely useful to incumbents facing challenges and looking to manage the potential for opposition. While such systems prevent the *absolute* concentration of political power, they do expand the population of actors with a vested interest in preserving the regime. Unlike military juntas or monarchies, multiparty electoral systems do not carry the requirement that regime participants bear any particular fundamental characteristics. *Anyone* can be included in the population that selects and supports those who hold political power, as necessity or expedience dictate. Yet this does not mean that such systems must include universal suffrage. The franchise can be restricted with, for example, property requirements or citizenship regulations and particular parties can be banned for a host of reasons.

This may help to account for the myriad seemingly-accurate theories of democratization and electoral authoritarianism in the scholarly literature. Some “bottom-up” theories focus on economic class structure as the foundation for democratic development. As Wood (2000) argues, democratic institutions provide a way for mass publics and lower classes to gain political voice, and may result when they are able to sufficiently raise the cost to upper classes of maintaining non-democratic institutions. Classical theories of economic modernization similarly

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10 Selectorate theory offers a means of considering the size and composition of this population of actors. For more on selectorate theory, see Bueno de Mesquita, et al (2003).
may be correct in their findings that changing socioeconomic class structures drive new middle classes to expand the political power structure (Moore 1966).

Other theories focus on more top-down explanations for institutional democratization. Democracy is a strong choice for political forces that find themselves genuinely at a stalemate and in need of a system that preserves their chances for future political power (Przeworski 1991, Wantchekon 2004). Amid ongoing or political unrest, elites may negotiate their way to a pacted transition in which electoral competition is meaningful and incumbents may actually lose. It is also, however, a compelling institutional choice for actors who do not face a genuine stalemate. For authoritarian incumbents who have just begun to lose their hold on power, introducing multiparty elections provide a means of expanding the proportion of the population and the pool of elites with a stake in the political system (Lust-Okar 2005). In these cases, the likelihood that the incumbent loses is much lower because opposition elites who have previously been excluded from political power have an incentive to participate in the system even when they know it is flawed. Some access is better than no access. Particularly where the opposition finds itself unable to impose the level of costs on incumbents hypothesized by Wood, it may be willing to settle for imperfect elections in which they at least gain legitimacy and a public platform from which to pursue their interests.

In a sense, then, the ubiquity of post-conflict elections may reflect a kind of equifinality in the development of domestic political institutions. Formally democratic institutions are widespread precisely because they are multifunctional: for those previously excluded from

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11 Staffan Lindberg makes the case that repeated elections actually improve democratic quality, even in systems that start out as highly manipulated. He suggests that the practice and experience of elections allows opposition elites to develop the capacity for more effective competition (Lindberg 2006). Insofar as opposition leaders share this perspective, this may help to explain their continued participation in flawed systems.
power they offer a means of access, while for those in power they offer the possibility of a second-best alternative for retaining their position through a combination of legitimation and manipulation. Yet even given this multi-functionality, formally democratic institutions are common but not universal in the post-conflict context. Prior to 1989, many conflicts resulted in alternative political systems, and there have been additional exceptions to the multiparty trend since the end of the Cold War, such as Uganda.

Key to explaining this variation is the experience of conflict itself. All incumbents maintain their position on the basis of some mix of loyalty and coercion (Wintrobe 1998, 33). Closed regimes such as monarchies or single party states in which political power is obtained by means other than contested elections are no different. They may maintain power on the basis of an extensive security apparatus, a lucrative patronage network, or some other combination that might include charismatic or other appeals. Key for a closed regime is that these bases of power all enable the incumbent to exclude would-be competitors from power.

Civil wars are particularly problematic for closed regimes because they raise the costs of political hegemony. The government must deploy resources to fund military and police operations that might otherwise be directed towards the types of goods (whether public or private) that maintain incumbents in power. Violence takes a toll on economic activities that would otherwise provide revenue to the incumbent in the form of rents or taxes. This again

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12 For an argument that is similar to mine but more concerned with interactions between incumbents and international actors, see Brancati and Snyder (2011).
13 Uganda’s president Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986 but retained a “no party democracy” dominated by the National Resistance Movement until a constitutional change in 2005.
14 Civil wars are costly to all governments, but the focus here is on why closed regimes have become so rare after civil wars. Unlike closed regimes, those with elections offer an institutionalized means for citizens to remove the incumbent government. While coups d’état may (and do) still occur in states with multiparty elections, these frequently find themselves facing pressures similar to those discussed here (Marinov and Goemans 2014).
deprives the incumbent of resources that could be used to reinforce his position but it also potentially alienates supporters whose independent material interests are damaged by war. The extent to which this occurs varies across conflicts, with some imposing higher costs on the incumbent than others. Highly costly conflict thus erodes the support base of a regime with a material interest in its continued power and increases the likelihood that an incumbent will face or attempt to preempt calls for a new system of governance.

Beyond the material realm, civil war may also inflict costs on the legitimacy of an incumbent government.\textsuperscript{15} Like material coercive capacity, legitimacy is a source of power (Whalan 2013, 6). It can be crucial for a government’s stability and survival insofar as it helps to create authority and gives the government symbolic power resources that are not available without legitimacy (Hurd 2007, 41). Legitimacy itself is a contested concept in the social sciences and one about which there is little consensus as to either its full definition or its sources.\textsuperscript{16} Many scholars draw on Weber’s classical approach identifying three types of legitimacy: traditional, charismatic, and rational-bureaucratic (194679). However, scholarship on questions of legitimacy and support for government has moved us beyond this fairly simplistic trichotomy. Accordingly, we can define legitimacy as a quality of power that depends on the extent to which “(i) it conforms to established rules, (ii) the rules can be justified by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate, and (iii) there is evidence of

\textsuperscript{15} The outbreak of civil war is a clear indicator that a state’s legitimacy is being challenged by a portion of its populace and has been used as such in prior studies (Gilley, The Meaning and Measure of State Legitimacy: Results for 72 Countries 2006, Rothstein 2009), but the argument here is that conflicts themselves degrade legitimacy further to varying degrees that then have significant effects for both bottom-up pressures for change and top-down incumbent survival strategies.

\textsuperscript{16} A full review of the extensive literature debating the definition and sources of legitimacy is well beyond the scope of this discussion. For condensed overviews of the literature addressing these issues, see Gilley (2006) and Andersen (2012).
consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation” (Beetham 2013, 15-16). The second component of legitimacy is particularly important for our purposes. The beliefs that justify the exercise of power can take a wide variety of forms depending on context, but the key is that it is seen as being “derived from a valid source of authority… those who come to power have the qualities appropriate to its exercise; and the structure of power must be seen to serve a recognizably general interest, rather than simply the interests of the powerful” (Beetham 2013, 18). This inclusion of serving the general interest introduces what is sometimes called “performance legitimacy” into the conceptualization: a regime is perceived as legitimate if it provides the goods (such as security or economic development) that the population expects it should. Not only can ideology, nationalism, or tradition provide justification for a government's continued rule, so can its success in governance.

Protracted conflict undermines the fundamental sources of legitimacy for closed regimes on multiple fronts. If the regime claims justification on the basis of a unifying ideology, its claims are hollowed out by any insurgency able to attract and sustain local support. If its claims rely on the effective provision of economic development or security, legitimacy again deteriorates as conflict drags on or does greater damage in human or material terms. This may lead to calls from below for a change of regime, or it may lead to top-down efforts to revise the populace’s perception of the regime. In both cases, the adoption of multiparty elections and

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17 Empirical research has indicated that a state’s success in delivering on expected goods (rather than procedural formalities such as the holding of elections) is a key driver of whether or not it enjoys legitimacy (Gilley 2006, Rothstein 2009, Gerschewski 2013).

18 In such circumstances, an incumbent will presumably wish to adopt the minimum level of reform necessary to raise his legitimacy without weakening his position of power more than absolutely necessary. For closed regimes, this may be especially challenging to do within existing institutional structures. Easton (1975) distinguishes between specific and diffuse support. The former refers to support for the particular set of office holders in place at any given time, while the latter refers to support for the structure of offices itself. In a democracy, specific support
other formal institutions of democracy are likely to result as legitimacy claims are revised regarding the process of leadership selection.

Conflict thus imposes both material and ideational costs on maintaining or imposing a closed regime. In some circumstances, these costs can be overcome with external support (such as unconditional foreign aid) or internal policies (such as mass killing of ethnic or political opponents). In most circumstances, however, incumbents in a closed regime will be forced to seek an alternative means of survival.\textsuperscript{19} The adoption of multiparty institutions provides just this for all of the reasons discussed above: it offers a means of expanding the number of interest groups with a stake in the regime, enables incumbents to manage their own structures of power, and provides a new narrative of justification for political power. We should thus expect that the more costly a conflict episode proves to be, the more likely that it will result in the adoption or maintenance of the formal institutions of democracy. Incumbents may find themselves forced to acquiesce to external calls for democratization or the impetus may be internally-generated. In some cases the change may be adopted as part of a formal negotiated settlement, while in others it may be a unilateral move. In still other cases where democratic institutions predate the conflict, the costliness of conflict may simply raise the bar for the adoption of any other regime type. Regardless of the particular process, post-conflict states are likely to feature the \textit{de jure} institutions of democracy wherever the relative cost of war is high.

\textsuperscript{19}This discussion is couched in terms of the survival of an authoritarian incumbent in the midst of conflict, but it is also applicable to insurgents who emerge from war victorious. Establishing a new government after conflict is often difficult precisely because of the types of costs it imposed on a prior incumbent. The benefits of a more formally inclusive system are thus equally useful to a new government looking to establish stability.
Failed Hegemony and *De Facto* Electoral Competition

The costliness of conflict incentivizes many actors in a political regime to adopt more inclusive institutions, particularly in the form of *de jure* democracy and multiparty elections. Yet these institutions frequently lead to political hegemony rather than the competitive elections that would be at the heart of an accountable democracy. Why can some actors consolidate political power into low-competition elections while others face much more competitive polls? Contrary to much scholarship that focuses on proactive democracy-building after civil war, competitive politics after conflict may not be the success of democracy; it may be the failure of power consolidation. As Lucan Way has argued persuasively in examining the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emerging regimes that became (and remained) competitive after their initial political opening were those in which would-be dominant actors failed in their efforts to consolidate control. Way calls this kind of competitiveness “pluralism by default” (2005232). A similar argument can be made about actors emerging from conflict. Where war leaves major assets relatively concentrated with one actor or organization, electoral politics will likely be dominated by that group in the post-conflict period. Where control of assets is more diffuse, no single group will be able to consolidate power and politics will be more competitive.

What precisely is meant by assets? Broadly speaking, we can think of any organization’s assets in terms of two facets: its resources and its capabilities. In the business management literature, resources are defined as

stocks of available factors that are owned or controlled by the firm… [they] are converted into final products or services by using a wide range of other firm assets and bonding mechanisms such as technology, management information systems, incentive systems, trust between management and labor, and more. These *Resources* consist, *inter alia*, of...
knowhow that can be traded (e.g., patents and licenses), financial or physical assets (e.g., property, plant, and equipment), human capital, etc. (Amit and Schoemaker 1993, 35).

In armed conflict, resources might include financial support from an external sponsor or diaspora community, specialized knowledge of terrain, a populist ideology, military hardware, or lootable resources such as alluvial diamonds that can be used to further a war effort. Control over resources may shift over time, but more consistent may be an organization’s capabilities, defined as the “capacity to deploy Resources (sic), usually in combination, using organizational processes, to effect a desired end” (Amit and Schoemaker 1993, 35). A government may have access to military hardware and soldiers capable of operating it, but its battlefield effectiveness will be limited if it lacks command and control capabilities. A rebel group may profess an ideology, but it will have little impact on the war effort if the group lacks the capability to promulgate it for use as a mobilization tool among civilians.20

During conflict, combatant organizations develop various mixes of resources and capabilities in order to pursue their military and political goals.21 Prior research has illuminated the multiple ways that non-state actors organize themselves (Staniland 2014), as well as the way that qualitatively different endowments affect rebel groups’ behavior and use of violence during conflict (Weinstein 2007). Former combatants carry these assets into the post-conflict period and rely on them as they attempt to obtain power by electoral rather than military competition.

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20 It is important to note that not all capabilities are appropriately thought of in the sense of an organization’s use of resources. This is because, outside of the business context, resources are not always directly “owned” by an organization and not all resources are material. Weinstein’s (2007) distinction between economic and social endowments provides a clear example.

21 For simplicity, the discussion is presented here exclusively in terms of combatant organizations. Non-combatant organizations, however, engage in similar processes both during conflict and in its aftermath. Resources and capabilities may be made available or developed in response to conflict in ways that are not explicitly outlined here. The case study of Sierra Leone presented in Chapter 6 provides further discussion of such circumstances.
Yet not all capabilities and resources are equally valuable in this endeavor. There are relatively few circumstances in which overt force is sufficient to both establish and maintain a political regime. A rebel group with strong fighting abilities may be able to force an incumbent to introduce multiparty elections as part of a peace agreement, but how it will fare in those elections will depend on more than its combat acumen. In making the transition from battlefield to ballot box, qualitative differences in capabilities and resources matter.

One useful way to conceptualize the issue and distinguish among asset types stems from the literature on political economy. The key distinction for our purposes is the difference between highly specific assets, defined as “assets that cannot readily be turned to another purpose” (Hall and Soskice 2001, 17) and those that are convertible (or “switchable”), defined as those “whose value can be realized if diverted to other purposes” (Hall and Soskice 2001, 17). Ethnic networks and territorial support bases are much more easily converted into electoral assets than is military hardware, for example.

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22 One of the major limitations of prior works that have considered the transition from civil war to electoral politics is that many have tended to assume that power resources are perfectly fungible. Whether in economics or politics, however, we know that this is rarely (if ever) the case. The Stolper-Samuelson Model, for example, has been found to have limited applicability because of its strong assumption that assets are perfectly mobile between industries. Whereas that model would expect capital and labor to take opposing positions on questions of free trade, Magee (1980) finds that labor and capital within a given industry identify their interests as aligned the vast majority of the time, due in large part to issues related to asset specificity. See also Hiscox (2002). The assumption of fungibility thus limits the likely validity of studies whose primary independent variable is, for example, the mode of conflict termination.

23 Admittedly, asset specificity has been defined variously in the literature. Williamson, for example, defines asset specificity as referring to “the ease with which an asset can be redeployed to alternative uses and by alternative users without loss of productive value” (199179-80). A crucial difference between this business-oriented definition of specificity and the politically-oriented definition presented above is that I do not make the claim that resources must be specific to use by particular actors. An interesting extension of the theory might take into account the question of whether the transferability of resources consolidated during conflict affects coalition behavior in post-conflict elections. That inquiry, however, is beyond the scope of this project.

24 This is by no means to say that individuals’ military experience in civil war is irrelevant to subsequent political behavior. Jha and Wilkinson (2012) find that greater fighting experience left some Indian World War II veterans with the organizational capacity to more effectively ethnically cleanse their communities during the partition of South Asia.
In industrial and economics studies, asset specificity is shown to affect a range of firm behaviors stretching from responses to economic crises (Grewal and Tansuhaj 2001) to lobbying behavior (Alt, et al. 1999). Much of this research is motivated by a desire to understand the business and political effects of globalization, which advantages some industries over others in any given country. This should put pressure on firms to switch their activities to the most profitable industry, given the new market conditions of global integration. Some firms whose assets are more specific resist this pressure by a number of means (Alt, et al. 1999), while others fail to remain competitive under the new conditions and, for example, seek state subsidies (Zahariadis 2001). If asset specificity affects firms facing pressure to move between industries, a parallel argument might be made about political organizations making the change from battlefield to electoral competition. As Frieden writes,

…an automobile factory cannot costlessly be converted into a brewery, nor can a seamstress costlessly become an aerospace engineer. Although factors of production may move from one use to another over the long run, they cannot do so in the short and medium run, which is the time frame more relevant to political analysis (1991436).

While parties may eventually be able to adapt to acquire and develop new electorally-useful resources and capabilities, such processes take time and there is empirical evidence that they rarely take place easily in the immediate post-conflict period. To understand the outcomes of elections in the short- and medium-term, then, we must direct our focus to the resources available to parties at the moment of transition.

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25 In international relations, asset specificity has also been offered as an explanation for the persistence of some international alliances beyond their original purpose (Wallander 2000).
26 See Manning (2008) for case studies of rebel-organizations-turned-opposition-parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique, and El Salvador.
If it is true that “The more specific its assets, the more costly a firm facing competitive pressure to adjust would find ‘exit’ into another product or industry” (Alt, et al. 1999, 102), then it should also be true that the more specific an organization’s assets are to militarized conflict, the more difficult it should find the transition to electoral politics.\(^{27}\) If, for the sake of argument, we make the strong assumption that the return to arms has been rendered ineffective by international pressure, military defeat, or a hurting stalemate, those combatants whose assets are specific to military conflict at the moment of transition should be consistently less successful at the polls than rivals whose assets are more convertible.\(^ {28}\)

Importantly, we are not solely concerned with the ability of individual organizations to make the transition from conflict to elections. The question driving this study is why the political system that follows conflict is more or less competitive. We are thus concerned not only with the presence or absence of convertible assets for any one actor, but on the overall distribution of convertible assets. A unipolar distribution of convertible assets (in which a single organization enjoys significant advantage over others in its stock of convertible assets) will likely lead to electoral dominance for obvious reasons. But a proliferation of parties can actually be damaging for the competitiveness of an election, splitting opposition voters among many camps (Howard and Roessler 2006). Where multiple rebel groups, for example, all have convertible assets and compete against an incumbent, the benefits to the rebels of having developed such assets during conflict may be diluted. The former rebels may well box one

\(^{27}\) Though I know of no research has been done explicitly considering transitions from civil war from the perspective of asset specificity, related work exists on the transformation of militarized forces. See, e.g., Lyons, (2005).

\(^{28}\) This assumption prevents unsuccessful political parties from simply choosing to return to the battlefield. Examples such as Angola in 1992 demonstrate that this is not always the case. Empirical tests in Chapter 4 will account for the possibility of a return to arms as an alternative for electorally weak combatants.
another out, allowing the incumbent to remain in power. We would therefore expect competition to be highest between two parties with roughly equal convertible assets.

**Violence and Voters: Polarization and Good Citizens**

So far we have theorized that costly conflicts create opportunities and generate incentives for the adoption of formally democratic institutions, but whether elections become genuinely competitive depends on the way that civil war redistributes convertible assets among the actors who are or eventually become political parties. Whether competition can be sustained in the longer term, however, depends in part on the connection between the elites at the heart of these first two processes and the voters whose choices at the ballot box (theoretically) decide the outcomes of elections. High levels of competition in successive elections require that voters continue to turn out to vote for multiple parties repeatedly over time. Under what conditions is this likely to occur and how are these conditions influenced by voters’ experience of violence?

In the abstract, we can think of voters as occupying the space along some spectrum of preferences. This might be a left-right policy spectrum, but in the post-conflict context of weak institutions and new democratization it is more likely to be a spectrum between an incumbent and the opposition.\(^{29}\) Highly competitive elections are likely to emerge in either of two situations. In the first, we can think of the preferences of voters as being distributed in a bimodal fashion between the two competing parties. Under this scenario, roughly equal numbers of citizens are polarized between the two parties, with few “swing voters” in the middle of the preference spectrum who might be persuaded during a campaign to support one side or another.

\(^{29}\) For simplicity, this is presented in terms of a two-party election. The underlying concepts and general hypothesis would still be applicable in cases where voters are choosing between multiple parties.
Success in this election is thus contingent on each party’s ability to turn out its base. In the second scenario, we can think of a more normally or uniformly distributed population of voters. Here, there are significant numbers of voters in the center of the spectrum who do not necessarily have a strong preference for one party or the other. The victor in this scenario is thus likely to be the party that can attract the most uncommitted voters.

Robust competition is possible under either of these hypothetical scenarios, but it is not guaranteed. In both cases, competitive elections depend on the presence of multiple parties with the capacity to mobilize voters. If one side dominates the field of convertible assets (in financial or organizational capacity, for example), elections may still be uncompetitive. Parties are the vehicles through which voter preferences are translated into electoral outcomes. This may be particularly important in the second, third, or fourth election after conflict ends.

Which of these scenarios is more likely to emerge in the post-conflict context? National-level competitiveness is the aggregation of local-level electoral competition. Both electoral competition and conflict violence vary within countries, offering a source of theoretical and empirical leverage over this question. Violence during civil war has a deep impact on those who experience it, helping to shape their political preferences and outlooks. Does conflict push voting populations towards one or the other of these preference distributions? Prior scholarship is surprisingly divided in its implications for this question. One body of literature espouses what I call the “polarization hypothesis” and would suggest that the bimodal distribution of preferences is more likely to emerge where much of the population is exposed to violence during

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30 Parties, of course, also help to shape voter preferences through agenda-setting and platform articulation. In the context of conflict, however, the lines of political debate and the salience of some cleavages over others tend to be fairly fixed. In this sense, the preference-shaping function of parties is less important in the post-conflict context that in other, more stable democracies.
conflict. The other suggests that exposure to violence may have pro-social effects on individuals and amounts to what I term the “good citizen hypothesis.” From this perspective we might expect voters previously exposed to violence to exhibit a higher willingness to serve as swing voters, lending support to the idea of a more normally or uniformly distributed population. Each of these hypotheses is discussed in turn and, while the polarization hypothesis appears to be slightly stronger, both demand serious consideration both theoretically and in empirical testing.

*The Polarization Hypothesis*

A number of scholars have undertaken studies related to the question of violence and political behavior and identified evidence that conflict exposure has politically polarizing effects. Several studies have found that exposure to armed combat or to terror attacks (or the threat thereof) tends to drive voters to favor parties with hardline stances towards terror groups at election time (Grossman, Manekin and Miodownik 2015, Kibris 2011, Getmansky and Zeitzoff 2014). This is not limited to civilian support for hawkish parties at one end of a political spectrum. When examining both sides of a militarized political cleavage, other studies have found further evidence of polarizing effects. Victims during the civil war and subsequent authoritarian regime in Spain, for example, have been found to be more likely to reject the political identity of the group perceived to be responsible (Balcells 2012). Having been or had a family member victimized by forces of the right increased the likelihood that voters would support leftist parties even long after the transition to democracy, and vice versa. Districts with more intense violence between the PKK and security forces in Turkey have similarly been found
to have higher electoral support for Turkish-nationalist and Kurdish-nationalist parties (Kibris 2014).

Other studies have found support not only for overall polarization, but also suggest that we should expect violence exposure to lead to greater localized homogeneity of voter preferences (rather than deeply divided but balanced communities). Exposure to violence ranging from terrorist attacks to civil war has been found to decrease levels of political tolerance (Hutchison 2014). Similarly, ex-combatants in Liberia were found to support freedom of expression as a democratic right, but simultaneously were reticent to express dissent in group settings and expressed skepticism of the value of opposition parties’ public criticism of the incumbent government. These results were interpreted as a prioritization of peace and stability over other interests (Söderström 2011). In Uganda, individuals living in areas with high levels of violence reported lower levels of social trust and a higher prioritization of ethnic identity over national identity, particularly when the local violence involved members of their own ethnic group (Rohner, Thoenig and Zilibotti 2013).

Taken together, these prior findings provide support for the hypothesis that exposure to violence during civil war has polarizing effects on a population. The human toll of conflict is enormous and likely leads to individual loyalties and animosities that are not easily shaken. The polarization hypothesis would accordingly suggest that the experience or threat of violence during conflict should leave voters less conciliatory, more likely to identify strongly with one side of the conflict, and less likely to consider switching their vote to a party identified with the opposing side. Moreover, this should play out at the sub-national level. Violence in conflict is never uniformly distributed across a country’s territory. If the polarization hypothesis is correct
in its anticipation of pressures for both hardline preferences and localized conformity, we would expect that localities that were most violent during conflict should be least competitive in subsequent elections. Vote shares in each district should more heavily favor one side or another and volatility between elections should be relatively low. Competition at the national level would thus hinge on parties’ ability to mobilize their bases over repeated elections, rather than their ability to attract new support.

*The Good Citizen Hypothesis*

While the polarization hypothesis has received substantial consideration in the literature, other research indicates that there may be support for an alternative. A growing literature on the effect of violent experiences on individuals’ political behavior departs from the conventional wisdom that conflict leaves its victims isolated, mistrustful, and polarized. Instead, scholars have identified a number of ways in which exposure to violence actually has pro-social effects on those who survive large-scale conflict. It is not only those who participate in main combatant organizations who develop new skills or social resources, but civilians as well (Wood 2008). Greater levels of violence provide civilians with greater incentives to organize themselves for self defense or other activities, for example. Cross-nationally, voter turnout is higher in democracies that have recently experienced terrorist attacks (Robbins, Hunter and Murray 2013). In Uganda, exposure to violence has been found to increase individuals’ subsequent levels of political participation and engagement (Blattman 2009). These effects are not necessarily tied

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31 These effects may not be limited to the experience of civil war violence, but may instead be a reaction to many forms of insecurity. Regina Bateson (2012) has found that crime victimization leads to increased political participation in such forms as attending community meetings and talking about politics frequently. She also finds,
to the cleavages of conflict. Exposure to violence has also been found to increase attendance at community meetings and rates of voter registration (Bellows and Miguel 2009). Individuals exposed to high levels of conflict violence have also been found to demonstrate higher levels of altruism (Voors, et al. 2012), egalitarianism (Bauer, et al. 2014), and pro-social decision making (Gilligan, Pasquale and Samii 2014).

This research suggests that individuals who have been through the experience of conflict see their preferences changed in ways that are more community-oriented. Rather than triggering a retreat into private life, conflict makes individuals more dependent upon one another and more invested in political processes. Whether such individuals are also more committed to holding leaders accountable at election time has not been directly studied. Yet the body of previous findings does suggest a possible extension in what I call the good citizen hypothesis: those exposed to violence may be more committed to political activism of the kind that uses democratic processes to hold leaders accountable. At the local level, this would predict that areas that were more violent during civil war should be more competitive in subsequent elections. We would expect to see elections won by narrower margins, for example, as groups mobilize in favor of preferred policies and higher conflict violence should be associated with higher volatility between elections, indicating higher rates of swing voting.

*Adjudicating Between Hypotheses*

As noted above, there are tentative reasons to favor the polarization hypothesis over the good citizen hypothesis in examining the specific outcomes associated with electoral participation, however, that this may not always be a democratic form of participation, as crime victims in some regions of the world may also be more supportive or tolerant of authoritarianism or vigilantism.
competition. Chief among these is the parallel approach taken in much of the polarization literature in its examination of party preferences and voting behavior. The polarization hypothesis is thus more concrete in its derivation from prior research, whereas the good citizen hypothesis rests on less direct foundations.

Even so, the polarization hypothesis faces some challenges. As framed here, the polarization hypothesis takes for granted that voters can identify the perpetrators of the violence to which they are exposed or that they are primarily exposed to violence from only one side of the conflict. We know from prior studies of conflict violence that this is not necessarily the case in the context of civil war. Control of an area may change hands several times or civilians may be subjected to abuse by militias whose connections and allegiances are ambiguous or shift over time. Violence experienced by civilians may also have little to do with the “master cleavage” of the conflict itself, as war presents opportunities for actors to engage in violence to resolve pre-existing local or private grievances (Kalyvas 2003). The relevant cleavage for voters may thus become combatant-civilian or even localized loyalties rather than the master cleavage. Under such circumstances, the polarization hypothesis may find less support. For these reasons, the good citizen hypothesis will be taken as a particularly compelling alternative in the empirical tests examining the sub-national relationship between violence and electoral competition.

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32 Recent research also suggests that the relationship between violence exposure and vote share is not always as straightforward as the reviewed literature might suggest, even where violence is clearly attributable and aligned with the master cleavage of the conflict. The relationship between violence exposure and support for a pro-negotiation incumbent in Colombia, for example, was found to have an inverted-U shape, with vote shares highest in communities that had experienced moderate levels of insurgent violence (Weintraub, Vargas and Flores 2015). Additionally, electoral support for the political wing of the Basque separatist movement in Spain has been found to be dependent not only on localities’ exposure to violence, but also the nature of the target of the violence (de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca 2013).
Alternative Explanations

The theory outlined above rests on foundations that are primarily domestic and rooted in conflict processes. The institutions of electoral competition emerge from the costliness of civil war as actors attempt to maneuver in a political space in which formal monopoly is no longer viable. Whether competitive elections actually emerge at the national level is dependent on the ways that various actors respond to the challenges of conflict and their transition to peacetime politics. Where robust electoral competition is located sub-nationally is influenced by the geography of violence during the preceding war. In all parts of the theory, the legacy of conflict and domestic actors are the crucial drivers of post-conflict political outcomes.

Throughout the following chapters, this approach will be tested against alternative explanations. Although each case and method has features specific to its history or approach that are considered as alternatives to the explanation I advance, I also test my hypotheses against two general alternative explanations from the literature throughout. Each alternative challenges one of the core features of the approach I adopt. The first suggests that conflict itself has little influence over post-conflict outcomes, while the second emphasizes the importance of international interventions.

All That is Old is New Again: Conflict as Endogenous to Politics

While the theory developed above emphasized the transformative effects of large-scale conflict, it is also possible that the outcomes under examination are not actually rooted in conflict at all. Some research has suggested that the prospects for post-conflict democratization are subject to the same structural forces—such as economic development—as non-conflict cases
(Fortna and Huang 2012). Structural considerations are also widely considered to drive whether civil wars occur (and reoccur) at all, with poverty and economic decline being key factors (Collier, Elliott, et al. 2003, 4). Economic crisis has similarly been linked to pressure for political liberalization in non-conflict cases (Bratton and van de Walle, Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective 1997, 98-103, Bates 2010). This research suggests that conflict may be part of the process of adopting democratic institutions, for example, but may not be a driving force behind it.

Beyond structural considerations, it is also possible that the features of conflict highlighted here are themselves the product of pre-conflict variables that are linked to post-conflict political outcomes. Research on political violence during the Holocaust, for example, has found that the persecution of Jews in Poland was higher in areas where Jewish political parties had done better in pre-war elections (Kopstein and Wittenberg 2011) and that Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghettos relied in important ways on the political networks established during the same pre-war period (E. Finkel 2012). Recent work on insurgent organizations similarly emphasizes the way that peacetime networks and capabilities influence how rebels organize themselves in conflict and the effectiveness of these strategies (Staniland 2014). This research suggests that, once again, the conduct of the conflict itself is at most a mediating variable between pre-conflict social and political factors and post-conflict outcomes. If post-conflict political competition simply reproduces pre-conflict patterns of contestation, then the features of the conflict are likely a distraction to understanding our outcomes of interest.
International Peacebuilding: The Effectiveness of External Intervention

A second alternative explanation calls into question not the importance of conflict to subsequent political life, but the relative importance of domestic versus international actors in affecting these outcomes. Civil war has long drawn the influence or involvement of external actors. During the Cold War, conflicts with local roots became proxy battles for superpower competition. Foreign fighters have joined combatants for mercenary or ideological reasons. International and regional organizations from the United Nations to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the African Union have taken it upon themselves to engage in conflict mediation and peacekeeping operations.

Since the early 1990s, these interventions have often been accompanied by an explicit goal of facilitating democratization. The United Nations has adopted multidimensional peacebuilding missions in an effort to stabilize post-conflict countries and has seen improved rates of success in this regard (Doyle and Sambanis 2006, 335). International influence has been found to push up the timetable for post-conflict elections (Brancati and Snyder 2011) and extended to the very writing of constitutions for countries emerging from war (L. M. Howard 2012).

The role of international forces in promoting democratization is commonly noted in both studies of post-conflict cases (Paris 1997, Fortna 2008) and elsewhere (Finkel, Pérez-Liñán and Seligson 2007, Levitsky and Way 2010, Boix 2011, Marinov and Goemans 2014). Much, though not all, of this research focuses on the leverage (or lack thereof) that democracy-promoting states have over weaker authoritarian regimes, generally through conditionalities
attached to foreign aid. International actors are thought to have been able to wield such influence primarily because democratizing states are weak and have few alternatives for support. Given this, we might expect international influence over domestic political choices and the outcomes of domestic political processes to be especially robust in countries emerging from conflict. Conflict often has devastating impacts on the economy and the state, and the task of reconstruction is often too overwhelming for a government to manage alone. The importance of aid may thus constrain some incumbents in ways that produce competitive electoral politics. Particularly where robust peacebuilding missions are in place, the emergence of competitive electoral politics after civil war may be a question of the quality of international peacebuilders’ efforts rather than primarily the product of domestic processes. While my theory certainly does leave space for international actors to play a role, this alternative would suggest that outsiders such as UN officials and Western diplomats should be key engines of competition-promoting processes.

Conclusion

Prior scholarship has highlighted the need for concreteness when seeking to understand the quality of political life, particularly in the aftermath of armed conflict. In particular, this dissertation seeks to understand why countries that face high levels of internal military competition sometimes see subsequently high levels of political competition but more often see sustained periods of political dominance. Rather than couch this enquiry in terms of a broader

\[33\] This influence does seem to have been effective in many cases of facilitating the introduction of multiparty elections, though the record with regards to democratic consolidation is decidedly more mixed (Brown 2005).

\[34\] Even more recent work that sought to bring local elites back into our understanding of why post-conflict democratization efforts succeed or fail are framed in terms of the efforts of international actors as the initiators of peacebuilding processes (Metternich 2011, Zürcher, et al. 2013).
assessment of democratization, the study focuses on open political competition as a crucial feature of that multifaceted process.

In the democratic sense, political competition requires several features: (i) institutions that allow for individuals and groups to pursue office via multiparty elections; (ii) de facto competition at election time between parties; and (iii) a voter population with an interest in sustaining this de facto electoral competition over time. In the post-conflict context, I have argued that each of these features of political competition is affected by the legacy of political violence. In particular, three broad hypotheses have been developed:

(1) more costly conflicts are more likely to be followed by de jure competitive institutions such as multiparty elections,

(2) such elections will be genuinely competitive at the national level where conflict has left multiple actors (ideally two) with significant stocks of convertible assets that can be transferred from military to electoral use, and

(3) violence polarizes voters such that long-run political competition will depend both on the geography of violence during the conflict and parties’ ability to sustain the repeated mobilization of their voter base.

Each of these three components is necessary for electoral competition to emerge in a meaningful way and so each is deserving of independent inquiry that still recognizes their connected nature. The remaining chapters examine each of these hypotheses in turn using both qualitative and quantitative methods in an effort to both establish general relationships and illuminate the underlying processes by which institutions are adopted and competition or dominance emerges.
Each chapter begins by reviewing the relevant aspects of the theory and specifying the observable implications to be tested.

Chapter 3 takes up the question of multiparty institutions and investigates why it is that they are now so common after conflict. The chapter combines cross-national regression analysis and brief case studies to identify relationships between key variables and illustrate the processes by which the pressures of civil war translate into the adoption or reinstatement of multiparty institutions. Chapter 4 presents cross-national statistical evidence regarding the emergence of competition within electoral institutions. The quantitative analysis reveals complex relationships between different types of combatant assets, the number of actors across whom they are distributed, and time. Further tests of the second hypothesis are provided in Chapters 5 and 6, which present case studies of war-to-politics transitions in Mozambique and Sierra Leone, respectively. These cases offer hard tests of the broader hypothesis but also offer an opportunity to revisit and refine the findings from the cross-national analysis. The qualitative evidence provides support for the broad hypothesis regarding convertible assets and electoral competition, but indicates a need to expand our consideration of the types of actors who may hold such assets and the way that they are deployed or degraded over time. The third hypothesis regarding the effect of violence on voters is also taken up in both Chapters 5 and 6 via a sub-national statistical analysis of violence patterns and the returns of key elections. Repeating this analysis across both cases presents a more challenging test for the hypothesis and helps to address any concerns of external validity that so often plague studies utilizing sub-national analysis. Despite the different contexts of the Mozambican and Sierra Leonean conflicts, the results of this analysis indicate
support for the polarization hypothesis over the good citizen hypothesis. The concluding chapter
draws the findings of these various tests together and revisits the theory as presented above.
CHAPTER 3: WHY ARE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS UBIQUITOUS AFTER CIVIL WAR?

“Elections are part of the peace process. This is how we are going to achieve peace.”
– Women’s Civil Society Leader, Sierra Leone

“All of these reforms and all these changes, we felt they were the result of our pressure, the result of our fight... So let’s put this as an agreement, not as you are the good guys who made the change... Some critics were saying ‘Well they are pulling the carpet out, so Renamo has no more reason for fighting.’ And we said, ‘Hey, stop, it’s not like that. There’s no confidence.’”
– Raul Domingos, Renamo Lead Negotiator

Much has been made in recent years of the spread of formal democratic institutions in the world. While optimism about the “liberal moment” at the end of the Cold War has given way to a more measured recognition that holding elections does not necessarily a democracy make, most policymakers and scholars have taken the ubiquity of electoral politics as a fact, rather than a puzzle to be explained. Particularly in the context of civil war, the widespread introduction of electoral institutions is indeed worth closer examination. When security crises often provide a pretext for military intervention in politics, why do such crises also become the occasion for regime liberalization? Put simply, why do so many countries have elections after civil wars?

Prior research in this area has not focused on this question. Instead, scholars have investigated the effects of post-conflict elections on other outcomes of interest such as the stability of peace (Lyons 2005, Flores and Nooruddin 2012) or economic recovery (Flores and Nooruddin 2009), or else looked for explanations as to the timing of elections (Brancati and Snyder 2011). That there will be elections (if only eventually) is largely taken for granted. Yet it is not immediately obvious why incumbents who have often been content to rule for years
without the mantle of democratic legitimacy would accept and even promote the legalization of political opposition and the holding of multiparty elections. This chapter examines this question in the context of civil war. The social, political, and economic destruction wrought by conflict creates especially steep challenges for a political system that is (in theory) rooted in popular participation, acceptance of institutional constraints, and respect for civil liberties. While we might expect this to make democratization less common in countries wracked by war, the data indicate that formally democratic regimes are actually more common in post-conflict countries than in previously-closed countries that do not experience conflict (Table 3.1). Conflict itself seems to accompany the development of multiparty institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1</th>
<th>Regime Types by Conflict Experience 1989-2000</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closed Systems</td>
<td>conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=55)</td>
<td>no conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparty Systems</td>
<td>conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>(n=105)</td>
<td>no conflict</td>
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Figures indicate the number of countries with closed or open political systems. Closed systems are those in which no parties or only a single party was legal, while open systems are those in which multiple political parties are technically legal based on data from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010). Conflict indicates whether there was at least one year of armed conflict between 1989 and 1999, as coded by Kreutz (2010).

This chapter argues that multiparty elections are especially ubiquitous after civil war because closed authoritarian regimes are costly to found and maintain. The adoption of multiparty systems and electoral institutions offers incumbents in a chance at the legitimacy of controlled political opening with potentially only moderate risk of losing office. Incumbents essentially accept limited uncertainty at the polls in an effort to avoid forcible removal when the
latter looks especially likely. Civil war raises the appeal of that tradeoff for many incumbents. Whether a would-be dictator has survived a civil war as the incumbent or only recently taken power, the instability of the post-conflict context creates high barriers to establishing a monopoly on political power and legitimacy. This suggests that the formal institutions of democracy—measured here by whether multiple political parties are legal—should be most prevalent after conflicts in which incumbents cannot afford to establish closed political systems. This should be the case after conflict episodes that have been especially long or economically destructive. Cross-national regression analysis and case evidence from Sierra Leone and Mozambique support this hypothesis.

The chapter begins with a brief overview of post-conflict institutions for all conflict episodes from 1946 to 2008. This highlights the phenomenon under examination, hypothesizes basic relationships with the key independent variables, and considers alternative explanations. The descriptive data suggests that conventional explanations for the prevalence of democratic institutions are incomplete without a more concrete consideration of how the experience of conflict shapes actors’ preferences and options with regards to institutional choice. A second section carries this analysis further by utilizing cross-national regression to demonstrate the robustness of key relationships between the destructiveness of a conflict episode and the likelihood that it is followed by formal democratization. A third and final section presents case evidence from Sierra Leone and Mozambique. This section highlights the mechanisms by which conflict breaks down an incumbent’s ability to maintain a monopoly on political power.

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35 This framework parallels that offered by Robert Dahl on the tradeoff between the costs and benefits of strategies of repression and allowing opposition, which has become a standard way of thinking about regime liberalization in the literature on democratization (197114-16).
The Liberalization of Post-Conflict Politics

The formal institutions of democracy have become nearly ubiquitous since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of communist systems around the world. Yet while this pattern has often been highlighted (Roessler and Howard 2009), less common is the recognition that the introduction of formally democratic institutions is especially prevalent in countries emerging from civil wars. While some cases of democratization fall into both explanatory camps (as in Tajikistan, where the collapse of the Soviet system and the initiation of a civil war occurred almost simultaneously), a close examination of the data shows that the special relationship between conflict and democratization is not limited to such cases. Figure 3.1a shows the proportion of countries in the world in which multiple political parties are legal.\textsuperscript{36} The figure demonstrates quite clearly the trend towards multiparty politics around the world.

\textsuperscript{36} This data is based on the \textit{de jure} variable from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010), which codes countries’ laws as permitting no, one, or multiple political parties represented. This is, of course, a limited measure as the \textit{de jure} legality of opposition parties may have little relation to their \textit{de facto} existence. This measure is used as a standard (albeit low) bar, which is compared to more robust measures in subsequent sections of this chapter.
Even more striking, however, is the trend depicted in Figure 3.1b. This figure shows the number of conflict episodes ending each year from 1946 to 2007. The bars distinguish between conflicts which end with formally democratic institutions in place and those that end with closed political systems. Not only does the number of conflict terminations increase dramatically in the late 1980s and 1990s, so too does the proportion of conflicts which end with a nominally democratic political system in place. Democracy (or at least the guise of democracy) has become an increasingly standard institutional solution to conflict. This is taken for granted after major and intractable civil wars with heavy international post-conflict involvement, such as the war fought in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United Nations has made its preference for democracy-as-peacebuilding explicit since the early 1990s and governments reliant on peacekeepers for short-term stability are unlikely to object. Where conflict leads to a mutually-hurting stalemate, it is unsurprising that combatants will implement some political system that enables the incorporation and integration of multiple competing factions. Thus, it is little wonder

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37 As discussed below, regime type is coded for the year following the end of a conflict episode.
that Bosnia and Herzegovina should have adopted a system that allows for power-sharing among the major ethnic groups via elections that are competitive but institutionally constrained. With three major ethnic groups having fought and failed to achieve victory and in the context of massive Western intervention, democracy seems almost over-determined as a likely outcome.

Yet democratic institutions are the political form of choice in far less-likely contexts as well. These cases are far more puzzling. Why did Guatemala return to a multiparty system in 1984, still in the midst of its civil war? Guatemala embarked on decades of armed conflict and military rule with a US-backed coup in 1954 and an insurgency that began in 1960. The conflict pitted a highly corrupt but dominant military government against a patchwork of rebel groups that only unified in 1982 as the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). The conflict was long and violent, with an estimated 132,000 deaths, most of which occurred between 1978 and 1983 (Stanley 2013, 15).

In the early years of the war, the government received extensive assistance from the US, unattached to any real political conditions. When the US attempted to introduce conditionality related to human rights practices in 1977, the Guatemalan government withdrew from the relationship rather than acquiesce.\(^{38}\) Yet even before the conflict was resolved, the military government re-introduced multiparty elections and \textit{de jure} democracy as the law of the land in 1984, with the first elections in thirty years taking place in 1985. The institutional change was not accompanied by robust democratic consolidation, as the military continued to operate with relative impunity, leftist parties were banned, and opposition groups routinely practiced self-censorship in an environment in which reprisals for criticism were always a possibility (Jonas

\(^{38}\) Under exceptions to the policy made by the Americans, the military did continue to receive limited assistance from the Central Intelligence Agency.
1991, 162). With little effective pressure from international sources, the conflict still ongoing, and the tightly controlled nature of the transition, the timing of the return to multiparty elections in Guatemala is somewhat puzzling. Cases such as this suggest that the common focus on international pressures to explain institutional liberalization may be incomplete in cases where major political violence is present.

Nor are some of the seemingly likely answers supported by the data. The ubiquity of democratic institutions is not explained by the post-Cold War trend towards ending conflicts via peace agreement, for example. While 95% of the conflicts that end with peace agreements are followed by democratic institutions, so too are 75% of conflict episodes that do not end with a peace agreement. The increased interventionism and preferences of the United Nations after the end of the Cold War similarly offer an incomplete explanation. While 95% of conflict episodes that ended after the Cold War and saw some kind of UN involvement were followed by democratic institutions, so too were 93% of the conflict episodes that did not involve the United Nations in any meaningful way. International influence and conflict termination type thus do not appear to paint a complete picture, despite being two of the more visible processes by which democratic institutions might be adopted.

Why Post-Conflict Democracy?

In theory, democratization is a means of conflict management. Repeated free and fair elections offer a means of pacifying and legitimating competition over government resources that

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39 This pattern is weaker in countries that featured closed political systems prior to the conflict, with 83% of conflict episodes ended by peace agreement and 34% of conflict episodes ended by other means featuring democratic institutions in the year after war.
both places citizens in the role of third-party arbiter (Wantchekon and Neeman 2002) and lengthens leaders’ time horizons by guaranteeing the loser of any given contest an opportunity to gain office in the future (Przeworski 1991). Democracy should thus be beneficial to civilians and leaders alike by channeling leaders’ interests towards a self-enforcing system that is both fundamentally less repressive than other political forms (Davenport 2007) and particularly effective in holding leaders accountable to citizens’ interests and preferences. Where a society has been torn by violent conflict, all of these benefits should be especially pronounced.

Yet as discussed in Chapter 2, the literature on electoral authoritarian regimes has found that the institutions of democracy can be equally beneficial to incumbents seeking to consolidate political power in the face of challenges. It can help to divide opposition to the incumbent (Lust-Okar 2004), make efficient concessions to various social groups (Gandhi 2008), avoid pressure from foreign donors (Ottaway 2003), or even maintain solidarity among the incumbent party’s supporters by offering opportunities for professional advancement (Magaloni 2006). Authoritarian incumbents with no intention of surrendering their office may thus engage in precisely the same behaviors (holding elections, permitting legal opposition parties, etc.) as leaders looking to establish a democratic system. The adoption of democratic institutions can thus result from either the bottom-up emergence of a powerful opposition or from the top-down calculations of an incumbent who cannot afford to maintain a closed regime for some other reason.

While the ideal typical democratic leader establishes multiparty elections as a long-term means of managing elite and social conflict, the ideal typical authoritarian leader does so in a bid to retain his or her position. Unable to maintain his position by other means, the authoritarian
incumbent engages in limited liberalization as a second-best strategy of remaining in power. While permitting formal channels of political opposition, the incumbent gambles on the likelihood that the political playing field can be sufficiently tilted in his favor by licit or illicit means to reduce the likelihood of electoral defeat below some acceptable threshold.\textsuperscript{40} Crucially, the incumbent permits opposition only when he cannot afford to do otherwise. This explains why conflict itself may increase the likelihood of closed authoritarian regimes introducing multiparty politics, and also leads to the chapter’s main hypothesis that conflicts that are especially costly to incumbents should be most likely to result in \textit{de jure} democratic institutions, as compared with conflicts that are less costly.

Put another way, since conflict is always costly, only those regimes facing relatively low-cost conflicts or with access to significant resources should be able to establish or maintain closed regimes in the wake of political violence. Incumbent weakness should provide a significant predictor of post-conflict democratic institutions. The costs of conflict that would contribute to such weakness are many and occur in both material and ideational forms that are not possible to aggregate into a single measure. I thus examine this issue with two representative types of conflict costs. First, \textit{longer conflicts should be more likely to lead to democratic institutions than shorter episodes of violence}. While incumbents may be able to use brief, low-level challenges to justify their continued control of power, longer conflicts indicate both a level of incumbent weakness and a level of domestic opposition that should make such a monopolistic strategy extremely difficult. In addition to the material costs, longer conflicts take a greater toll on an incumbent regime’s claims to legitimacy. Because of this, longer conflicts are likely to

\textsuperscript{40} Whether or not this gamble is a good one is the subject of Chapter 4, which examines the circumstances under which incumbents are able to dominate political life after conflict for extended periods.
promote institutional democratization in previously closed regimes, but may have no effect (or even a negative one) on such processes in already-competitive regimes.

The length of a conflict is not the only measure of its costliness, however. The material implications of violence also matter and form a second part to the analysis. *Conflicts that are more economically destructive should also be more likely to result in democratic institutions.* While a lengthy conflict damages the legitimacy claims of an incumbent even in the absence of material effects, an economically costly conflict may damage both the legitimating and material underpinnings of his rule. Incumbents who have recourse to additional material resources (such as support from a foreign sponsor) may still be able to maintain or establish a closed regime. Those without the luxury of such resources are more likely to become vulnerable to demands for democratization. Democratic institutions, in other words, should emerge from incumbent desperation.

Unlike some prior work on post-conflict democratization, this approach does not assume that pressures for democratization are exclusively (or even primarily) external or structural. Influences such as diplomatic pressure or conditions for foreign aid may help to initiate institutional change, but it is the effects of conflict that create the domestic political space for such external factors to matter. While an otherwise weak incumbent may be able to retain control over a political system through recourse to external support or natural resources, the decision to introduce or reintroduce multiparty elections is likely to be precipitated by active advocacy by domestic groups, armed or otherwise. These groups often emerge from structural opportunities created by the conflict due to new or amplified incumbent weakness and to connect demands for democratization to demands for peace. In other words, *where multiparty elections*
are not the legal norm, collective advocacy for the (re)introduction of elections is likely to come from groups empowered or connected by conflict processes. The theory underlying this project is that processes of democratization are in large part the result of incumbent weakness in the face of armed challenge. If these processes are fundamentally reactive to the conflict, we should see the conflict enabling—or at least being rhetorically used by—those advocating change.

**Alternative Explanations**

As discussed in Chapter 2, a number of studies have offered explanations for the success or failure (or absence) of post-conflict democratization. These theories, though not incompatible with the hypothesis just presented, serve as alternative explanations. The theory discussed in Chapter 2 emphasizes the importance of incumbent weakness to explain democratic emergence. Rather than focusing on the susceptibility of incumbents to challenge, many other studies have focused instead on the magnitude of the external pressures placed upon them, and these are treated as alternative (if not mutually exclusive) explanations for why multiparty elections are so common in post-conflict contexts. Fundamental among these are studies focused on the success and failure of international peacebuilding and democracy promotion missions. The presence of these missions and institutions thus form an important alternative explanation.

A second alternative explanation is rooted in the study of democratization outside the post-conflict context. As discussed in Chapter 2, another possible explanation for the adoption of democratic institutions is that democratization processes actually have remarkably little to do with conflict at all. Instead, democratization is driven by structural factors such as high levels of economic development or the overall absence of oil wealth. This suggests an alternative
explanation for the question addressed in this chapter: the decision to hold post-conflict elections may be part of a broader process of democratization that is supported only at a high level of economic development that has a broad social base.

I test the hypothesis that conflict leads to the adoption or maintenance of de jure democratic institutions by making incumbents desperate for political control in two ways. First, I examine cross-national trends to test the first two observable implications of the hypothesis. Using regression analysis, I show that conflicts are significantly more likely to end with de jure multiparty systems in countries whose incumbents have suffered greater costs from violence. Second, I utilize qualitative analysis of the democratization processes in Sierra Leone and Mozambique to show how conflict can initiate internally-driven processes of democratization that are not sufficiently accounted for in the literature.

**Democratic Institutions after Conflict: Cross-national Evidence**

The first two implications of the theory that are identified above can be tested cross-nationally using regression analysis of existing datasets. Using the measures identified below, a series of logit models provide evidence for the argument that the de jure institutions of democracy are more likely to be adopted after conflicts that are more damaging to incumbents, either because of their length or their impact on the availability of rents. These results support the broader hypothesis that civil war makes closed authoritarianism untenable, leaving the adoption of democratic institutions as a “second best” strategy for those attempting to reconsolidate power in the aftermath of war.
Data & Methodology

The hypothesis of this chapter—that more costly wars increase the likelihood that democratic institutions will be adopted—can be tested using data on all episodes of intrastate armed conflict that ended between 1946 and 2008. Using the list of distinct conflict episodes from Kreutz (2010) based on the Uppsala Conflict Data Program/Peace Research Institute Oslo (UCDP/PRIO) definition of armed conflict results in 319 distinct conflict episodes during the period. \(^41\) Conflict episodes during this period range in duration from 1 to 48 years, with a mean length of 4.4 years. Table 3.3 shows the results of logit models assessing the likelihood that democratic institutions are in place in the year after a conflict episode. Logit models are appropriate because the data is structured as a cross-section and the dependent variable (discussed below) is a dichotomous measure of the legality of opposition parties, a key institution of *de jure* democracy. Logit models are the standard approach in the literature to regression under these circumstances. Because some countries experience multiple conflict episodes during the sample period, standard errors are clustered by country.

The dependent variable under examination is whether or not the conflict episode was followed by a formally democratic political system, defined as one in which multiple political parties were legal in the year following the conflict episode. \(^42\) This is a relatively low bar, but the legalization of opposition parties is the most comparable measure of formal legal structures across countries and circumstances. Measuring whether there are multiple political parties

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\(^41\) The UCDP/PRIO data identifies intrastate conflict as an episode of violent conflict between two organized actors, at least one of whom is the government of a state, that results in at least 25 battle-related deaths per year. Kreutz identifies distinct conflict episodes by defining conflict termination as occurring when there is a full year in which conflict does not reach the 25-death threshold.

\(^42\) This is measured using the *dejure* variable from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).
represented in a legislature or whether multiparty elections are held, for example, would exclude countries in which legal changes were adopted, but the holding of elections delayed due to security or logistical issues. The focus in this chapter is on changes to the formal legal structure, consistent with the hypothesis that such changes can be adopted by incumbent (or new) governing elites as a means to hold on to political power when a fully closed system is no longer feasible. The risk of course is that there may be cases in which opposition parties are permitted under the law but prevented from actually forming by other measures, leaving the country a *de facto* one party state without even the possibility of electoral competition. This would be distinct from cases in which the legalization of opposition parties actually provided an opportunity for challengers to buy into the system. While the legal change is in and of itself an important one, I address this issue in a robustness check by re-running all of the models with a dependent variable that measures whether or not opposition parties actually existed in the year after conflict.⁴³

Table 3.2 offers a cross tabulation of the legality of opposition parties before and after conflict episodes. While the majority of countries experiencing conflict permitted multiple political parties by law (if not always in practice) both before and after conflict, a significant minority experienced a change over the course of the conflict episode. In roughly 9% of cases, multipartism was only introduced in the wake of conflict. In 6.4% of cases, on the other hand, opposition political parties were banned in previously multiparty systems.⁴⁴ Conflict may open up opportunities for liberalization, but it may also lead to political systems that are closed to *de jure* competition. By including all conflict episodes, and not only those preceded by closed

⁴³ This is measured using the *defacto2* variable from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).
⁴⁴ The latter cases are not fully accounted for by the incidence of military coups d’état. While a number of cases in which multipartism was illegal after a conflict episode did involve the staging of a successful military coup, controlling for this in the models discussed below does not alter the results.
systems, we can test the hypothesis discussed above that some costs are more likely to affect closed systems than others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Post-Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Conflict</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparty</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 Conflict Episodes by Legality of Opposition Parties

To test the hypothesis that costly conflicts are more likely to be followed by formally democratic institutions, I rely on two main independent variables. The first, Conflict Length, is a measure of the duration of the conflict episode in years. This is one measure of the costliness of conflict and we would expect conflict length to be positively associated with de jure democratic institutions in conflicts that take place within closed systems. A simple comparison of the data provides preliminary support for such a relationship. Across all episodes, those conflicts that ended with legal opposition parties lasted an average of 4.67 years, compared to 3.54 years for those conflicts that ended without a legalized opposition. The difference is even more notable when we consider only those episodes that took place in countries with closed regimes at the outbreak of conflict. In that subset, the conflicts that resulted in legalized opposition lasted an average of 7.31 years, as compared with 3.12 years where the post-conflict regime remained closed. These basic figures provide preliminary support for the argument that the costliness of lengthy conflicts incentivizes the adoption of democratic institutions.

The second independent variable, GDP Change, measures the percent change in per capita income over the course of the conflict.\(^{45}\) Perhaps surprisingly, countries manage to

\(^{45}\)This is calculated based on the gross domestic product (GDP) in constant 2011 US dollars and the country’s total population, both of which are available from the World Development Indicators (World Bank 2013).
maintain net positive economic growth in 60% of conflict episodes for which there is data. This performance, however, is not consistent over time. 49% of the conflict episodes that ended prior to 1989 saw positive economic growth during conflict, compared with 66% of episodes that ended in or after 1989. The theory would predict that conflicts that took a larger toll on the economy should be more likely to end with *de jure* democratic institutions. The data suggest that this may be so, but that it is primarily a post-Cold War phenomenon. During the Cold War, conflicts that saw negative growth during conflict ended with legalized opposition parties 49% of the time, compared with 91% of cases in the post-Cold War era. This is a much more dramatic change than conflicts that experienced positive economic growth, which ended with legalized opposition parties in 77% of cases during the Cold War and 93% of cases after. These numbers suggest that the end of superpower competition and the support it generated for struggling incumbents mattered most for those governments who were especially vulnerable. An incumbent who might rely on external support to weather an economically costly conflict in 1980 could no longer do so by 1995. Governments thus had to seek an alternative means of legitimation. Multipartism appears to have filled this gap.

In addition to these primary independent variables, the literature suggests that a number of other factors ought to be taken into consideration to account for the dissertation’s main alternative explanations outlined above. First, democratization may be facilitated by involvement of the international community, so a dichotomous variable is included to indicate whether the United Nations had any involvement in the peace process or peacebuilding during or

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46 These basic relationships should be evaluated in context of the broader historical pattern of the adoption of multipartism. Opposition parties were legal after 63% of conflicts during the Cold War and 94% of cases afterwards. The number of countries that did not have multiparty institutions in place after 1989 was relatively low and the relationship between economic performance and multipartism should be viewed as suggestive.
immediately after the conflict episode. Similarly, it has been argued that the desperation of some incumbents following civil war may make foreign aid particularly effective at achieving development goals (D. Girod 2015). Aid dependence is also shown to speed the holding of elections after military coups since the end of the Cold War (Marshall and Marshall 2014). Accordingly, the final model includes a measure for development aid per capita in 2005 US dollars (World Bank 2013), measured in the final year of conflict.

Another set of control variables is less specific to the post-conflict context and accounts for the second alternative explanation that the adoption of democratic institutions is no different in this context than any other by controlling for economic conditions. Accordingly, the final model in Table 3.3 controls for the level of economic development at the beginning of the conflict episode, measured by GDP per capita (World Bank 2013). This is consistent with prior scholarship on the relationship between economic development and democratization (Przeworski, Alvarez, et al. 2000), and more recent research focused specifically on the post-conflict context (Fortna and Huang 2012). The literature also indicates that it is not only the level of economic performance but also its sources that matter for steps towards democratization. Rents from natural resources are thought to be particularly problematic in many cases (Dunning 2008, Ross 2001). The final model thus includes Rents, a control for the level of natural resource rents per capita a country enjoyed at the start of the conflict episode.  

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47 This was coded using data from Doyle and Sambanis (2006) and supplemented with SIPRI data. 
48 The log-transformed value of the variable is used in the model to account for its skewed distribution. 
49 This is calculated based on three measures from the World Development Indicators: the gross domestic product (GDP) in constant 2011 US dollars, the country’s total population, and the total natural resource rents from oil, natural gas, coal, minerals, and forests as a percentage of GDP (World Bank 2013). This is calculated for the year prior to the conflict episode’s start. The log-transformed value is used in the model due to the skewed distribution of the variable.
Results

The model results are reported in Table 3.3. As is evident from models 2, 4, and 5, once we account for the major influence of the end of the Cold War and the legacy of pre-conflict institutional form, we see that both of our main measures are statistically significant and have effects in the general direction anticipated by the theory. Conflict Length is positively associated with the presence of de jure democratic institutions after a conflict episode in a previously closed regime. GDP Change is negatively associated, though its effects only emerge after the end of the Cold War. Both effects are statistically significant at the p<.05 level.

Figures 3.2 and 3.3 help us to evaluate the magnitude of these effects. Figure 3.2 shows the probability that a closed regime experiencing conflict ending after 1988 will legalize multiple political parties. As is clear from the figure, the likelihood of this happening increases rapidly with the length of the conflict. While the probability of de jure democratic institutions being adopted after a single year of conflict is approximately 0.27, after 5 years of conflict this nearly triples to 0.75. The longer a conflict goes on, the more likely an incumbent is to succumb to pressure for liberalization (whether domestic or international).

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50 The model fit is fairly strong, with a Pseudo R-squared of 0.5061. It correctly predicts 91.72% of observations, with higher performance (97.7%) in correctly predicting post-conflict democratic institutions for those episodes that did, in fact have them.

51 The interaction term between Conflict Length and Pre-Conflict De Jure institutions falls below conventional levels of statistical significance in Model 5. This is likely due to data loss. Of the observations that are lost to missing data in model 5, three-quarters occurred in cases that had de jure democratic institutions prior to the conflict episode. Despite the change in significance on the interaction term, a basic link test confirms the validity of the model specification.
Table 3.3 *De Jure* Democratic Institutions After Conflict (Logit)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Length</strong></td>
<td>0.0717</td>
<td>0.622**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.320**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.158)</td>
<td>(0.255)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.611)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Conflict De Jure</strong></td>
<td>3.559***</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.291***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.580)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.976)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Conflict De Jure</strong> *</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.664*</td>
<td>-0.429</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Length</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.403)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP Change</strong></td>
<td>1.166</td>
<td>3.800*</td>
<td>4.525**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.841)</td>
<td>(2.289)</td>
<td>(1.904)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Cold War</strong></td>
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<td>1.955***</td>
<td>2.154***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.627)</td>
<td>(0.678)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post Cold War</strong> *</td>
<td></td>
<td>-3.911*</td>
<td>-8.457**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GDP Change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.300)</td>
<td>(3.362)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per capita</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.483)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rents</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0344</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.183)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN Involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.534</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.049)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Aid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.186)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td>1.310***</td>
<td>-1.127**</td>
<td>1.515***</td>
<td>0.558*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.274)</td>
<td>(0.463)</td>
<td>(0.291)</td>
<td>(0.334)</td>
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<td>296</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>205</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pseudo R-squared</strong></td>
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<td>0.286</td>
<td>0.00974</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations: 157

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country

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

We see a similar pattern for *GDP Change*: more costly conflicts again increase the likelihood of democratic institutions being introduced in the wake of conflict, though this effect appears only after the close of the Cold War. Figure 3.3 again shows the predicted probability of *de jure* democratic institutions being introduced by a closed regime in the wake of armed conflict, but distinguishes between a conflict ending before and after 1989. Since the end of the Cold War, the larger the negative impact on the economy, the more likely that multiple political
parties will be legalized in a previously-closed regime. Where income per capita drops by 6% over the course of conflict (roughly equivalent to the 25th percentile of the GDP Change variable), the probability of subsequent liberalization is 0.53. Where income per capita increases over the conflict episode by 8% (the 75th percentile), the probability of such liberalization drops to 0.42. While the difference of 0.11 is not as dramatic an effect as that of Conflict Length, it does represent a 21% drop. These effects may make the difference between an incumbent being able to retain a closed system and being forced to liberalize.

The interaction with the end of the Cold War is important in understanding the effects of the economic destruction of conflict. During the Cold War, the relationship between the economic costliness of conflict and the post-conflict legality of opposition parties was the opposite of what we would expect from the general theory. Multipartism was more likely after conflicts that saw higher growth, rather than low or negative growth. As noted above, it was not until after 1989 that the predicted relationship emerged in fact. The difference can be explained in terms of the features of foreign support during the Cold War. Incumbents facing costly conflicts had multiple avenues available for legitimation in the form of both liberal and socialist models. Accompanying the availability of multiple ideational solutions to conflict’s damage to a regime, superpower competition meant that more external resources were available to struggling incumbents, without any conditions on domestic political processes. While the vast majority of conflict-affected countries adopted democratic institutions in the decade following the Cold War, the change was particularly pronounced among those for whom conflict was economically costly.
Figure 3.2 - Probability of *de jure* Democratic Institutions, by Conflict Length

*Figure shows the predicted probability of a country having a *de jure* multiparty political system in the year following episodes of internal armed conflict of various lengths, based on Model 5 in Table 3.3. The figure presents predictions for a conflict ending after 1989 without UN intervention in a country that did not permit multiple political parties prior to the conflict episode. All other variables are set at their means.*

Aside from the main independent variables, the controls behave largely as anticipated. The end of the Cold War significantly increased the likelihood that countries would emerge from conflict with the *de jure* institutions of democracy, as did pre-conflict legacies of such institutions. Consistent with most findings in the field of democratization studies, higher levels of economic development are also associated with democratic institutions. *Foreign Aid* and *UN Involvement* were not statistically significant in the model. This is consistent with findings that the effectiveness of these efforts in promoting other outcomes such as development (D. Girod 2015) or peace (L. M. Howard 2008) is highly contingent on the manner and circumstances in which they are implemented.
Figure 3.3 shows the predicted probability of a country having a de jure multiparty political system in the year following episodes of internal armed conflict of varying costliness ending before and in or after 1989, based on Model 5 in Table 3.3. The figure presents predictions for a conflict without UN intervention in a country that did not permit multiple political parties prior to the conflict episode. All other variables are set at their means.

The results are also robust to a number of different checks. Using country random effects rather than clustering standard errors by country does not significantly change the results. Neither does adding other potentially significant controls such as whether the conflict involved a successful coup or the number of battle-related deaths in the conflict episode.

One possible critique of the models presented in Table 3.3 is that the dependent variable represents too low a bar for meaningful analysis. While there are good reasons to use the de jure variable in the main analysis, the final model was also run using a measure of whether opposition
parties not aligned with the government are actually in operation.\textsuperscript{52} The direction and magnitude of *Conflict Length* and *GDP Change* are similar to those in the main analysis, but there is some loss of statistical significance, with *GDP Change* falling below conventional levels. This loss of significance is not entirely surprising, given that an incumbent may legalize multiple political parties in an effort to gain the appearance of liberalization, without actually permitting genuine opposition to operate.

*Discussion*

The results from the cross-national analysis provide support for the theory that post-conflict democratization is a second-best strategy for incumbents no longer able to hold onto power in a closed system. The significant variables in the models all indicate that *de jure* liberalization is more likely under conditions that make it more difficult for incumbents to maintain a closed system. Even in the context of significant political violence, some incumbents are able to retain a monopoly on power. The longer or more costly that violence, however, the more difficult retaining this monopoly becomes.

We see this pattern play out in a number of cases that seem otherwise unlikely candidates for political liberalization. The lengthy conflict in Angola, for example, demonstrates the ways in which the mounting costs of war can be seen to generate pressures for liberalization. With an incumbent government publicly dedicated to a Marxist-Leninist system under the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA), the likelihood of democratization in the country seemed relatively low at the outbreak of civil war shortly after independence in 1975. The

\textsuperscript{52} This measure also comes from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) and is based on their *defacto2* variable. As with the dependent variable used in the primary analysis, this is measured for the year following a conflict episode.
MPLA relied on support from the Soviet Union and Cuba during the conflict and initially dismissed the insurgent União Nacional para a Independéncia Total de Angola (UNITA) as a force to be defeated rather than incorporated. After a decade and a half of civil war, however, this began to change. With external support waning as the Cold War ended and an insurgency that had yet to be defeated after more than 15 years of civil war, the MPLA changed its rhetoric and officially adopted “social democracy” as its guiding ideology. By the end of 1991, the Bicesse Peace Accord was signed with UNITA and the constitution was revised to allow for multiparty elections. The country’s first multiparty elections were held in 1992, though they did not prevent the outbreak of renewed violence.

Algeria provides an example of a case in which the conflict’s costs mounted quite rapidly. Civil war broke out in Algeria following the military’s cancellation of multiparty elections in 1992, which were almost certain to be won by the opposition Front Islamique du Salut (FIS). After decades of relative stability, the government found itself confronting an expanding number of Islamist insurgent organizations. As the conflict escalated rapidly, so did its toll on the country’s resource base. Between 1991 and 1994, Algeria’s per capita income from natural resource rents dropped by 15%. With an economy whose resource dependence ranks in the top quartile of conflict-experiencing countries, such a decline in just three years would create serious challenges, compounded by massive government debts to international creditors. In this context, the Algerian military announced a return to civilian government and the re-introduction of multiparty elections with a presidential race in 1995. Elections since that

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53 Based on the World Development Indicators described above.
54 For a contemporary accounting of the challenges facing the military regime, see Pierre & Quandt (1995).
time have not generally been considered to meet international standards, but the use of regular elections as a legitimating exercise has not been abandoned.

As the data presented above indicate, conflict frequently leads to institutional liberalization, but it does not always do so. The effects of the brief conflict in Cameroon in 1984 provide an illustration. Operating under a one-party system, the country experienced relative stability in the years immediately preceding a 1984 coup attempt. The attempt, though ultimately unsuccessful, entailed fighting between factions of the presidential guard that left as many as 1000 people dead.\(^5\) Though President Paul Biya had shown some indications in his previous two years of rule of inclinations toward mild political liberalization, after the conflict he is widely regarded as having clamped down on dissent and consolidated his hold on political power. The limited nature of the conflict and Biya’s ability to draw on offshore oil revenues (which contributed to an increase in per capita rents of 34% in 1984) did not generate conditions of sufficient pressure to require a more inclusive political system. Multiparty elections in Cameroon would not be held until 1992.

While these cross-national results lend support to the hypothesis that desperation leads incumbents to accept multiparty politics, there are limitations. First, the models presented in this chapter are explicitly legalistic. The dependent variable is whether or not multiple political parties are \textit{de jure} legal. This does not mean that opposition parties actually exist in practice. The formal institutions of democracy and its \textit{de facto} exercise are two very different phenomena. Indeed, as noted above, re-running the models with an alternative measure of institutions based on whether true opposition parties actually operate weakens the statistical significance of the

\(^5\) Official government accounts set the fatalities at 74.
results (though it does not eliminate them entirely). The decision to adopt multiparty institutions thus cannot be taken as an indication that incumbents are genuinely interested in democratization, or that these institutions will facilitate genuine political competition. The latter question of when conflict is followed by *de facto* electoral competition is the subject of the following chapters.

Even within the purely legal framework of this chapter, however, the statistical results presented cannot tell us everything we might like to know. In particular, they do not identify the mechanism by which conflict costs lead to a decision to introduce (or maintain) democratic institutions when such a decision might otherwise not be made. Do such costs leave incumbents vulnerable such that they have to respond to pressure from international donors or from domestic actors? Is the decision generally a concession in the process of negotiating an end to the conflict, or is it a step taken by incumbents attempting to co-opt the mantle of democratic legitimacy? Given the widespread liberalization of political regimes in the early 1990s, are post-conflict countries distinct from other formerly-closed systems? These are all questions left unanswered by the quantitative analysis and anecdotes presented above. Accordingly, we turn to qualitative evidence from Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

**Incumbent Desperation: Evidence from Sierra Leone & Mozambique**

Sierra Leone and Mozambique both represent cases that are on the regression line from the perspective of the model above. Sierra Leone’s civil war lasted 11 years and saw a 25% reduction of its per capita GDP. Mozambique’s civil war lasted 16 years and contributed to the

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56 See the Chapter Appendix for these and other robustness checks.
near-total destruction of the country’s economy, with neither side able to achieve a military victory. In both cases, the countries emerged from highly destructive conflicts with the institutions of democracy in place. As such, they represent an opportunity to examine the mechanisms underlying the relationships identified above.

Examining both cases provides us with leverage over a number of possible alternative explanations. Although not all possible alternatives can be addressed by a paired comparison and careful process tracing is necessary to adjudicate between some alternative explanations, the comparison of Sierra Leone and Mozambique does help to eliminate some possibilities. First, and perhaps most importantly, the governments in place at the crucial decision point differed in their nature. Mozambique was overseen by a single-party regime rooted in Marxist-Leninist ideology, while Sierra Leone was governed by a military-civilian junta that had seized control in the early years of the war. This allows us to set aside consideration of democratization theories rooted in the nature of the preceding regime (Hadenius and Teorell 2007). Second, neither country saw the adoption of multiparty institutions as part of a negotiated settlement. Renamo in Mozambique had at least maintained the rhetoric of democracy and economic liberalization as its political goals for the majority of the war and begun to take steps towards a peace agreement, but negotiations had not yet begun in earnest when Frelimo introduced the multiparty constitution. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone could not claim more than a rudimentary set of political goals at the time that democratic institutions were introduced, nor was there any real peace process in progress. As demonstrated below, the adoption of democratic institutions appears to have been an effort to preempt the peace process in Mozambique, while it was an
attempt to initiate it in Sierra Leone. This suggests that we should modify theories that might see
democratization primarily as the result of combatants’ bargaining strategies (Wantchekon 2004).

Instead, the two cases allow us different contexts in which to examine the process by which the costs of conflict escalate and place pressure on incumbents. In both cases, the decision to introduce democratic institutions and multiparty elections was made by the incumbent regime prior to the end of the war. In the case of Mozambique, this decision was taken as the early stages of the peace process were under way and elections were postponed until after a peace agreement was signed and implemented. In Sierra Leone, the first elections were held even as conflict still raged in many parts of the country. What led incumbents in each of these cases to adopt such drastic institutional changes?

As evidence presented below suggests, the adoption of multiparty politics in both cases was the result of mounting pressures on incumbents to find a way to re-legitimate their positions under conditions of deep contestation. What distinguishes these and other civil war cases from the larger universe of countries making a transition to democratic institutions is the way that conflict itself generated the pressures faced by incumbents. Weaknesses in the incumbent regime were initiated or exacerbated by violent conflict, international pressure for democratization was made more effective by these weaknesses, and domestic actors were motivated and empowered by conflict processes to pressure for democratization from below as a form of conflict resolution. In neither case was there unanimity among incumbent elites about the necessity or the timing of institutional change and the adoption of such changes was never a foregone conclusion. Instead, key incumbent elites in both cases who would otherwise have preferred the maintenance of political monopoly responded to the pressures of war by pushing
through democratic changes in an effort to simultaneously adopt the mantles of democratization and peace.

**Sierra Leone – Regime Change as the Road to Peace**

At the start of conflict in Sierra Leone, the country was ruled by the All People’s Congress (APC) that had governed the country since winning highly contested elections in 1967 and formally establishing a one-party state in 1978. The APC government had been kept running via extensive patronage networks and selective coercion by Siaka Stevens until his resignation in 1985. While Stevens managed this system with some success, his successor Joseph Momoh lacked the same capacity for overseeing this web of informal structures and patronage networks. Momoh announced plans for a revision of the constitution in 1991 and multiparty elections in 1992, after facing pressure from both external and internal sources (Kandeh 2004, 125). These elections, had they actually gone forward, are unlikely to have been particularly free and fair. As one civil society activist put it, Momoh and the APC “didn’t really understand what was going on” in terms of popular discontent in the early 1990s and the gravity of the threat posed by the RUF. Reflecting on previous APC-managed elections, this activist believed that, had the 1992 elections one forward, the electoral commission running them would likely have been corrupt and that it was “possible that it would have been a very violent election.”

As it stood, the elections themselves never took place. In April 1992, a junior officers’ coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser overthrew the APC government and established a military-civilian junta to govern the country. This National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC)

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57 Interview with a Women’s Civil Society Leader, March 2013.
claimed to have removed the APC from power on the basis of both its corruption and its related inability to defeat the RUF, which had invaded Kailahun District in April 1991. Initially, the NPRC enjoyed support from a number of fronts and “was instantly popular” as a distinct contrast to the ageing APC elite (Gberie 2005, 71). Some Sierra Leoneans today look back on the period with a certain amount of nostalgia. As one political activist now residing in the diaspora put it:

> During the [NPRC] in 1992 I was in Freetown… throughout my life in Sierra Leone, [in] my assessment, that was the best government. I mean, people can do wrong, but in terms of development, putting that country under control, making sure people are disciplined, making sure civil servants are doing their proper duty—that they go to work, that they are committed to their job—it only happened during the NPRC time.\(^{58}\)

This perception, however, was not widely shared for long. Scholars studying the period have suggested that the NPRC government operated in a manner that gave it little credibility as a champion of the fight against corruption. Military and civilian members of the NPRC are alleged to have stolen millions of dollars’ worth of diamonds and state funds, with senior leaders leading lavish lifestyles (Kpundeh 2004, 95-96). The perception among many in Freetown quickly became that the NPRC was benefitting greatly from its time in power and that this access to wealth left it with very little incentive to actually end the war. Even those with connections to the NPRC recognized that the then-current state of affairs was not consistent with the public statements being made by the government. While the military put out the impression that the war effort was going well and that its efforts against the RUF were effective, these statements soon began to ring false. As those with families in the war zones received word from relatives

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58 Interview with Saidu Amara, Chairman of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Leone People’s Project, May 2014. Mr. Amara also suggested that the performance of the NPRC government might be a major reason that Julius Maada Bio has enjoyed high levels of popularity within the SLPP as a civilian politician after the war. He offered Maada Bio’s willingness to relinquish power to an elected government, his youth, and his membership in the Mende tribe as other reasons for that popularity.
and as internally displaced persons made their way into Freetown, the stories of suffering and “sobels” (soldiers-by-day-rebels-by-night) that they brought with them diverged significantly from official statements. Displaced persons, and particularly women, became an alternative source of information about the war and their reports inspired action among a number of civil society actors. As one activist put it “Civil-military relations were very bad… the military were not winning the war… it became clear that we had to change the government [because the NPRC] were entrenching themselves in power… In 1995 if you said you wanted peace, it was like opposing the government.”

Another individual, who had been a student activist at the time, explained:

So I was involved as a student, which, you know, you believe in the concept of democracy. You have friends who share the same values and you guys just decided to, you know, have a voice, saying ‘Enough is enough.’ The war, the motive of the war when it started was with one objective but as it progressed over time you realized this was not really about what the objective was… so most students, including myself, we decided to have a voice, made protests, decided to target government officials to tell them that, you know, much is not [being] done about the war.

Civil society activists concluded that the method of changing the government would have to be through elections, rather than a return to the old system or new military government. Though it had little interest in actually relinquishing power, the NPRC allowed a national consultative conference to go forward at the Bintumani conference center in Freetown. This event, the first of a series of three conferences, became known as Bintumani I. Throughout the consultative conference, a major argument made by influential women’s organizations was that “elections are part of the peace process. This is how we are going to achieve peace.”

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59 Interview with a Women’s Civil Society Leader, March 2013.
60 Interview with Lawrence Sandi, North American Chairman, SLPP, December 2014.
61 Interview with a Women’s Civil Society Leader, March 2013.
position was not universally shared during the conference, as some saw bringing the RUF into the peace process and negotiating an agreement as an alternative strategy to removing the NPRC government from power.

The NPRC itself, while not explicitly committed to a strategy of negotiation, argued forcefully that it was necessary to have “peace before elections.” Unlike others outside the NPRC, former NPRC Secretary of State (and later Sierra Leone People’s Party Chairman and President) John O. Benjamin emphasized pressure from the international community as a key element of the decision. He summarized the view of the NPRC that it would be impossible to really conduct elections with the conflict still going: “There was a war ongoing… [but] you are being blackmailed by the international community to hold elections.” With regards to the Bintumani conferences, Benjamin emphasized that “[the NPRC] was looking at the interests of the state… a lot of people were living in camps. The military regime gave birth to an independent election commission [although] the reality was that the country was still at war.” Benjamin believed that people outside the NPRC thought that the problems would disappear if the army was removed from government and that “containing the military government” became the focus rather than “containing the war.”

Those agreeing with the NPRC position of “peace before elections” can point to the problematic implementation of the 1996 election and the escalation of conflict thereafter. Just before the elections were scheduled to take place, Valentine Strasser was removed from office in a palace coup led by Julius Maada Bio in order to prevent Strasser from co-opting the electoral

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62 Interview, April 2013.
process and running for president himself.\textsuperscript{63} Even the electoral system had to be changed from single-member district to proportional representation in an acknowledgement that drawing constituency boundaries and organizing polls in some parts of the country would be logistically impossible.\textsuperscript{64} During the election itself, 200,000 refugees in Guinea were never even registered to vote and significant areas of the country were unable to report results because of violence (Kandeh 2004, 127, 136). Tonkolili District reported turnout of just 6%. As is often the case in newly democratizing countries, allegations of fraud and mismanagement from the competing parties were rife. Despite these challenges and shortcomings, by the end of the process a civilian government was accepted by all major contestants, with a parliament taking its seats representing 6 different parties and an executive government forming under President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP.\textsuperscript{65}

The (re)adoption of democratic institutions in Sierra Leone largely follows the model supported by the cross-national analysis. As the costs of the war escalated, the NPRC found itself increasingly unable to maintain a closed regime. Qualitative study of the process by which the adoption of democratic institutions was completed reveals that the conflict itself offers significant explanations not only for \textit{why} this happened, but also \textit{how} it happened. Faced with

\textsuperscript{63} Domestic pressure for multiparty elections presented members of the NPRC with very different incentive structures. While all senior members would no doubt have preferred to maintain the monopoly on political power which reportedly benefitted them all so well, the prospect of institutional change was more problematic to some than others. The party formed by NPRC supporters and widely viewed as carrying its mantle in the 1996 elections, the National Unity Party (NUP), did very poorly in the 1996 elections. Some of the top NPRC members, however, have gone on to be senior government and party officials for the SLPP. For these individuals, the incentive to resist democratization would have been lower than for purely-military or otherwise-aligned members of the NPRC. Studies of democratization have long noted that divisions within an incumbent regime often portend transitions to democracy (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986).

\textsuperscript{64} Interview with Mohamed N. Conteh, National Election Commission of Sierra Leone, March 2013.

\textsuperscript{65} Kabbah and his government were removed in a second coup d’état in 1997, replaced by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), an alliance between members of the military and the RUF. Discussion of the AFRC government and its subsequent removal from Freetown by Nigerian forces fighting under the auspices of ECOMOG are beyond the scope of this study.
the rising costs of a war that it was not winning, the NPRC found itself unable to rely on support from an international community that preferred to work with a civilian government. Whether or not the NPRC could have muddled along despite this pressure, domestic pressure for change made the maintenance of the military regime extraordinarily difficult without resorting to overwhelming repressive coercion.

The parallels between the preparations for the aborted 1992 elections and the 1996 elections are striking in some ways. In both cases, the incumbent power holder was a reluctant liberalizer and sought to maintain power through the process of institutional change. This was prevented in both cases by the intervention of military forces, with the Strasser-led coup in 1992 and the Bio-led palace coup in 1996. In both cases, key actors viewed regime change as a prerequisite for peace. In 1992, the military justified its takeover of government on the grounds that it was better equipped to bring an end to the war. In 1996, the costs of the war were widespread enough that civilians came to believe that institutional change was essential to ending the war. Even life-long supporters of the APC’s previous one-party rule had adopted this position. While the election process itself was contentious, by that point “[Sierra Leoneans had accepted democracy] because that was the only way out.”66 To end the war required the removal of the NPRC government, and elections—even deeply flawed elections—became the most legitimate means of doing that. Democracy was instrumentally desirable as the pathway to peace.

Yet there were also crucial differences between the 1991-1992 moment of liberalization and the 1996 moment. While some of the domestic advocates for democratization were the same

66 Interview with Mr. Alie M. Kargbo, APC Bombali District Chairman, April 2013.
in both periods, the intervening years also saw the mobilization of new networks. Whereas a poorly-equipped military felt that it bore the brunt of the costs of the early years of conflict, by 1995 the war had touched the lives of a much broader cross-section of Sierra Leonean society. Displaced persons moving from rural to urban areas became an alternative information source on the status of the conflict, and independent women’s organizations emerged as a new source of political pressure. Individuals such as petty traders who had never previously been politically active found themselves with a vested interest in change. The timing and mode of the adoption of democratic institutions cannot be understood without reference to the ways that conflict processes themselves changed the capabilities and incentives of key civil society and government actors.

Mozambique – Economic Collapse and System Cooptation

Unlike Sierra Leone, Mozambique did not enjoy much stability as an independent country before finding itself wracked by political violence. Gaining independence in 1975 after a guerilla campaign against the Portuguese, Mozambique established a one-party state under the Marxist-Leninist Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Frelimo) party. As the vanguard party of independence, Frelimo claimed leadership over the country and set about the task of building a state in a country of 10.6 million people that had at that point fewer than 12 college graduates.67

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67 Estimates of the number of university graduates left in the country at independence vary, but “fewer than a dozen” is the figure reported by the government to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1985 (International Monetary Fund 1985).
In 1977, the Rhodesian-funded Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Renamo) carried out its first attacks in what would eventually stretch into a 16-year civil war. Disturbed by a communist neighbor and alarmed by the safe-haven it provided for their own opposition organizations, Rhodesia and later South Africa funded and trained a group of Mozambican dissidents to combat the Frelimo government on its own soil. Initially limited to radio propaganda and lightning strikes geared towards infrastructure vandalism, Renamo grew over time to become a more formidable fighting force, capable of survival even after the majority of its external assistance was withdrawn in 1985.

As the war stretched on, the Frelimo government’s assertions that conflict was the result of actions of a group of foreign-funded armed bandits seemed to carry less and less weight. Throughout the early years of the war, Frelimo leader and Mozambican president Samora Machel promoted political and economic policies consistent with the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the party. For the individuals interviewed for this study, these policies were often at the heart of what drove individuals to political opposition. Interview participants recalled the removal of family members’ authority as tribal leaders, centralized control of the labor force and career choice, and ineffective mechanisms of professional advancement within the party as reasons for joining Renamo. Scholarship on Renamo has also recently focused on the organization’s recruiting efforts and noted that it was able to successfully recruit support within Mozambique among groups excluded by or displeased with Frelimo’s policies (Manning, The Politics of Peace in Mozambique: Post-conflict Democratization, 1992-2000 2002, 38).

Yet the increasing mobilization of fighters to Renamo’s call and the accompanying challenge to legitimacy were not the only hurdle presented by the civil war. The conflict took a
serious toll on the Mozambican economy, already struggling following the mass exodus of the skilled labor and managerial classes shortly after independence.68 Though the Mozambican economy did manage to grow at a rate of approximately 2% annually between 1977 and 1981, it was estimated by the IMF to have declined at approximately 8% per year between 1981 and 1986 (International Monetary Fund 1987). In the same report, the IMF estimated Mozambique’s agricultural productivity to have declined by 25% and international transport receipts by 40% during the same period. While scholars and analysts have noted a complex configuration of reasons for the country’s economic decline in the early 1980s, the security situation plays prominently in nearly all of them. Rural violence is at least partly to blame for damage done to the agricultural marketing system (Arndt, Tarp Jensen and Tarp 2000) and Renamo engaged in a strategy of disrupting railroads that had historically provided a key source of income by providing transportation services to coastal ports from landlocked neighbors (Kyle 1991).

It was in this context of insecurity and economic decline that the Frelimo government first began to consider changes to the institutional structure of the country. The major shock to the system came at Frelimo’s Fifth Party Congress in July 1989 that abandoned Marxism-Leninism as an official guiding ideology. Six months after the Congress, the Frelimo leadership began to publicly present proposals for liberalizing Mozambique’s political system. The initial public proposals for permitting electoral competition envisioned a system in which individuals would be permitted to run for presidential or legislative office as independents, but in which multiple political parties would not be permitted on the grounds that this would promote regional or ethnic divisions (Maier 1990). Viewed in comparison to similar rules utilized in Uganda, such

68 For a more extensive discussion of the challenges faced by the Mozambican economy in the early years after independence, see Chapter 2 of Hall and Young (1997).
a system would undoubtedly have proven easily susceptible to dominance by the well-established Frelimo organization. It was only later that multiple political parties were settled upon as the institutional underpinning of a democratic transition and the government introduced a new constitution instituting multiparty elections for national office in December 1990.

The sequencing of the reform proposals suggests that political liberalization was indeed the type of “second-best” strategy hypothesized here. Frelimo leaders were clearly concerned with finding a political strategy that would maximize their chances of staying in power at the same time that it would help to bring the war to a close. Without question, this is how Renamo interpreted the moves. Renamo did not welcome the planned reforms, which it saw as an attempt by the Frelimo government to tinker with the system itself rather than negotiate more sweeping changes with Renamo. Raul Domingos, a senior Renamo leader who would lead the team that negotiated the General Peace Accords and later serve as the head of Renamo’s parliamentary delegation, recalled the reaction:

All of these reforms and all these changes, we felt they were the result of our pressure, the result of our fight… So let’s put this as an agreement, not as you are the good guys who made the change… Some critics were saying ‘Well they are pulling the carpet out, so Renamo has no more reason for fighting.’ And we said, ‘Hey, stop, it’s not like that. There’s no confidence.’

Frelimo officials today are understandably hesitant to attribute the adoption of a multiparty system to the conflict with Renamo. To do so would be tantamount to acknowledging that Renamo achieved its primary stated political goal. Instead, Frelimo officials talk about the change as a natural evolution of the party to adapt to changing circumstances. Such an

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69 Interview, May 2013.
explanation would place Mozambique in the company of non-conflict cases of political liberalization responding to the changing realities of geopolitics and economic crisis.

Did the conflict itself have any distinct causal impact? Several factors indicate that it did. First, as noted above, insecurity in rural areas played a significant role in the economic decline experienced during the early and mid-1980s. At the time, this connection was highlighted in public statements by Frelimo leaders and in assessments made by the IMF and it has subsequently been affirmed by scholars studying the period. But the conflict not only helped to precipitate the economic crisis, it also made addressing it more difficult. Because of ongoing insecurity, trading networks connecting agricultural producers with urban markets remained largely shattered. Few individuals were willing to take the risk of traveling into rural areas in order to coordinate such exchanges (Kyle 1991). With improving agricultural productivity and market efficiency serving as a key piece of the structural adjustment program, the ongoing conflict thus prevented the resolution of the economic crisis without an accompanying resolution to the political crisis. Any hope Frelimo might have had of regaining dwindling popular support via economic recovery was rendered misplaced.

Second, and perhaps even more importantly, internal discussion of constitutional reform was ongoing before Frelimo knew whether the structural adjustment programs would be effective, but only adopted after it became clear that a resolution to the conflict would be necessary. At a public rally in Maputo in January 1990, then-President Joaquim Chissano addressed Renamo’s demands to be recognized as a political party on equal terms with Frelimo and the recently-introduced proposals for constitutional reform, among other issues:
Let us ask the people if they will allow us to go to Nairobi and discuss with the so-called Renamo changing everything and then signing agreements to change the constitution, and therefore accept beforehand that Renamo is another party in the country… If the people authorize us or give us a mandate to do this, we shall not need to go to Nairobi. We shall just tell them, ‘Come.’ … As for the constitution, we said we are debating the constitution. We began the debate some time back and interrupted it because of the congress. Now, we shall continue the debate (1990, emphasis added).

The “congress” referenced is the Fifth Party Congress that took place in July 1989.

Constitutional reform was thus under consideration before Frelimo leaders could have known whether the economic reforms begun in earnest in 1987 would be effective. Simpson also contends that Frelimo members had an eye on potential electoral change even during preparations for the Fifth Congress, writing that, “Some within the party had come to the conclusion that a military solution to the conflict was not on the cards, and that in view of the likelihood of a negotiated settlement with Renamo it would do well to strengthen its social base with a view to possible elections” (Simpson 1993, 331). This supports an argument that political reform was viewed as a possible (if perhaps undesirable) solution to the loss of popular support due to violence as much as to the economic crisis that accompanied it. While Mozambique did not see the same kind of civil society mobilization in favor of democratization as Sierra Leone, the mounting costs of the conflict clearly left the incumbent government considering it as a means of reconsolidating popular support.

**Implications and Conclusion**

Taken together, the evidence presented in this chapter supports the hypothesis that armed conflict raises the costs of maintaining a closed political system above a threshold that is sustainable for most governments. The cross-national evidence indicated that the longer a
conflict lasts, the more likely it was to be followed by the adoption or maintenance of the institutions of democracy. Similarly, conflicts that are more costly in terms of their economic impact are also more likely to be followed by such institutions. Both of these findings indicate that incumbents are forced to seek a means of re-legitimating and re-consolidating the political system when conflict calls this into question.

The process by which they do so is illustrated by the qualitative evidence presented from studies of Sierra Leone and Mozambique. These cases support several implications of the hypothesis. First, both cases show that it is the combination of economic costliness and popular discontent generated by conflict that drives incumbents to liberalize. Without autonomous income to prop up the system, incumbents eventually become vulnerable to demands for political change from either civil society actors pursuing peace (as in Sierra Leone) or supporters of an enduring insurgency (as in the case of Mozambique). Second, political liberalization was a solution of last resort for incumbents seeking to remain in power in both cases. The NPRC government in Sierra Leone resisted democratization nearly until election day, while Frelimo resisted political change for over a decade. In both cases, key incumbents sought ways to minimize the political threat of liberalization before institutionally competitive multiparty elections were adopted. Strasser’s attempt to co-opt the 1996 presidential election and Chissano’s initial proposal for competitive elections without parties both represent (failed) efforts to do just this. In the end, however, incumbent desperation led to the adoption of formally democratic institutions in both cases.

The results of this chapter have a number of broader implications. First, they help to explain why incumbents who seem relatively insulated from post-Cold War pressures for
democratization adopt democratic institutions. Conflict itself imposes costs and political change helps incumbents to generate perceptions of legitimacy to overcome those costs.

Second, they can help to explain why rebel victors since the Cold War have almost universally adopted or preserved formally democratic institutions. As new actors on the scene, rebels are often relatively weak in their capacity to build or maintain a state. The nominal adoption of multiparty elections not only potentially provides them with enhanced access to foreign aid, it is hard to avoid because the new government lacks the resources that would permit the full exclusion of opposition from the political system. Even the Rwandan Patriotic Front maintained the formal legality of opposition parties, despite having driven the majority of its opponents out of the country and delaying elections for years after the conflict ended. Only incumbents who find their way to an income windfall or who can isolate the effects of conflict might be able to resist its pressure for a competitive political system.

Crucial questions remain unanswered, however. This ubiquity of formally democratic institutions has not universally led to robust political competition. Elections in some cases are highly competitive from the very early post-war period. In others, however, elections are dominated by a single party or individual for years or even decades after the shooting stops, sometimes but not always due to manipulation. What explains wide variation in the de facto competitiveness of post-conflict politics? This is the subject of the next three chapters.
Chapter 3 Appendix

Several potential issues arise in the model run in Chapter 3 that are worth examining in slightly more detail. This appendix addresses these issues by running robustness checks on the results presented in Table 3.3. All Models in Table A3.I are based on Model 5 in Table 3.3.

The first issue that the robustness checks address is the choice of dependent variable. The main chapter discussed the theoretical and practical reason for selecting the *de jure* legality of multiple political parties in the year after conflict’s end as the dependent variable for the main models. It is possible, however, that a change in laws is too low a bar. Model A in Table A3.I instead uses the *defacto2* variable from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland’s data as the dependent variable. Measured again in the year following each conflict episode, this variable indicates whether there are multiple political parties actually in existence, with the added caveat that at least one of them must not be aligned with the governing party. This draws a distinction between those cases in which all parties are approved by the incumbent and those in which there is an actual *de facto* opposition. As is shown in Model A, the results are largely consistent even using this higher bar.

Another possibility is that the model in Table 3.3 suffers from omitted variable bias. Two additional controls may also be needed. On the one hand, it may be that the brief conflicts that are identified as the least likely to lead to *de jure* democratic institutions not because of their length but because of some other qualitatively different feature. In particular, short conflict episodes may be less likely to lead to democratic institutions because such conflict episodes are frequently associated with coups d’état. For much of the period under review, we would not expect coups to lead quickly to the (re)adoption of democratic institutions as military
governments attempted to govern in their own right. Model B includes the variable *Successful Coup*, taken from the Center for Systemic Peace’s dataset on Coup d’État Events (Marshall and Marshall 2014). While the variable is statistically significant in this specification, it does not alter the core findings reported in the main chapter.

Another possibility is that the findings related to conflict length are less about the duration of conflict than its intensity. It may be that what matters is the human cost of conflict, in which longer conflicts lead to democratic institutions because they entail a greater number of deaths, not because they drag on. In such circumstances, a short, highly violent conflict might be as likely to incentivize the adoption of democratic institutions as a long, highly violent conflict. Model B thus also accounts for the level of violence in each conflict episode using the variable *Episode Battle Deaths*, which is the natural log of the high estimate of battle deaths for a conflict episode (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005). From the results in Model B, we see that there is no substantive effect on the main findings with regard to conflict length and *Episode Battle Deaths* is not statistically significant. This supports the interpretation in the main chapter that it is conflict length, and not necessarily intensity, that imposes legitimacy costs on the incumbent and incentivizes the adoption of democratic institutions.

The final robustness check is presented in Model C of the table. The models in Table 3.3 cluster standard errors by country in order to account for the non-independence of conflict episodes that occur over time within the same state. We may still have concerns that the results are being driven by a few countries that experience multiple conflict episodes over the time period covered in the data. This would limit the generalizability of the findings. Using random effects in Model C allows us to focus on between-country effects rather than mixing between-
and within-country effects. Doing this again does not meaningfully change the results in Table 3.3 and provides additional support for the findings.

Table A3.I Adoption of Democratic Institutions, Robustness Checks (Logit Models)

<table>
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<th>(A) Alternative DV</th>
<th>(B) Additional Controls</th>
<th>(C) Random Effects</th>
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<td>1.488**</td>
<td>1.320*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.826)</td>
<td>(0.684)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.208***</td>
<td>4.407***</td>
<td>4.292***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.942)</td>
<td>(1.036)</td>
<td>(0.987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Pre-Conflict De Jure ***</td>
<td>-0.723</td>
<td>-0.631</td>
<td>-0.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Length</strong></td>
<td>(0.899)</td>
<td>(1.114)</td>
<td>(1.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP Change</strong></td>
<td>4.160</td>
<td>6.033***</td>
<td>4.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.611)</td>
<td>(1.671)</td>
<td>(3.131)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Cold War</strong></td>
<td>2.967***</td>
<td>2.207***</td>
<td>2.154***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.671)</td>
<td>(0.740)</td>
<td>(0.777)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post Cold War * GDP Change</strong></td>
<td>-6.570**</td>
<td>-10.38***</td>
<td>-8.457*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.687)</td>
<td>(3.508)</td>
<td>(4.402)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per capita</strong></td>
<td>1.744**</td>
<td>0.666</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.738)</td>
<td>(0.502)</td>
<td>(0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rents</strong></td>
<td>-0.507**</td>
<td>0.0581</td>
<td>0.0345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.239)</td>
<td>(0.180)</td>
<td>(0.229)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN Involvement</strong></td>
<td>1.050</td>
<td>1.299</td>
<td>1.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.794)</td>
<td>(1.160)</td>
<td>(1.230)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Aid</strong></td>
<td>0.0403</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.0224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.233)</td>
<td>(0.202)</td>
<td>(0.256)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Episode Battle Deaths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Successful Coup</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.759*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.903)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td>-10.84**</td>
<td>-9.807***</td>
<td>-6.888**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.334)</td>
<td>(3.405)</td>
<td>(3.390)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>lnsig2u</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-15.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.479)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
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<td>149</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pseudo R-squared</strong></td>
<td>0.430</td>
<td>0.546</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of clusters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country except in Model C

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
CHAPTER 4: WHY ARE SOME POST-CONFLICT ELECTIONS MORE COMPETITIVE THAN OTHERS?

“One of the ironies of democratic development is that, as the future is being planned, the past intrudes with increasing severity.”

– Donald Horowitz

The following chapter examines cross-national variation in the competitiveness of electoral competition. It begins by re-visiting the theory laid out in Chapter 2 and identifying the observable implications to be tested. This section discusses the hypothesis that political competition will be highest after conflict episodes in which multiple actors develop capabilities that can be converted from use in military competition to use in electoral competition. I refer to these as “convertible capabilities.”71 A second section presents descriptive data on cross-national trends in several key variables, including the competitiveness of post-conflict elections, as measured by electoral turnover. This section is important because it demonstrates that the competitiveness of post-conflict elections does not follow the same trends as the adoption of formally democratic institutions, the outcome examined in Chapter 3. A third section presents cross-national regression analysis as an initial test of the main hypotheses. Surprisingly, this section finds that in the very first years after a war ends electoral turnover is most likely after conflicts in which no rebel group has convertible capabilities, though the effect of capabilities is initially quite small. Over time, however, a bipolar distribution of organizational capabilities and a broad distribution of mobilization capabilities are most likely to lead to electoral turnover. The discussion and concluding section identify mechanism to explain these broad patterns, which are explored via the case studies of Mozambique and Sierra Leone in Chapters 5 and 6.

71 While convertible resources are not irrelevant, the focus of this chapter is on capabilities rather than all assets.
Convertible Capabilities and Electoral Competition

Why are some post-conflict elections so much more competitive than others? In the introduction, competitiveness was defined as a type of uncertainty. Elections are competitive only to the degree that their results are *ex ante* uncertain. This is not to say that the validity of the elections is uncertain (though it may be), nor is it to say that the implications of their results for peace are uncertain (though, again, they often are). Simply put, elections are highly competitive when knowledgeable observers are unsure before polling day who will be declared the winner.\(^\text{72}\) Uncompetitive elections are often uncompetitive because of widely-recognized manipulation or fraud (as in Azerbaijan), but they are not always so. Post-Apartheid elections in South Africa have been considered relatively free and fair, and yet on a national scale there is little question that the African National Congress will emerge victorious. Its dominance of the political space is no less (and indeed is perhaps augmented) because it does not need to resort to overt fraud.

What explains variation in electoral dominance and competition? The theory presented in Chapter 2 suggests that post-conflict elections are unique in that they occur in the wake of an extremely high level of state breakdown. This opens the field for a wide variety of actors to gain political relevance, even when they do not have the types of resources or skills typically associated with successful party leaders or candidates. During civil wars, actors can literally fight their way to a place on the ballot. This makes post-conflict elections different.

\(^\text{72}\) As discussed in the introduction, uncertainty is partially, but not entirely, a question of information scarcity. Good polling data can reduce uncertainty about an election, particularly if one candidate is shown to have a robust lead. Where that data shows only a slim lead for one candidate or another, however, even perfect polls cannot eliminate uncertainty. Where a race is close, factors ranging from election day weather to the ability of parties to support turnout among their base can affect the result in unpredictable ways. Where parties attempt to manipulate election outcomes, information about their ability to do so can be even more important to the level of uncertainty than information about voters’ preferences.
For the present analysis, the relevant part of that theory is whether or not actors come to the table with resources and skills that are convertible from warfare to electoral politics. This parallels the idea of switchable assets (or its converse, asset specificity), which is more common in the scholarly literature on economics and business management than it is in studies of organized violence (Alt, et al, 1999; Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Grewal & Tansuhaj, 2001; Hall & Soskice, 2001; Hiscox, 2002; Williamson, 1991; Zahariadis, 2001). Yet the notion that combatants in conflict develop different organizational structures, funding sources, and behavior patterns is increasingly a subject of interest for scholars of civil war violence (Weinstein, 2007; Salehyan, 2009; Staniland, 2014) and political outcomes (Akcinaroglu, 2012; Huang, 2012; Ishiyama & Widmeier, 2013).

Because conflict allows multiple actors to fight to a place on the ballot, we can expect that post-conflict elections will feature parties and candidates with wide variation in their mix of resources and capabilities. Some actors will have assets that served them well in conflict but are ill-suited to the demands of competing for popular support. Others will have used the conflict as a time to build a disciplined political organization, develop networks among local populations for provisions or information, and/or secure the support of groups with significant monetary resources. These latter assets can (though it is by no means certain that they will) be tapped for continued use once “normalized” politics set in. In particular, two types of such assets, which I have labeled “convertible capabilities,” are important: organizational capacity and mobilization capacity. The former includes high levels of leadership cohesion and a disciplined cadre of political activists. These are the capabilities that allow for the functioning of a competitive political party in the post-conflict period. The latter includes a robust ideology or a sizable
population of co-ethnic voters, for example. In the highly polarized environment of post-conflict elections, groups that mobilized the population along these lines during conflict will have an easier time getting them to the polls. Both organizational and mobilization capabilities provide an opportunity for actors to be competitive at the ballot box. This leads to the main hypothesis of this chapter that the level of competitiveness observed in post-conflict elections is dependent on the number of actors who develop convertible capabilities during the conflict itself.

This creates several expectations that can be examined by quantitative analysis. First, conflicts featuring at least one rebel group with significant levels of convertible capabilities should result in more competitive post-conflict elections. Outright rebel victories are fairly rare, and incumbent parties enjoy access to the highly convertible assets of the state (control over government media, influence over the civil service, etc.), so much of the discussion essentially centers on the rebels. Where rebels are reliant on civilian populations during the conflict, particularly if they mobilize rather than abuse those civilians, their prospects for electoral success are much stronger.

Second, the higher the number of rebels across whom convertible capabilities are distributed, the lower the level of competition will be in post-conflict elections. While this may seem counter-intuitive, the theory suggests that the relative distribution of capabilities matters greatly. Particularly because of the incumbent advantage mentioned above, a divided opposition is at a significant disadvantage, relative to a united one. This should be especially true when the capabilities in question relate to mobilization, linking combatants to the voting population.

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73 This approach is consistent with prior studies of post-conflict democratization that focus on the transformation of rebel groups into political parties (e.g., Ishiyama & Widmeier, 2013; Manning, 2008; de Zeeuw, 2008).
Multiple rebel groups with high mobilization capabilities will likely divide the opposition vote, enabling the incumbent to retain office for longer periods.

Third, *the balance of military power (strictly defined) should have little significant bearing on post-conflict electoral competition*. Because military assets are generally not convertible in the sense used above, they should neither promote nor inhibit electoral competitiveness, once elections are held. This balance of power may affect the stability of peace (and nearly all prior research suggests that it does), but only in a few cases do we have empirical evidence to suggest that leaders can hold voters hostage with the threat of renewed conflict and persuade them to vote those leaders into office.

Fourth, *the effect of conflict-era resource distributions should diminish over time*. This means that that distribution should be less determinative (though not irrelevant) as a country reaches its second and third election cycles. The theory suggests that parties to the conflict will be the primary players in its immediate aftermath. After all, war is often both polarizing and all-encompassing, so it is unlikely that individuals or groups who might be viable political parties will be able to avoid involvement or break away from existing combatant organizations. As time goes on, however, new parties may emerge to increase the competitiveness of elections.

**Convertible Capabilities and Post-Conflict Elections since 1945**

Before turning to the regression analysis, it is worthwhile to consider the data underlying the statistical models. The following section presents a justification and description of several of the key indicators. Chapter Appendix A identifies coding rules and further description of the entire dataset.
The dataset utilized for this chapter builds on that presented in Chapter 3. It includes all post-conflict episodes ending between 1945 and 2007, as previously defined (N=319). The central inquiry of this chapter is the competitiveness of post-conflict elections, but how is competitiveness to be measured? I have suggested that the capabilities of combatants are crucial to understanding the political outcomes of conflict, but how frequently do they actually possess the kind of organizational and mobilization abilities that are central to the enquiry?

Electoral Turnover

As emphasized throughout the dissertation, one of the major barriers to concrete inference in studies of post-conflict democratization has been the tendency to take democracy as a single, aggregate phenomenon. This has typically been done by utilizing the Polity IV measure (or some variant of it) and examining the level or change in score over time. In this chapter, I instead focus on one crucial element of democracy: whether or not a regime meets Przeworski’s criteria that “Democracy is a system in which parties lose elections” (Przeworski, 1991, p. 10). As such, the following analysis examines incumbents’ ability to survive in office after a conflict has ended. To do this, I use survival analysis and as the dependent variable whether or not the incumbent party loses a national election during the post-conflict episode.\footnote{Data for this is based on the \textit{nelda24} variable in the National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) Dataset (Hyde & Marinov, 2012). See Chapter Appendix A for more detail on the variable coding.} The emphasis here is on the party and not the individual incumbent. While heads of government may change relatively frequently, many electoral regimes come to be dominated by one party for periods that long outlast the professional life of any individual leader. Competitiveness is not reflected in a
party-orchestrated “changing of the guard,” but it is reflected in a changing of the party in power.\textsuperscript{75}

Of the 319 episodes under examination in this chapter, roughly 27.27\% of them experienced electoral turnover (n=87). Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of time-to-turnover for those episodes that did eventually result in an incumbent electoral loss. As can be seen from that figure, the prospects for turnover are low if opposition parties cannot achieve it within the first twenty years after conflict. Half of all turnover events occur within the first five years after conflict and among those peace spells that end in turnover, the average time from the end of conflict to the electoral defeat of an incumbent is 9.36 years. If we exclude outliers, this drops to 6.21 years.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{75} Turnover is certainly not the only way in which the competitiveness of an electoral system can be measured. Other assessments such as the margin of victory in elections or the ratio of resources expended by candidates might get at the concept of competition as well. Other measures are influenced by variation in legal and institutional structures, so for purposes of identifying broad patterns, turnover is the most cross-nationally valid measure of competition.

\textsuperscript{76} Outliers are here defined in the standard manner of those data points more than 1.5 times the interquartile range above the third quartile. Here, that is 28 years.
Many post-conflict episodes, however, never actually see electoral turnover. Instead, some post-conflict episodes see incumbents who manage to avoid a return to war but retain their hold on power. These cases represent 24.14% (n=77) of the episodes in the dataset. Incumbents need worry not only about electoral defeat, but about renewed violence as well. The country relapses into conflict in roughly 48.59% (n=155) of cases. An extensive literature exists on the causes of peace failure after civil war addresses the stability of peace after conflict, particularly in cases of negotiated settlement (e.g., Doyle & Sambanis, 2000; Flores & Nooruddin, 2012; Fortna, 2004; Howard L. M., 2007; Mukherjee, 2006; Paris, 2004; Toft, 2010; Walter, 2002; Wantchekon, 2004). Whether the distinction between relapse and censoring affects the analysis is addressed in Chapter Appendix B with other robustness checks.
**Combatant Capabilities and the Number of Combatants**

The theory being tested focuses on the notion of convertible capabilities. How can such capabilities be measured, and how prevalent are they across conflicts? Recent data available via the Non-State Actor (NSA) Dataset allows us to distinguish between different types of rebel group capabilities. (Cunningham, Gleditsch, & Salehyan, 2009). Details on the coding of particular variables are available in the appendix, but the most important feature of the NSA dataset is that it presents unusually fine-grained detail on rebel groups involved in civil wars, reporting on their strength vis-à-vis the government across a number of factors. It is particularly helpful that the NSA data enables us to measure both political organization and popular mobilization capacity as distinct features of rebel groups. While both are convertible capabilities, the former provides an indication of a rebel group’s ability to re-orient its organization from military to electoral struggles, while the latter provides a measure of how robust that group’s core support base is likely to be. Nor do the two necessarily go hand-in-hand. For example, the Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines is coded as having high mobilization capacity among Muslims in the country between 1972 and 1980, but lacked a political wing during this period. This distinction allows us to discern the various pathways by which convertible capabilities might be deployed after conflict: as a foundation for political party-building, a network for voter mobilization, or both. If convertible capabilities are indeed crucial for post-conflict political competition, distinguishing among the types of these capabilities will help us begin to understand how.

Three variables coded from the NSA data are utilized here: *Fighting Capacity* indicates a rebel group that has demonstrated moderate or high fighting capacity relative to the government
it opposes, Political Wing indicates whether or not the rebel group had a defined political wing during the conflict episode, and Mobilization Capacity indicates a rebel group that demonstrates a moderate or high capacity to mobilize support among the civilian population during conflict, again relative to the government. Mobilization Capacity accounts for factors such as a robust ideology and the percentage of the population that shares a group’s ethnic identity. The first of these three characteristics can be considered a specific capability for purposes of the theory, while the second and third qualify as convertible organizational and mobilization capabilities, respectively. Figure 4.2 presents the percentage of conflict episodes in the dataset which feature at least one rebel group with each characteristic.

Figure 4.2 Conflict Episodes Featuring at Least One Rebel Group with Mobilization Capacity, Fighting Capacity, or a Political Wing

Conflict episodes featuring no rebels with fighting capacity, mobilization capacity or political wing: 54

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77 Importantly, this is coded only for the conflict period itself, and does not take post-conflict election performance into account in the variable coding.
Importantly, many conflict episodes feature more than one rebel group. As discussed in the theory chapter, multi-actor civil wars have been found to be distinct from other conflicts in a number of ways. The theory presented here suggests that the number of actors involved in conflict matters not only for their behavior during war, but also for the prospects for subsequent electoral competition. Of the conflict episodes in the dataset, 252 episodes featured a single rebel group, while 67 included two or more separate groups. This is important because whether one group or several has convertible capabilities is hypothesized to have an important bearing on the likelihood of electoral turnover. This is particularly relevant in the case of mobilization capabilities, as the number of voters for whose support parties will compete is relatively fixed. Table 4.1 describes whether conflicts feature any rebel groups with strong mobilization capabilities, fighting capabilities, or a political wing and whether those capabilities are enjoyed by one or multiple groups.
Table 4.1 Conflict Episodes by Number of Rebel Groups and Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Rebel Groups</th>
<th>Groups with High Fighting Capability</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Rebel Groups</th>
<th>Groups with High Mobilizing Capability</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
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<td>32</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Rebel Groups</th>
<th>Groups with a Political Wing</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>One</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>121</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
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</table>

Cross-national Analysis: Incumbent Survival

As previously noted, electoral competition after civil wars can be modeled in terms of survival. Rather than looking at the competitiveness of each and every election, we can think of incumbents as challenged to “survive” the risks of renewed warfare and electoral defeat. We do not have strong theoretical priors about the form that the baseline hazard takes over time, so a Cox proportional hazards model is appropriate because it makes no assumptions in this regard. Using a standard Cox model, the following section examines the cross-national relationship between the variables discussed above, and the likelihood that incumbents will lose office in an
election during a post-conflict episode. As in Chapter 3, I have defined a “post-conflict episode” as the period after an episode of intrastate violence, beginning in the last year of conflict (defined by the 25-deaths-per-year threshold coded by UCDP-PRIO) and ending in 2009, or the year that violence resumes. The data includes all post-conflict episodes which began between 1946 and 2007 (N=319), as defined by Kreutz (2010).

Dependent Variable: Post-Conflict Competitiveness Consistent with the perspective highlighted earlier in the dissertation—in which democracy can be seen as the failure of would-be authoritarians to consolidate power—the following analysis examines incumbents’ ability to survive in office after a conflict has ended. Though political competition may be difficult to measure cross-nationally, turnover is a clear indication of competitive elections. Accordingly, the models in Table 4.2 and 4.3 use survival analysis and, as the dependent variable, whether or not the incumbent party loses a national election during the post-conflict episode. As noted above, electoral turnover occurred in 27.27% of post-conflict episodes in the dataset.

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78 I begin post-conflict episodes in the year that conflict itself ends (essentially treating the last year of conflict as the first year of peace). This is done to ensure that elections which are held in the same calendar year as the cessation of hostilities are included.

79 Full descriptions and sources of each variable used in the analysis are available in Appendix A.

80 Much of the reason that scholars believe that political competitiveness improves features of democracy such as accountability is precisely that competition increases the perceived risk of incumbents losing office (see, e.g., Elkins, 1974, p. 684). Thus, while electoral turnover fails to capture systems in which elections are closely contested but the incumbent still wins, it does measure a crucial feature of the most competitive systems.

81 Turnover is not meant to serve as a proxy for a larger process of democratization. As recent research has noted, opposition victory does not necessarily lead to an improvement in the overall quality of democracy (Wahman 2014). Competitive elections are thus a necessary but not a sufficient feature of democracy. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point.

82 Data for this is based on the nelda24 variable in the National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) Dataset (Hyde & Marinov, 2012). See Appendix A for more detail on the variable coding.
Independent Variables: Fighting, Organizational and Mobilization Capacity

As discussed above, the NSA data allows us to distinguish between the fighting, organizational and mobilization capacity of rebel groups, which I use as rough proxies for specific and convertible capabilities. To test the hypothesis’s first implication—that conflicts in which any rebel group develops convertible capabilities are more likely to be followed by competitive elections—I use straightforward dummy variables for the three capabilities. *Fighting Capacity* indicates that at least one rebel group involved in the conflict demonstrated moderate or high fighting abilities vis-à-vis the government. *Political Wing* is a dummy variable reflecting whether any rebel group developed a political wing during the conflict. *Mobilization Capacity* indicates whether at least one rebel group involved in the conflict episode could be judged to have a moderate or high capacity for mobilizing support among the population, again relative to the government. If the first implication of the theory is correct, then *Political Wing* and *Mobilization Capacity* should be associated with an increased likelihood of electoral turnover, while *Fighting Capacity* should not be significant.

Yet not all conflicts are between the state and a single rebel group, and twenty-one percent of the peace spells in the dataset followed conflict episodes in which more than one rebel group was active. The second implication of the hypothesis is that the overall distribution of convertible capabilities should matter for post-conflict political competition, with bipolar distributions (between a single strong rebel group and the incumbent government) being most strongly predictive of competitive elections. Accordingly, conflict episodes can be thought of as marked by one, multiple, or no rebel groups with fighting capacity, a political wing, or mobilization capacity. Splitting these categorical variables into binary indicators results in nine
main variables of interest: NO\text{fight}, ONE\text{fight}, MULTI\text{fight}, NO\text{polwing} ONE\text{polwing}, MULTI\text{polwing}, NO\text{mobilize} ONE\text{mobilize}, and MULTI\text{mobilize}, which are included in all of the models in Table 4.3. This approach leaves the reference categories in Model 6 of Table 4.3 as conflicts in which no rebel group has the relevant capability. Model 7 in Table 4.3 adjusts the reference category in order to compare the effect of multiple mobilizers or political wings against conflicts with just one mobilizer or political wing.\textsuperscript{83} If the theory is correct, both ONE\text{mobilize} and MULTI\text{mobilize} should be positively associated with electoral turnover, and the positive effect of ONE\text{mobilize} should be greater than MULTI\text{mobilize}. The same should be true of ONE\text{polwing} and MULTI\text{polwing}. In order to distinguish between the effect of multiple mobilizers or multiple political wings and that of simply having multiple rebel groups in a conflict episode, a dummy variable for conflicts with multiple rebel groups (Multiple Rebels) is included in all models.\textsuperscript{84}

We are fundamentally concerned with the legacy of conflict, but few legacies are eternal. The fourth implication of the theory was that the effects of conflict-related variables should be strongest in the period immediately after war. Whether the effect of convertible capabilities on electoral competition is the same twenty years on as in the immediate aftermath of conflict thus requires investigation.\textsuperscript{85} For these reasons, the possibility of non-proportional hazards must be considered. Most standard survival models (including the Cox models used in Tables 4.2 and 4.3) assume that hazards are proportional. In other words, the effect of covariates on survival is

\textsuperscript{83} A similar treatment for the fighting capacity variables did not alter the negative finding and so is not reported.
\textsuperscript{84} Cunningham et al’s definition of conflict episodes does not align perfectly with mine, due to their coding of conflict episodes as those in which violence ceases for two, rather than one, full year. There are thus cases in which his coding applies to two or more of my conflict episodes, even if not all rebel groups were active at the same time.
\textsuperscript{85} Two other key challenges to estimation are the possibility of sample selection bias and the challenge of competing risks. When addressed in Chapter Appendix B, these issues do not alter the core findings of the chapter.
assumed to be consistent over time. While this might be an appropriate assumption for short spells, for covariates that take different values over the observed period, or for certain structural conditions, it is less clear that the assumption is appropriate for the main variables of interest in this chapter. Testing for time-varying covariates indicates that the effect of Political Wing, ONEpolwing, and MULTImobilize are indeed time-dependent and so the interactions of these variables with the natural log of time are included in the final models.86

Control Variables

In addition to the main independent variables of interest above, I include two sets of control variables in the main models. Both sets of variables are included because they have been found to influence the prospects for the overall quality of democracy, to which political competition is closely related. The first set of control variables relates to characteristics of the conflict, which have received a great deal of attention in the literature on post-conflict democratization, as well as in research on post-conflict stability. The models thus include variables for the natural log of the length and battle-related deaths of the preceding conflict.87 Conflicts involving multiple rebel groups have been found to be more difficult for governments

86 Testing for the non-proportionality of hazards was done via a simple inclusion of time-varying covariates in Stata, as well as analysis of Shoenfeld residuals. All of the independent variables were tested, but only the three noted presented evidence in either test of non-proportionality. Interacting variables with ln(t) is the standard treatment in Cox models with non-proportional hazards.

87 Battle deaths data are taken from the PRIO Battle Deaths Dataset Version 3.0 (Lacina & Gleditsch, 2005). Length of conflict episodes and the termination variables are coded using the UCDP-PRIO Conflict Termination Dataset (Kreutz, 2010). See Appendix A. Other research has suggested that the mode of conflict termination—victory or negotiated settlement—also impacts the prospects for post-conflict democratization (Gurses and Mason 2008). Including measures for this, however, does not yield significant results for any mode of conflict termination and does not alter the core findings. Moreover, there is no statistically significant difference in rates of eventual electoral turnover following conflict episodes ended by negotiated settlement, rebel victory, government victory, and other means such as ceasefires when evaluated using a Pearson’s Chi-Square test with three degrees of freedom. Accordingly, these variables are not included in the model in the interests of parsimony.
to win (Akcinaroglu 2012), for example, and so the inclusion of these controls allows us to distinguish between the effects of the conflict itself and the effects of the characteristics of the non-state actors involved. Other research has indicated that international involvement can also influence the prospects for a more democratic peace (Doyle and Sambanis 2006), though only multidimensional missions are believed to have this effect. The final models thus also control for United Nations involvement, distinguishing between traditional and multidimensional UN missions along the lines set forth in Doyle and Sambanis (2006). Because violence may end and resume multiple times within a single conflict, the measure Prior Episodes counts the number of prior peace episodes within a given conflict.

In addition to these, I also include control variables for the economic and contextual aspects of democratization more generally. Research on democratization in the post-conflict context and elsewhere has emphasized the importance of economic variables. Higher levels of economic development are associated with democratization in the post-conflict context (Fortna & Huang, 2012) and more generally (Przeworski, Alvarez, et al. 2000). In addition to overall levels of development, the structure of the economy is believed to be important, with high levels of natural resource dependence being considered by many to inhibit democratization under many circumstances (Ross 2001, Dunning 2008). Access to autonomous sources of income (such as revenue from natural resources) is also found to enable incumbents in electoral systems to build and maintain dominance (Magaloni 2006, Greene 2010), bearing even more directly on the question of electoral competition. Foreign aid, though sometimes used effectively by incumbent

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88 Longer or more violent conflicts, for example, might be responsible for breaking an incumbent’s hold on political power (and thus be conducive to competitive post-conflict elections) in ways that are correlated with but not causally related to non-state actors’ mobilization or organizational capabilities.

89 The Doyle and Sambanis data is updated using data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.
governments for its stated purposes (D. M. Girod 2012), has also been suggested to serve a similar function of power consolidation (Ahmed 2012).

Accordingly, for each year of the post-conflict episode, the full models all include a log-transformed measure of per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a measure of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP, and a log-transformed measure of the net development assistance received by a country. Because the end of the Cold War is widely viewed as a watershed moment in the recent history of democratization, I include a variable indicating whether the preceding conflict episode ended after 1988. Finally, the full models include a dummy variable indicating whether or not the regime qualified as a democracy in the year prior to the onset of conflict in order to distinguish cases with a pre-conflict history of electoral turnover, such as India, from those in which there is not, such as Angola.

**Regression Results**

The results of the survival models are presented in Tables I and II. The results in Table I utilize the independent variables testing whether any rebel group in a conflict episode displays high fighting or mobilization capacity or develops a political wing. This tests Hypothesis 1. All models in the table report hazard ratios, so that ratios over 1 indicate an increase in the likelihood of electoral turnover, while ratios less than 1 indicate a lower risk. The results in Table I suggest that conflicts involving rebel groups with high levels of fighting capacity are less likely to result in electoral turnover than those whose rebels are militarily weak. This finding, however,

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90 All three measures are from the World Bank (2013). The measure for natural resources includes rents from oil, natural gas, coal, minerals, and forests. It is thus more comprehensive than any of these measured individually.

91 This variable is coded from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010).
disappears both substantively and in its statistical significance when we control for other relevant characteristics of the conflict and post-conflict periods. More consistent is the finding that the presence of at least one rebel group with a political wing slightly decreases the prospects for electoral turnover in the short run, but significantly increases the likelihood of turnover as time goes on. The same effect does not hold for mobilization capacity.

While Table 4.2 shows the effects of the presence of various rebel capabilities, Table 4.3 shows the effects of the distribution of capabilities, distinguishing among conflict episodes featuring no, one, or multiple rebel groups with a political wing or mobilization capacity, respectively. Model 4 includes only the capabilities variables and Multiple Rebels, Model 5 introduces the interaction with \( \ln(t) \) for the relevant variables, Model 6 includes the full battery of controls, and Model 7 changes the reference categories for the Political Wing and Mobilization Capacity variables.\(^92\) This tests the expectation suggesting that the positive relationship between convertible rebel capabilities and electoral competition should be strongest where these capabilities are concentrated with only one rebel group and decline as they are distributed across a larger number of rebel organizations.

\(^92\) The interactions are included only for those variables that were tested and found to have non-proportional hazards. Dropping Multiple Rebels from Models 4 and 5 does not alter the findings (results not reported).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobilization Capacity</strong></td>
<td>1.197</td>
<td>1.206</td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.357)</td>
<td>(0.352)</td>
<td>(0.182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Wing</strong></td>
<td>0.916</td>
<td>0.424**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.166)</td>
<td>(0.147)</td>
<td>(0.205)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political Wing*ln(t)</strong></td>
<td>1.549**</td>
<td>1.651***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.275)</td>
<td>(0.318)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fighting Capacity</strong></td>
<td>0.668**</td>
<td>0.677*</td>
<td>0.904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.137)</td>
<td>(0.139)</td>
<td>(0.237)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Rebels</strong></td>
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<td>0.438**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(0.169)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post Cold War</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.790)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rents</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0139)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per capita</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aid per capita</strong></td>
<td>0.776**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0945)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UN – Traditional</strong></td>
<td>3.460***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.485)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN – Multidimensional</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.596)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Length</strong></td>
<td>2.080***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.550)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Battle Deaths</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0979)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Democracy</strong></td>
<td>3.864***</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.171)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Prior Episodes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td>3,431</td>
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<td>2,028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Models all use a Cox proportional hazards model estimated using Stata and report hazard ratios. The natural log of GDP per capita, Aid per capita, Conflict Length, and Battle Deaths are used.
### Table 4.3 Electoral Turnover (Cox Proportional Hazards Models)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
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<td><strong>ONEmobilize</strong></td>
<td>1.136</td>
<td>1.158</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.356)</td>
<td>(0.352)</td>
<td>(0.191)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MULTImobilize</strong></td>
<td>1.742</td>
<td>0.925</td>
<td>0.231*</td>
<td>0.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.070)</td>
<td>(0.951)</td>
<td>(0.187)</td>
<td>(0.252)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MULTImobilize</strong> * ln(t)**</td>
<td>1.482</td>
<td>2.364*</td>
<td>2.364**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.489)</td>
<td>(0.790)</td>
<td>(0.790)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOMobilize</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.326)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONEpolwing</strong></td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>0.460*</td>
<td>0.409*</td>
<td>0.209*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.181)</td>
<td>(0.210)</td>
<td>(0.210)</td>
<td>(0.189)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONEpolwing</strong> * ln(t)**</td>
<td>1.442</td>
<td>1.777**</td>
<td>1.777**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.329)</td>
<td>(0.450)</td>
<td>(0.450)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MULTIPolwing</strong></td>
<td>1.323</td>
<td>1.232</td>
<td>1.957</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.628)</td>
<td>(0.579)</td>
<td>(1.266)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOmobilize</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.330)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONEfight</strong></td>
<td>0.692*</td>
<td>0.682*</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>0.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.144)</td>
<td>(0.145)</td>
<td>(0.246)</td>
<td>(0.246)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MULTIfight</strong></td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>1.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.294)</td>
<td>(0.287)</td>
<td>(0.907)</td>
<td>(0.907)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Rebels</strong></td>
<td>0.930</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>0.273***</td>
<td>0.273***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.259)</td>
<td>(0.258)</td>
<td>(0.121)</td>
<td>(0.121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post Cold War</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.990*</td>
<td>1.990*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.829)</td>
<td>(0.829)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rents</strong></td>
<td>0.970**</td>
<td>0.970**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0140)</td>
<td>(0.0140)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per capita</strong></td>
<td>1.387***</td>
<td>1.387***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.172)</td>
<td>(0.172)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aid per capita</strong></td>
<td>0.790**</td>
<td>0.790**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0896)</td>
<td>(0.0896)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN – Traditional</strong></td>
<td>3.090**</td>
<td>3.090**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.381)</td>
<td>(1.381)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN – Multidimensional</strong></td>
<td>3.973***</td>
<td>3.973***</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.884)</td>
<td>(1.884)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Length</strong></td>
<td>2.175***</td>
<td>2.175***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.581)</td>
<td>(0.581)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Battle Deaths</strong></td>
<td>0.813*</td>
<td>0.813*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0982)</td>
<td>(0.0982)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Democracy</strong></td>
<td>4.069***</td>
<td>4.069***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.259)</td>
<td>(1.259)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Episodes</strong></td>
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<td>0.887</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.111)</td>
<td>(0.111)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td>3,431</td>
<td>3,431</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>2,028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country

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

Models all use a Cox proportional hazards model estimated using Stata and report hazard ratios.

The natural log of GDP per capita, Aid per capita, Conflict Length, and Battle Deaths are used.
The presence of rebel political wings improves the long-term prospects for electoral competition, but the results in Table 4.3 indicate that this is largely being driven by conflicts in which there is only a single rebel group with a political wing. Consistent with the theory, \textit{ONEpolwing} has significant effects on the prospects for turnover, both relative to conflict with no rebel political wings (Model 6), and when the reference category is set as \textit{MULTIpolwing} (Model 7). Regardless of whether a conflict includes multiple rebel groups or only one, long-term competition in subsequent elections will be highest when only one group developed political organizational capacity during the preceding conflict episode.

Figure 4.3 shows the predicted survival rates for two hypothetical incumbents. In both cases, the incumbent has survived a conflict episode against a single rebel group with low mobilization capacity and low fighting capacity. All controls are set at zero. The first, baseline scenario reflects an incumbent who has survived a conflict episode against a rebel group that has no political wing. For such an incumbent, the likelihood of survival in office is quite high. The second scenario, however, is one in which the rebel group did develop a political wing during the conflict. As is evident from the figure, the development of this convertible organizational capacity during the conflict episode has major ramifications for the incumbent’s prospects in subsequent elections. While conflicts with politically-institutionalized rebel groups are slightly less likely to lead to incumbent electoral defeat in the short term, after 5 years there is a negative impact on his ability to retain office. Twenty-one years after surviving a conflict against a politically-institutionalized rebel group, the incumbent’s survival chances slip below 50%, while they remain near 75% for the incumbent who survived conflict against a rebel group that did not have a political wing. Political organizational capacity, a highly convertible asset, is thus clearly
valuable to rebel groups who go on to compete in post-conflict elections. Consistent with the theory, a bipolar distribution of this capability (between the incumbent government and a single rebel organization) is most likely to result in highly competitive elections.

**Figure 4.3 Incumbent Survival after Conflict with a Single Rebel Group: Rebel Political Wings**

*Survival functions are calculated based on Model 3 in Table 4.2. All covariates (except Political Wing and its interaction with time) are set to zero in both estimates*
Figure 4.4 Incumbent Survival after Multi-actor Conflict Episodes: Rebel Mobilizing Capacity

Survival functions are calculated based on Model 6 in Table 4.3. All covariates (except ONEmobilize, MULTImobilize, and its interaction with time) are set to zero. Multiple Rebels is set to one for all estimates.

Mobilization capacity, however, does not have quite the same effect. Instead of a bipolar distribution of convertible capabilities being most likely to lead to turnover in the long run, conflict episodes featuring only one rebel group with high mobilization capacity are least likely to lead to competitive elections (as defined by turnover). A wide distribution of mobilization capacity among many groups appears to be most likely to lead to incumbent turnover in the long run. Figure 4.4 shows the prospects of post-conflict political survival for three hypothetical incumbents, differing only in whether they survived a conflict episode featuring no, one, or multiple rebel groups with high mobilization capacity. In the initial post-conflict years, there is almost no difference between “multiple-mobilizer” and “single-mobilizer” episodes, but the
difference becomes significant as time goes on, with the more fractured field having a greater chance of turnover. A similar pattern can be seen between no-mobilizer and multiple-mobilizer episodes. This surprising finding is discussed in the following section.

The control variables all behave largely in the manner expected. Electoral turnover became more likely with the end of the Cold War and, not surprisingly, countries in which democracy was established prior to conflict are more likely to see electoral turnover subsequently. Economically, overall wealth increases the likelihood of electoral turnover, while incumbents in countries that are heavily dependent on rents from natural resources are slightly more likely to survive. Interestingly, foreign aid also reduces the prospects of electoral turnover and facilitates incumbent survival. This is consistent with prior research suggesting that aid can be misdirected by incumbents in some (though not all) circumstances (Bearce & Tirone, 2010; Girod, 2012). As for the controls related to the characteristics of the conflict, United Nations intervention has a positive effect on electoral competition, regardless of whether it is traditional or multidimensional. Longer conflicts are also positively associated with turnover, while there is limited evidence from Models 6 and 7 that more violent conflict episodes dampen the political competition that would lead to turnover.

Discussion

The Relative Irrelevance of Fighting Capacity. Consistent with the theory’s expectations, the distribution of fighting capabilities during wartime had no consistent, statistically significant effect on the likelihood of electoral turnover after conflict. While both rebel organizational capacity and rebel mobilization capacity increased the likelihood of turnover in some way, rebel
fighting capacity did not. At most, high rebel fighting capacity may reduce the prospects for turnover, but this effect failed to reach significance once the control variables were added. Military success provides no guarantee of subsequent electoral success. Once conflict has ended, rebel groups who specialized solely in the use of violence may find that their reputations have been relatively fixed among voters and that their members lack the skills needed to campaign or rally voters, leaving them at a distinct disadvantage compared to the incumbent. Incumbents in control of the state, by necessity, nearly always have some level of organizational and mobilization capacity, and they carry this onto the post-conflict political playing field. Compared to a rebel group scrambling to build a political party after conflict ends, the incumbent effectively has a head start.

Convertible Capabilities: Organization and Mobilization. The results provide support for the notion that the distribution of convertible capabilities during civil war influences the competitiveness of post-conflict elections. Precisely how convertible capabilities affect post-conflict political competition is less straightforward. The results indicate that building political organizational capacity may be one of the best investments that a rebel group can make with an eye to the post-conflict future. Incumbent turnover via elections is significantly more likely when rebels institutionalize politically and establish a distinct political wing during a civil war. This is particularly true where the conflict episode involves a single politically-institutionalized rebel group. Students of democratization should find it as no surprise that an organized, unified opposition is more likely to unseat an incumbent.

While the political wing variables behave largely as the theory would predict, mobilization capacity seems to play a different role. The results indicate that having the
opposition’s mobilization capacity concentrated with a single rebel group is actually the condition least conducive to incumbent turnover after civil war. Wider distributions of mobilization capacity, as when multiple rebel groups enjoy high levels of this capacity, are far more conducive to electoral competition once conflict ends. The more fractured the field of voters, it seems, the less likely it is that an incumbent will be able to (re)consolidate his position in the face of electoral challenges.

This finding appears to challenge the theory’s implication that competition should be most robust under bipolar distributions of convertible capabilities. A unified opposition should present a particularly strong electoral challenge to incumbents, while a more fractured opposition may offer opportunities for “divide and conquer” strategies by the incumbent. Particularly given the findings related to rebel groups with political wings, the relative insignificance of unified mobilization capacity is surprising. Why is it that bipolar distributions of organizational capacity facilitate post-conflict electoral competition, while bipolar distributions of mobilization capacity do not have a significant effect? The first possibility is that unified rebel organizations with high levels of mobilization capacity are more likely to win a military victory. While some research has suggested that this type of conflict termination is most likely to lead to long-term democratization (Toft, 2010), prominent cases of rebel victory such as in Ethiopia in 1991 and Rwanda in 1994 suggest that rebel groups who win victory are particularly capable of establishing political systems dominated by a single party. While there is strong case evidence for this argument, dominant rebel victors are not driving the cross-national results, which are robust even when cases of rebel victory are dropped from the sample. Instead, two mechanisms are likely behind the superior importance of organizational over mobilization capacity.
First, the modeling strategy adopted in this chapter makes the assumption that the incumbent government has both organizational and mobilization capacity. A fractured opposition is thus assumed to be facing off against a unified, capable incumbent who should be able to dominate the electoral field. Yet one of the most prominent effects of civil war is that it generates an enormous strain on states and the incumbents who rule them. Conflicts with multiple mobilizing rebel groups may exacerbate this strain. A highly fractured field may offer opportunities for new coalitions or new parties where the incumbent’s capacity is limited. While the available data requires that we assume a certain level of incumbent capacity, qualitative analysis might allow us to relax that assumption. The complete wartime collapse of the state and repeated military coups d’état in Sierra Leone, for example, strain our traditional notions of incumbent advantage when considering conditions at the end of the 1991-2002 conflict.

The second possible explanation is that organizational capacity simply matters more than mobilization capacity in the long run. While parties with an established base of support among voters have an advantage over those that do not, organizational capacity is crucial in expanding that base, getting voters to the polls, preventing leadership splits, and reclaiming support from voters who may have moved away from the party. High mobilization capacity is not sufficient to ensure success, though a combination of high mobilization capacity and high organizational capacity is likely to lead to electoral success. An equitable distribution of mobilization capacity may not sustain political competition over time where there is not also an equitable distribution of organizational capacity. Conversely, organizational capacity may be adequate to sustain a party though “dry spells” in which mobilization proves difficult.
The Long-Run Effects of Conflict. The effect of time on the results is also surprising. Across the models, the difference between conflicts with and without convertible capabilities is quite minor in the early years after the war. We only begin to see a significant difference in turnover rates after about five years of peace. This is counterintuitive if we generally expect legacies to fade over time. One plausible explanation is that the substantive effect of rebel capability is simply overwhelmed by other factors in the early, fragile years of peace. Foreign aid flowing in to assist with reconstruction may tip the scales in favor of the incumbent in a way that cannot be immediately combated by rebels-turned-opposition. The finding related to aid supports this explanation. Power-sharing agreements may also freeze a particular configuration of political offices for the immediate post-war period. It may be that the instability of those early years turns what should be immediate effects into latent ones, as concern for the stability of peace overwhelms any other interests.

While the effects of convertible capabilities on electoral turnover emerge in the longer term, the findings are limited in their implications for the trajectory of a political system once turnover has occurred. As noted earlier, electoral competition is a necessary but not sufficient component of democratization, and it is difficult to assess whether convertible capabilities reduce the risk of autocratization once the opposition achieves electoral victory. It may be that they do. A party that comes to power relying on the types of convertible capabilities addressed here may be more confident in its competitiveness in future elections, reducing the incentive to secure its position by engaging in autocratization and facilitating other processes of
Moreover, if turnover occurs in cases where the overall distribution of convertible capabilities is indeed equitable, then the likelihood of autocratization may be further reduced. Just as politically organized rebels or a highly destructive conflict limit the incumbent’s monopoly on power, an organized and mobilizing incumbent party may provide a similar counterweight should it find itself newly in opposition. Limitations in the data do not allow rigorous investigation of these possibilities at present, but the issue does provide a potentially fruitful avenue for future research.

**Convertible Rebel Capabilities and Electoral Competition in El Salvador**

Post-conflict elections in El Salvador offer a strong illustration of the findings provided above. The war in El Salvador was both lengthy and violent, lasting from 1979-1991 before a peace agreement was signed in January 1992. The conflict claimed the lives of an estimated 75,000 people in a country with a population under 6 million. Although the war was one of the most costly in the Western Hemisphere, the way in which it was fought laid the foundations for subsequent elections to be remarkably competitive. This was largely because the major parties to the conflict (and especially the rebels) developed significant convertible capabilities that could be transferred to the electoral playing field.

Low-level insurgencies began to break out in El Salvador in the early 1970s in opposition to an economic system that was deeply unequal, with nearly two-thirds of agricultural land

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93 Wahman (2014) makes a similar argument regarding the conditions under which opposition victory might promote democratization after African elections.  
94 Importantly, this possibility for minimizing the risk of autocratization hinges on one key condition. The incumbent-turned-opposition (or some other actor) must possess electorally-relevant capabilities that are independent of the state itself. The incumbent in any election enjoys the advantages accompanying control of the state. When a party loses this advantage, it must turn to other resources and capabilities to compete in the future. Unfortunately, the data currently available do not allow us to distinguish between types of government capabilities.
concentrated in less than 5% of the country’s farms (Wood 2003, 22). Ownership of these large farms was mostly concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of families, a pattern reinforced by government repression of leftist organizations and peasant efforts to improve their situation. While a number of leftist organizations and parties attempted to oppose this system by conventional means, five of them attempted to change the system with violent action. These five groups consolidated their efforts in late 1980 to form the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). Using a variety of military tactics, the FMLN presented a major challenge to the Salvadoran government, which responded with high levels of violence. Both sides were responsible for the high number of civilian deaths, with pro-government “death squads” playing a particularly harsh role. As the conflict reached stalemate in the late 1980s, progress towards a peace agreement was made, with the eventual integration of the FMLN into the political system. Post-conflict elections, beginning in 1994, were highly competitive (see Tables 4.4 and 4.5), ultimately resulting in the FMLN gaining control of the presidency in 2009.

The foundation for this electoral competitiveness was laid during the civil war, as the insurgent FMLN built up significant convertible capabilities and the governing parties found theirs challenged, breaking their ability to monopolize politics without weakening them beyond their ability to compete. The convertible capabilities developed by the FMLN were particularly important to subsequent competition. Though not all of the five factions had established separate political and military organizations prior to their alliance, they generally did develop important relationships with the civilian populations in their areas of operation. Guerrilla forces relied on local populations for intelligence, logistical support, and provisioning (Wood 2003, 123-124).

95 For a brief overview of the landscape of opposition prior to 1981, see the final report of the Salvadoran truth commission (Truth Commission for El Salvador 1993).
As one FMLN commander put it, “Essentially, it was the local people who supplied us. We created various supply networks and also networks of information… There were various levels of militia participation… On these structures, we, the permanent military force, depended.”

Even beyond these forms of military support, the FMLN worked to mobilize civilians politically as well. Political officers specialized in framing the conflict in leftist terms and generating support among civilians. In response to government agrarian reforms, the FMLN also supported the establishment of cooperatives that might be seen as legal in the eyes of some government bodies, but were clandestinely allied with the insurgent group. These organizations gave peasants a common interest, allied them with the insurgent network, and provided them with “a new political identity and new political practices” (Wood 2003, 167). These activities and networks were important during and after the transition.

The government’s convertible capabilities were also affected by the war in ways that would ultimately prove important for subsequent electoral competition. At the start of major conflict, El Salvador was ruled by a military government that came to power in 1979, though direct presidential elections were re-introduced in 1984. In addition to the return to civilian politics, the 1980s saw several important changes for the government that stemmed from the war. Key among these was the way that violence disrupted the economy, reducing the profitability of traditional agricultural activities because of increased instability in rural areas and diversifying the activities of economic elites (Wood 2000, 52-77). This had the effect of creating the political

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96 Quoted in Elisabeth Jean Wood’s Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador (2003124).
97 In the early years of the war, the FMLN was aligned with the Democratic Revolutionary Front. However, this alliance deteriorated over the course of the war (Baloyra 1992, 73) and the FMLN stood in post-conflict elections on its own.
98 The Christian Democratic Party took control of the presidency, but the military remained heavily involved in politics.
space for negotiation and changing the interests and resolve of these elites. Political change became a much greater possibility. When the Christian Democrats lost the presidency to the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) in 1989, this paved the way for a conclusion to the war. Conflict thus broke the ability of the old economic elites to maintain a closed system but also forced the leadership (and especially ARENA) to reconsider their relationship to citizens.

Table 4.4 Presidential Election Results in El Salvador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARENA</strong></td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>51.96%</td>
<td>57.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FMLN</strong></td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>28.88%</td>
<td>35.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Parties</strong></td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19.14%</td>
<td>6.61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 Legislative Seat Distributions in El Salvador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARENA</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FMLN</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Parties</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The civil war in El Salvador thus laid the foundations for electoral competition once peace was secured. Because of the relatively even distribution of convertible capabilities between the FMLN and ARENA at the end of the war, elections were indeed competitive.

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the results of El Salvador’s presidential and legislative elections. While it took the FMLN four election cycles and fifteen years to gain control of the presidency, the FMLN had managed to become the largest party in the legislature by the third election after the

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99 Data for Table 4.4 is taken from the Political Database of the Americas (Georgetown University and the Organization of American States 2012).
100 Data for Table 4.5 is taken from the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s PARLINE database on national legislatures (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015).
conflict. Despite the fact that the FMLN had not had a unified political wing during most of the conflict and the breakaway of two of its factions in the early post-conflict period, the organization managed to retain enough cohesion to tap its considerable mobilization capacity to get out the vote.¹⁰¹ Factionalism did not disappear from the FMLN’s leadership, but internal disagreements never broke the party apart in quite the same way as in other cases.¹⁰² The FMLN appears to have been able to carry its capacity for managing multiple factions from the war into the electoral arena.

**Conclusion**

Why do we see so much variation in the competitiveness of post-conflict elections? This chapter has suggested that these elections are most competitive when conflict leads to a “balance of convertible power” among political actors, particularly in terms of their political organizational capacity. While much prior scholarship in the area of civil war has focused on the transformation of rebel groups into effective political parties as a necessary condition for democracy, much of the research in comparative authoritarianism has focused on the strength of the incumbent. The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that both must be taken into account in order to analyze outcomes at the level of the political system. Civil war represents a crucial moment in the history of any organization, and so the extent to which combatants (and others) during conflict consolidate capabilities that will be valuable in subsequent political competition is highly influential. In achieving competitive elections, the conversion of a rebel

¹⁰¹ The superior performance of the FMLN in legislative rather than national elections likely reflects the nature of the FMLN as a union of regionally-based organizations. This lends further support for the argument that combatants carry their organizational structures forward from conflict into elections.

¹⁰² For discussions of the internal disputes, see Manning (2007) and Colburn (2009).
group to a functional political party is neither necessary (as in Sierra Leone), nor sufficient (as in Mozambique). In the short term, a weak incumbent (relative to other actors) may be sufficient to increase the uncertainty of election results. In the long term, however, competition requires a viable, institutionalized opposition.

This chapter has argued that these trajectories of competition and dominance have their roots in the experience of civil war itself. But is this primarily due to the effects of the war on organizational structures and leadership strategies, or are these national-level phenomena the aggregation of more localized interactions between combatants and civilians? Chapters 5 and 6 turn to the cases of Sierra Leone and Mozambique to examine the mechanisms behind the cross-national trends. In these cases, three general questions are investigated. First, did the conflict lead to a concentration or a dispersion of political resources among major actors, particularly in relation to their organizational and mobilization capacity? Second, how did this distribution constrain or empower political actors during post-conflict elections? Finally, did these effects persist or change over time?
# Chapter 4 Appendix A: Variable Descriptions and Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Turnover</td>
<td>Hyde and Marinov (2012)</td>
<td>Coded from the variable <em>nelda24</em>, indicating whether or not the incumbent party lost the election. NELDA codes both legislative and executive elections, as well as constituent assembly elections. The data here code for executive elections, unless no executive elections are held (as in a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy), in which case legislative elections are coded. Failure is coded as the first election in or after the last year of conflict in which the incumbent party loses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Rebels</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Wing</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIpolwing</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOpolwing</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization Capacity</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEmobilize</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOMobilize</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Capacity</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEfight</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIfight</td>
<td>Cunningham et al (2009)</td>
<td>Dummy variable identifying whether multiple non-state actors were active in the preceding conflict episode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – Traditional</td>
<td>Doyle and Sambanis (2006), Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2014)</td>
<td>Coding for UN missions is taken from Doyle and Sambanis’s <em>un mandate</em> variable and supplemented with data from SIPRI. The dummy variable <em>UN-Traditional</em> indicates that there was an observer mission or traditional peacekeeping mission present at the end of the conflict episode. The <em>UN-R obust</em> variable indicates that there was a multidimensional peacekeeping mission, enforcement mission, or transitional administration in place. For SIPRI supplemental data, the Doyle and Sambanis rules were approximated using Chapter VI missions as traditional missions and Chapter VII missions, or Chapter VI missions with two dimensions beyond the provision of protection, as robust missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Democracy</td>
<td>Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010)</td>
<td>A dummy variable indicating whether or not a regime qualified as a democracy by Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland’s criteria for their democracy variable in the year before conflict onset.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2013)</td>
<td>Percentage of GDP coming from rents from natural resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle Deaths</td>
<td>Lacina and Gleditsch (2005)</td>
<td>The number of battle-related deaths during the previous conflict episode. The measure uses the bdeadhigh estimate from the data in order to minimize missing data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Episodes</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>This is a count variable of the number of prior episodes of the same conflict.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4 Appendix B: Robustness Checks

This appendix presents robustness checks for methodological challenges that might theoretically affect the analysis in the main chapter. Foremost among these challenges are the possibility of sample selection bias and the possibility that competing risks to incumbents alter the results. All checks correspond to Model 6 in Table 4.3 of the main chapter, unless otherwise specified.

Sample Selection Bias

The analysis in the main chapter does not account for the potential critique that there may be a sort of sample selection bias at work here. Not all conflict episodes result immediately in systems with the *de jure* institutions of multiparty democracy, particularly prior to the end of the Cold War. Thus, the process at work may be more properly thought of as having two steps: the establishment of democratic institutions, and *then* the occurrence of electoral turnover only in those cases where it is an institutional possibility. The models in the main chapter treat this issue agnostically by including all post-conflict cases, regardless of institutional form. Turnover does eventually occur in some cases that do not have formal democratic institutions immediately after conflict. Tests of proportions find no significant difference in the proportion of cases with one or multiple mobilizers or one or multiple rebel political wings in these cases, as compared with cases in which democratic institutions are in place immediately after the conflict episode.  

It may be, however, that modeling a selection process would alter the findings. Unfortunately, no solution to this problem appears to exist that would allow the estimation of a survival model with a time-dependent covariate (key to the analysis). Since I cannot account for

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103 Here, I use the *de jure* variable from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010) to assess whether multiple political parties were legal in the year after conflict ended.
it directly, I attempt to indirectly show that the selection issue is not likely to affect the primary findings in two ways: by limiting the sample to the “selected” cases and by demonstrating that selection does not have a major impact on other estimates. Table A4.I shows the results (Model A) of the original Model 6 from Table 4.3 in the main paper. It also provides results when the selection problem is made most clear and only those cases are included in which multiple political parties were legal in the year after conflict’s end (Model B). As Table A4.I shows, the results are consistent.

A second approach to identifying whether sample selection biases the results is to treat the dependent variable as a simple binary outcome: electoral turnover vs. non-turnover during the peace spell. Thought of in this way, we lose the explanatory power of time-varying and time-dependent covariates, but it does allow for a simple Heckman selection model, adapted for probit. Table A4.II shows the results of this approach. Model C presents a simple probit model for electoral turnover in post-conflict peace spells in which multiple political parties were legal immediately after conflict. Model D presents the same model, but without the variable accounting for the end of the Cold War, which is used for the selection equation in Model E. In the data, the end of the Cold War is independently associated with whether or not democratic institutions are implemented, but not with whether turnover occurs (unless included with other covariates as in Model D). Model E presents the effects of the Heckman selection model. As shown in Table A4.II, the results are again largely consistent. The finding for ONEpolwing is not consistent, but this is not surprising, given the time-dependent nature of the effect.

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104 All covariates are set for the last year of conflict. The conflict termination variables are dropped from these models due to technical model demands.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Full Sample</th>
<th>Selected Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing</td>
<td>0.413*</td>
<td>0.417*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.209)</td>
<td>(0.218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing*ln(t)</td>
<td>1.726**</td>
<td>1.680**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.414)</td>
<td>(0.421)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEmobilize</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.190)</td>
<td>(0.204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize</td>
<td>0.217*</td>
<td>0.267*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.171)</td>
<td>(0.204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize*ln(t)</td>
<td>2.498**</td>
<td>2.213**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.937)</td>
<td>(0.756)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEfight</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>0.838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.227)</td>
<td>(0.258)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIfight</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.777)</td>
<td>(0.815)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Rebels</td>
<td>0.405**</td>
<td>0.400**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.163)</td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Cold War</td>
<td>1.945</td>
<td>1.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.803)</td>
<td>(0.699)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>0.970**</td>
<td>0.974**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0142)</td>
<td>(0.0119)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>1.381***</td>
<td>1.344**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.169)</td>
<td>(0.173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid per capita</td>
<td>0.783**</td>
<td>0.757**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0889)</td>
<td>(0.0905)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – Traditional</td>
<td>3.123**</td>
<td>2.968**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.399)</td>
<td>(1.297)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – Multidimensional</td>
<td>4.365***</td>
<td>3.862***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.832)</td>
<td>(1.736)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Length</td>
<td>2.131***</td>
<td>2.005***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.552)</td>
<td>(0.485)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle Deaths</td>
<td>0.812*</td>
<td>0.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0973)</td>
<td>(0.0955)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Democracy</td>
<td>3.984***</td>
<td>3.384***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.228)</td>
<td>(1.150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Episodes</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.114)</td>
<td>(0.107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>1,442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors, clustered by country

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

Models all use a Cox proportional hazards model estimated using Stata and report hazard ratios.
The natural log of GDP per capita, Aid per capita, Conflict Length, and Battle Deaths are used.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>(C)</th>
<th>(D)</th>
<th>(E)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>turnover</td>
<td>-0.381</td>
<td>-0.240</td>
<td>-0.233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.264)</td>
<td>(0.255)</td>
<td>(0.263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing</td>
<td>0.000253</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>0.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.673)</td>
<td>(0.625)</td>
<td>(0.687)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIpolwing</td>
<td>-0.131</td>
<td>-0.241</td>
<td>-0.0622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.281)</td>
<td>(0.267)</td>
<td>(0.259)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEmobilize</td>
<td>-1.271**</td>
<td>-1.350**</td>
<td>-1.222*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.630)</td>
<td>(0.628)</td>
<td>(0.736)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize</td>
<td>-0.162</td>
<td>-0.159</td>
<td>-0.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.337)</td>
<td>(0.318)</td>
<td>(0.307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEfight</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>0.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.748)</td>
<td>(0.731)</td>
<td>(0.761)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIfight</td>
<td>-0.958*</td>
<td>-1.150**</td>
<td>-1.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.571)</td>
<td>(0.567)</td>
<td>(0.623)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Cold War</td>
<td>-1.113***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.328)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>-0.0490***</td>
<td>-0.0465***</td>
<td>-0.0466***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0133)</td>
<td>(0.0124)</td>
<td>(0.0143)</td>
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<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>0.420***</td>
<td>0.472***</td>
<td>0.439***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.129)</td>
<td>(0.120)</td>
<td>(0.152)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aid per capita</td>
<td>-0.164*</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>-0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0936)</td>
<td>(0.0913)</td>
<td>(0.0926)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN - Traditional</td>
<td>0.944*</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>0.665*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.524)</td>
<td>(0.483)</td>
<td>(0.388)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN - Multidimensional</td>
<td>1.789***</td>
<td>1.448***</td>
<td>1.683***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.467)</td>
<td>(0.436)</td>
<td>(0.497)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict Length</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>0.104</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.241)</td>
<td>(0.240)</td>
<td>(0.197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle Deaths</td>
<td>0.0312</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.0961</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.111)</td>
<td>(0.106)</td>
<td>(0.0958)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prior Democracy</td>
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<td>0.908***</td>
<td>1.066***</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.307)</td>
<td>(0.284)</td>
<td>(0.290)</td>
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<td>Prior Episodes</td>
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<td>-0.165</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.112)</td>
<td>(0.103)</td>
<td>(0.121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.897</td>
<td>-3.633***</td>
<td>-3.628**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.383)</td>
<td>(1.122)</td>
<td>(1.464)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Log Pseudoliklihood</td>
<td>-59.904</td>
<td>-63.784</td>
<td>-115.785</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Observations: 141

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country in models C and D

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

Models are estimated using Stata.

The natural log of GDP per capita, Aid per capita, Conflict Length, and Battle Deaths are used.
Competing Risks Analysis

The primary analysis presented in the chapter treats post-conflict episodes as if there are only two “outcomes:” incumbent survival, and electoral turnover. Any other exit “type” is simply treated as censored. Yet we must also acknowledge that incumbents face multiple potential exits. Electoral turnover is one way in which incumbents might fail to reconsolidate political power in a post-conflict episode. From Sierra Leone to El Salvador, incumbents do actually lose in regular post-conflict elections in about 27.3% of the sample cases. Electoral turnover, however, is not the only risk. The post-conflict security context is one of high uncertainty and potential instability. Incumbents must worry not only about their political position, they must also face the distinct possibility that conflict will break out anew. In the present sample, 48.6% of peace spells are cut short by a relapse of the conflict.105 A great deal of work in political science has focused on this particular outcome, and it is beyond the scope of the main paper to provide an in-depth accounting of the conditions under which civil war is likely recur after a period of peace. However, in order to accurately estimate the causes of post-conflict turnover, we may need to account for the fact that many peace spells are ended by renewed violence before electoral turnover is ever observed. Moreover, it is very likely that some of the factors linked to electoral turnover (such as GDP per capita) affect the stability of peace as well as the stability of an incumbent’s hold on power. A relapse in the conflict is not necessarily the same as a random censoring of our observations.

105 If anything, this is an under-estimation. The current data is coded such that electoral turnover and conflict renewal occurring in the same year is treated as exit by electoral turnover. This is justified because the electoral turnover is likely to occur first (thus sparking the renewed violence), but does suggest that a study only of peace spells ended by violence would find a higher relapse rate.
For these reasons, the analysis below utilizes a competing risks model, following Fine and Gray (1999). This approach departs from the now-standard Cox proportional hazards model in order to account for multiple sources of ‘failure’ in the data. Similar models are increasingly being used to account for the multiple outcomes related to a range of conflict and post-conflict outcomes (Akcinaroglu, 2012; Flores & Nooruddin, 2012), yet none of the literature surveyed has focused on the particular approach taken in this chapter of modeling competing risks to incumbent political dominance. Utilizing this approach allows us to distinguish the sub-hazard due to electoral turnover, and to analyze this without interference from the risk of conflict recurrence. As shown in the model in Table A4.III, this does not change the primary findings.
Table 4A.III. Competing Risks Analysis

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing</td>
<td>0.143***</td>
<td>0.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0864)</td>
<td>(0.321)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEpolwing*ln(t)</td>
<td>3.203***</td>
<td>1.817*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.001)</td>
<td>(0.577)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MULTIpolwing</td>
<td>2.226</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(1.369)</td>
<td>(0.347)</td>
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<td>ONEmobilize</td>
<td>0.631*</td>
<td>1.491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.163)</td>
<td>(0.366)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize</td>
<td>0.0652**</td>
<td>9.303*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0745)</td>
<td>(12.52)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MULTImobilize*ln(t)</td>
<td>5.255***</td>
<td>0.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.463)</td>
<td>(0.212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONEfight</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>0.569**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.332)</td>
<td>(0.159)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIfight</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>1.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.876)</td>
<td>(0.404)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Rebels</td>
<td>0.147***</td>
<td>1.857*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0903)</td>
<td>(0.594)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Cold War</td>
<td>1.787</td>
<td>1.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.659)</td>
<td>(0.368)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>0.960***</td>
<td>1.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0139)</td>
<td>(0.00341)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>1.740***</td>
<td>0.766**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.214)</td>
<td>(0.0813)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid per capita</td>
<td>0.810**</td>
<td>0.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0731)</td>
<td>(0.0958)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – Traditional</td>
<td>1.941*</td>
<td>1.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.777)</td>
<td>(0.350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN – Multidimensional</td>
<td>4.702***</td>
<td>0.255**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.381)</td>
<td>(0.156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Length</td>
<td>1.771**</td>
<td>1.138</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.505)</td>
<td>(0.193)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Battle Deaths</td>
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<td>0.862*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.117)</td>
<td>(0.0687)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Democracy</td>
<td>3.811***</td>
<td>0.591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.184)</td>
<td>(0.201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Episodes</td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>1.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.116)</td>
<td>(0.0999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>2,028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robust standard errors, clustered by country

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

Models based on a competing risks model estimated using Stata and report hazard ratios.
The natural log of GDP per capita, Aid per capita, Conflict Length, and Battle Deaths are used.
CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL DOMINANCE IN MOZAMBIQUE

“Renamo never really went through that transformation of becoming more democratic internally... Things are very autocratic internally, very centralized. That hasn’t changed.”

-Head of a local NGO, Maputo

With the 1992 signing of the General Peace Accord (GPA) in Rome, Mozambique took a major step forward in stabilizing a country that had been the site of widespread political violence for the better part of the previous twenty-five years. The 1994 national elections that emerged from the GPA were both the first multiparty elections in the country’s history and the formal end to the initial phase of the peacebuilding process. As discussed in Chapter 3, the decision to introduce multiparty politics was taken prior to the negotiation of the GPA by a Frelimo government whose ability to maintain a monopoly on power was severely damaged by the costliness of the civil war. While the introduction of political liberalization appears to have been a gamble for political survival, there was no guarantee at the close of the civil war that this strategy would pay off for Frelimo. Having to make regular concessions to a strong opposition or even losing control of government via multiparty elections were real possibilities. Indeed, the first two national-level elections were remarkably competitive. Only after 1999 was Frelimo able to reassert its dominance over the political playing field and steadily marginalize Renamo in subsequent elections.

This pattern of competitiveness followed by dominance presents the puzzle to be examined in the following chapter. The results from the statistical analysis in Chapter 4 indicate that high levels of electoral competition should be most likely after conflicts featuring rebel groups with high levels of organizational or mobilization capabilities, but only in the long run. In Mozambique, the highest level of electoral competition was reached in the early post-conflict
elections, and Frelimo was subsequently able to re-establish political dominance. That elections were competitive at all is surprising, given Renamo’s lack of a distinct political organization during the war. Based on the results in Chapter 4, we might not expect the party to be able to pose a serious challenge to Frelimo at any point. Mozambique is thus a hard case for the theory because we would not expect competitive elections to emerge after a conflict featuring a rebel group with few convertible capabilities. The case has the added benefit of variation over time, allowing us to examine possible mechanisms behind the delayed effects identified in Chapter 4.

Why did electoral competition emerge at all and, once it did, why did it decline so quickly? Why was Frelimo able to re-establish itself as a dominant party, despite the breakdown of its political monopoly at the end of the war and the early ability of Renamo to mount a credible challenge?

In this case, the answer appears to lie in the distinction between the types of capabilities developed by combatant organizations during the conflict. The civil war and its attendant hardships degraded Frelimo’s mobilization capabilities but did not fundamentally damage (and even strengthened) its organizational capability. For Renamo, on the other hand, the conflict provided some limited mobilization capabilities, but did not leave it with the organizational capabilities that could sustain it as a purely political force in the longer term. Because Renamo’s popular support hinges on the perception that it offers the most viable means of defeating Frelimo, rather than its offer of some positively appealing platform, repeated electoral defeat has winnowed away its voter base.

To examine the broader theory in the context of the Mozambican case, three questions need to be answered: did the conflict result in a concentration or dispersion of convertible capabilities, did this distribution enable or constrain parties’ subsequent electoral strategies, and
(if so) how did this change over time? While the conflict did disperse convertible assets and even the playing field between Frelimo and Renamo, those of Renamo’s capabilities that were convertible were not durable. Specifically, the dynamics of the conflict led Renamo to develop an organizational structure and style that could not sustain voter support after repeated electoral failures. Because of this, the highly competitive nature of early-post-conflict politics in Mozambique was short-lived.

The remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. First, it offers an overview of the war-to-peace transition in Mozambique and highlights post-conflict trends in electoral competition. The chapter then takes each of the major questions posed above in turn, examining the effect of the conflict on both Frelimo and Renamo’s ability to develop certain capabilities and the way that this initially enabled and then subsequently constrained electoral competition. A final section reinforces the case for focusing on parties’ central decision-making and capabilities, rather than the effect of conflict on the population at large. Utilizing statistical analysis of conflict violence and subsequent electoral returns at the district level, I show that violence during Mozambique’s civil war appears to have reinforced partisan identities, rather than leaving the country with a body of swing voters more open to alternatives. Changing levels of electoral competition thus hinge not on post-conflict changes in the population’s preference structure, but rather on parties’ ability to mobilize voters whose preferences are reinforced by their experiences during the conflict itself.
Post-Conflict Elections: From Competition to Dominance

After a sometimes-tortuous negotiation process that stretched for a dozen rounds over two years, the Frelimo government and Renamo signed the GPA in 1992. The civil war that preceded these events was among the most costly conflicts since World War II. An estimated one million people died either from the violence itself or from associated causes and roughly five million were displaced. As highlighted in Chapter 3, the economic toll of the 16 year civil war was also catastrophic.

The majority of the conflict was fought between the Marxist-Leninist Frelimo government that had come to power at independence in 1975 and Renamo, a rebel group that initially relied heavily on external sponsorship but eventually became more self-sufficient and recruited some support from among the population. The dynamics of the war were nearly archetypal of Cold War conflicts: two forces assisted by external powers (the Soviet Union in the case of Frelimo, Rhodesia and South Africa in the case of Renamo) fought for control of the central government in the name of either democracy or socialism. While some localized self-defense groups did emerge during the war, their impact on the overall direction of the conflict was fairly limited and the primary armed players remained the national armed forces (formally the Popular Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique, or FPLM) and Renamo. The vast majority of violence during the war can be traced to these two forces.

To the extent that Renamo was able to draw on domestic support, a major driver of the conflict was dissatisfaction among various groups with Frelimo’s monopoly on political power. The collectivization of agriculture, the rejection of rural traditions and traditional authorities, and the centralization of economic planning all left significant constituencies with grievances against
the state. As discussed below, Renamo was able to capitalize on these grievances to recruit local support, particularly in the latter half of the conflict. When the military situation reached a stalemate and a widespread drought crippled the ability of both sides to feed themselves, negotiations began in earnest. Mediated by the Catholic lay community of Sant’ Egidio, these negotiations eventually produced the GPA, which addressed political and military issues to end the war. A key component of the agreement was a plan to go forward with the country’s first multiparty elections. International donors set up a substantial trust fund of approximately US$17 million to assist Renamo in transforming itself from a rebel organization into a political party, while Frelimo prepared itself for its first test in competitive elections since independence.

Initially under the agreement, elections were to be held in 1993, but they were postponed until October 1994 because of delays in the demobilization process and security concerns by Renamo. When the elections did go forward, Renamo made a strong showing but did not achieve the level of success that had been anticipated in the presidential election.\textsuperscript{106} Legislative elections were slightly more successful for Renamo, with the party taking 112 out of 250 seats in the National Assembly. The results from all of the elections between 1994 and 2014 are presented in Table 5.1. As these results show, Renamo’s competitiveness peaked in the 1999 national elections, when Afonso Dhlakama carried 47.66\% percent of the vote and the party took

\textsuperscript{106} Many commentators and several interview participants pointed to Dhlakama’s near-boycott of the polls on the eve of the election as having depressed Renamo’s returns. Reportedly believing that the election was likely to be stolen without any accountability from international monitors, Dhlakama announced just days before election day that he was withdrawing from the race. After diplomatic outreach from several international actors, Dhlakama agreed to participate in the election, but it is possible that not all Renamo supporters received the second message. Additionally, there were reports that Mozambicans in rural areas were being encouraged to vote Frelimo for the presidency (in order to return Joachim Chissano to office) and Renamo for the National Assembly (in order to satisfy the former rebels).
117 seats in the national parliament. Dhlakama claimed that the vote was stolen and that, in a fair election, he would have beaten the incumbent President Joachim Chissano.

**Table 5.1 Presidential Vote Shares and Legislative Seats Won, 1994-2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Frelimo</th>
<th>Renamo</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>53.30%</td>
<td>33.73%</td>
<td>12.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>129 seats</td>
<td>112 seats</td>
<td>9 seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>52.29%</td>
<td>47.71%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>133 seats</td>
<td>117 seats</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>63.74%</td>
<td>31.74%</td>
<td>4.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>160 seats</td>
<td>90 seats</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>75.01%</td>
<td>16.41%</td>
<td>8.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>191 seats</td>
<td>51 seats</td>
<td>8 seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>57.00%</td>
<td>36.60%</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>144 seats</td>
<td>89 seats</td>
<td>17 seats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data taken from the official election results released by the Technical Secretariat of Electoral Administration (STAE), unless otherwise noted.

The first two elections after the GPA can thus be characterized as having a relatively high level of competition, with the outcome of the election highly uncertain prior to election day. Yet this level of competitiveness was not sustained and Renamo’s electoral support waned dramatically over the next several cycles as Frelimo reestablished political dominance. The 2009 election in particular was marred by irregularities and criticized by most observers as being deeply flawed. In the long run, electoral politics in Mozambique have thus become remarkably uncompetitive. By 2012, Renamo’s chances at the ballot box were so slim that Dhlakama removed himself from the political process and returned to his basecamp in the Gorongosa mountains. In 2013, Renamo-linked militants engaged in attacks on security and transportation targets to pressure the Frelimo government in negotiations over its political demands. After an agreement was signed on September 4, 2014, Renamo went on to participate in national elections that October. Despite taking 36.6% of the presidential vote in the official tally—a substantial

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107 At the time of writing, detailed results of the 2014 election were not publicly available and so the national-level results are taken from the December 29, 2014 Constitutional Court opinion ratifying the results.
increase over the previous election—Dhlakama lambasted the results as fraudulent and began to press for political autonomy for regions of the country that remained Renamo strongholds.\textsuperscript{108}

Unlike studies that focus solely on the transformation of rebel groups to political parties, I suggest that the waxing and waning of electoral competition in Mozambique has as much to do with Frelimo as Renamo. First, the civil war broke Frelimo’s ability to dominate politics and contributed to mounting dissatisfaction among some parts of the population as unpopular rural policies were expanded in the name of security. The monopoly on legitimacy, popular support, and the economy which Frelimo enjoyed at independence was thus seriously eroded by the end of the war. Second, Renamo’s early strong showing was due to their efforts during and immediately after the conflict to build up convertible capabilities, particularly activating networks of supporters among key constituencies who were disgruntled with the Frelimo government. Finally, the longevity of this electoral competition was limited for two reasons. First, Renamo’s supporters were more anti-Frelimo than pro-Renamo and thus harder to mobilize over time. Second, Renamo’s organizational structure proved largely non-convertible from conflict to political competition. Once Frelimo realized the electoral threat posed by Renamo, it was able to reconsolidate its electoral position, leveraging its organizational strength and taking advantage of the reconstruction process to do so. Renamo, lacking both a large base of durable support \textit{and} the organizational capacity to build one, was unable to respond within the bounds of the electoral process.

\textsuperscript{108} At the time of writing, the political crisis remains unresolved with negotiations at a stalemate and intermittent violence still occurring.
Early Competition and the Balance of Convertible Capabilities

The 1994 elections in Mozambique took place under dual conditions of hope that the new government would secure the peace and fear that the process would fail. With extremely low levels of confidence and trust between the Frelimo government and Renamo, the campaign and election periods were tense. Dhlakama threatened on the eve of polling to pull out of the election altogether, but after intervention of the international community he agreed to keep Renamo in the race. When polling was done, Frelimo was declared the winner of both the presidency and a majority of legislative seats. Renamo emerged as the main opposition party in the national Assembleia da República with 112 of 250 seats.

For the 1999 election, Renamo sought to improve its performance in several respects. First, it pushed for (and received) changes to the electoral law that gave it a greater say in oversight of the election. Second and more importantly, Renamo agreed to form an electoral coalition—Renamo-UE—with other opposition parties. Though Renamo had been approached to form a coalition in 1994, Dhlakama rejected that strategy and chose instead to have Renamo contest on its own. The coalition strategy was effective at the polls, increasing Dhlakama’s vote share to 47.66% and 117 of 250 seats in the National Assembly. With just 206,943 votes separating Chissano and Dhlakama (compared to 515,316 ballots declared blank or invalid), Renamo claimed that they had been deprived of victory via fraud and that Dhlakama had been the true winner of the presidential election. It was the last time that the race would be so close. Renamo’s vote share declined dramatically over the next two national-level elections.

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109 This was largely the result of having boycotted the 1998 municipal elections, which Renamo claimed were not held under appropriate conditions.
110 Interview with Lutero Simango, June 2013.
Why were the first two elections after the conflict so competitive? After all, Frelimo largely controlled the state apparatus and had a centralized party whose structures nominally spanned the country and whose leadership enjoyed the legitimacy and loyalty of having achieved independence together.\textsuperscript{111} Renamo, on the other hand, had relatively little in the way of funding and had spent most of its existence as a rebel group vilified in the national and international press as a tool of apartheid backers and for its harsh treatment of civilians during war. An electoral field on which Frelimo and Renamo were the major players would appear to tilt heavily in favor of Frelimo, so how was it that Renamo nearly won the election in 1999?

Key to the explanation is an understanding of the “balance of power” between Frelimo and Renamo in these early years. Frelimo was not so strong as is often assumed, while Renamo was not simply the gang of \textit{bandidos armados} they had been labeled. Renamo made the leap from rebel group to political party effectively because it had started to build up its mid-level personnel and recruit members domestically after support from its Rhodesian and South African sponsors declined (Manning 2002, 92). Renamo was particularly attractive to traditional leaders and those in rural areas who were disaffected by Frelimo’s policies during the 1970s and early 1980s (Manning 2002, 41-42).

Interviews conducted during fieldwork in Mozambique confirmed that many of Renamo’s current leaders joined the organization because of dissatisfaction with Frelimo’s policies. These reasons included having been unwillingly conscripted into the FPLM, the loss of family status when a father was deprived of his role as a traditional healer and leader, and the loss of control over personal career choices. Interviews further confirmed that many of

\textsuperscript{111} For the importance of liberation struggles to leadership cohesion and party dominance, see Levitsky and Way (2013).
Renamo’s supporters were active in the group before the war ended and that the leadership had been engaged in efforts to build its organizational capacity. These mobilization networks and the centralized nature of Renamo’s organization proved to be its most important assets in the conversion from military to electoral competition. Importantly, however, these assets were convertible but not durable.

The 1999 Election: The Curse of a Close Second

Even twenty years after the GPA ended the civil war, Frelimo’s leaders still view Renamo as a group of bandits or a guerilla organization rather than a legitimate political party. In the words of one senior Frelimo member:

Renamo failed to make the transition from a guerrilla movement to a political party. It failed… Renamo has a structure, even here in parliament, a structure that has a military basis and a military discipline… Renamo appears to be the largest and most influential group, but they don’t hold [a party] congress, don’t have an [internal] election process or regular meetings of their organs… [after] two years, three years, five years, ten years, there is no [party] congress. There is nothing.  

The 1999 election results were thus a surprise and a shock to the incumbent party, leaving them extremely concerned over the closeness of the election. Some observers also believed at the time that the 2004 elections were potentially Renamo’s opportunity for victory, based on their performance in 1999 and the change in power as Armando Guebuza took over from Chissano as the Frelimo presidential candidate. Yet the 1999 election was the high-water mark of opposition performance in national elections. The 2004 and 2009 elections both saw a major decline in opposition performance. This decline was due to three factors: Renamo’s weakening

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112 Interview, June 2013.
113 Interview with David Pottie, March 2014.
114 Interview with Scott Taylor, March 2014.
base of support, Renamo’s organizational sclerosis, and Frelimo’s ability to capitalize on the economic recovery of the country. The legacy of the conflict manifested itself in each of these factors, though the effect of that legacy varied over time.

Renamo’s weakening base. As discussed above, Renamo’s base of popular support during the war consisted largely of individuals who were disaffected with the Frelimo regime’s approach to social and economic modernization. This support was concentrated in rural areas (though later in the conflict urban networks were also established) and particularly among traditional leaders who felt disadvantaged and even targeted by Frelimo. While this support has been reported by others to have been important to Renamo’s survival during the war (Manning 2002, 65), it is notable that this was a fairly unreliable voter base for Renamo going forward. Various constituency interests could be addressed in way that left them with little reason to maintain loyalty to Renamo, as with the passage of a law in 2000 reforming the state’s relationship with local traditional leaders. The fragility of Renamo’s base is illustrated by two pieces of evidence: Renamo’s decision to use a coalition in the 1999 elections, and the decline in turnout in subsequent elections.

Although Renamo was approached with offers for coalition partners in advance of the 1994 election, Dhlakama declined these offers, choosing instead to run Renamo’s candidates on a solo party ticket. This strategy proving unsuccessful, Renamo formed an opposition coalition with ten other parties in advance of the 1999 general election in order to maximize its

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115 Even without this law, party loyalty among traditional leaders was relatively weak. Schafer reports that “In Mossurize, mambos were virtually uniformly deposed by Frelimo, and some were killed. This did not result in a pattern of political allegiance unequivocally favorable to Renamo on the part of the chiefs themselves. Of those interviewed, one was openly associated with Frelimo, one overtly supported Renamo, and the rest appeared to be trying to negotiate between the two parties or refused to express political allegiance” (200742).

116 Interview with Luis Simango, May 2013.
chance of victory. This helped to consolidate opposition support behind Dhlakama as the presidential candidate, but it also came with costs. One of the key sources of financial support for political parties in Mozambique is state funding, which is allotted in part based on the number of seats that a party holds in the Assembleia da República. In choosing to form a coalition with so many other opposition parties, Renamo simultaneously increased its vote share in the legislature and hobbled itself financially by having to share resources with its partners. Given the clear preference of Dhlakama for going it alone and the predictable costs of forming a coalition, it appears that the Renamo leadership was aware that its base in 1999 was inadequate to defeat Frelimo.

The fragility of Renamo’s connection to its base is also illustrated by declining turnout. Turnout has generally declined since the country’s first election, with 5.4 million votes cast (88.0% turnout) in 1994, 4.9 million (69.5% turnout) in 1999, 3.3 million (36.4% turnout) in 2004, and 4.4 million (45% turnout) in 2009. Low voter turnout is an ominous indicator of the health of democratic politics in Mozambique, suggesting a citizenry disengaged from selecting its leaders, which reduces both legitimacy and accountability. A number of scholars have pointed to declining turnout as being related to Renamo’s political failures and Frelimo’s increasing dominance (Hanlon 2010, 93, Carbone 2005, 421). Two closely-related possibilities could explain voters’ reduced enthusiasm for turning out on election day: apathy towards the system as a whole, or apathy towards Renamo itself.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ A third possibility, outright fraud, is also plausible and likely played a role. I address accusations of fraud in the discussion of voters’ apathy towards the political system as a whole, rather than as an independent cause. Allegations of fraud have been made in every single election since the war’s end and assessing the validity and scope of such claims is beyond the scope of this chapter.
The perception among some political opposition leaders is that voters no longer see any possibility of a change in Frelimo’s control of most national-level government. Combined with allegations of outright manipulation, Frelimo’s control over the state gives the party several advantages: laws can be selectively enforced, officials who are also party members can serve as gatekeepers to government services and jobs, and senior-level party officials can become valuable intermediaries between contract and license-granting agencies and multinational corporations seeking entry to Mozambique’s fast-growing extractive industries. Voters opposed to Frelimo’s continued control of national government may simply see taking their preference to the ballot box as relatively useless. This is the perception of some opposition politicians. As one prominent leader stated, “There are a number of people in Mozambique who feel that Renamo has their choice, and those ones are not going to vote now because of the results of the elections. They feel that the decision of who is going to rule the country is not taken in the ballot boxes.” The perception that by 2004 Frelimo had established an uneven playing field and that the vote counting process lacks transparency is widely shared, as reflected in election observation reports from both the 1999 and 2004 elections (Carter Center 2000, 2005). This apathy is problematic for Renamo, since its core supporters are unified by their opposition to Frelimo more than their commitment to Renamo.

A second explanation given is not that voters abandoned Renamo not out of general despondency, but rather out of disillusionment with Renamo’s reaction to Frelimo’s increasing centralization of power. For some voters wanting a change from Frelimo government, Renamo was not seen as adequately carrying the mantle of opposition. One Renamo leader pointed to the

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118 For more on the relationship between economic privatization and government officials, see Pitcher (2002).
119 Interview with Raul Domingos, May 2013.
2000 demonstrations contesting the results of the 1999 elections, in which several hundred
Renamo supporters were killed. His perception was that the population became disillusioned
with Renamo’s leadership after that incident for not reacting more strongly. He believed they
saw the limited reaction by Renamo leaders as a sign of weakness.\textsuperscript{120} When asked what the party
has had to do to expand its base of support since 1994, another Renamo leader indicated that his
perception was that after the 2009 elections there was a greater desire for street demonstrations
among the people than among the Renamo leadership. Moreover, he believed that supporters
that abandoned the party in the 2000s were returning to the party after the violent events that
began in the spring of 2013.\textsuperscript{121} The implication is that those in Mozambique who are
dissatisfied with Frelimo’s long tenure in government support Renamo only when they perceive
it to be taking effective action, even when that entails clashes with the state security services.
Anecdotes provided during informal discussions with members of civil society supported this
assertion that many Mozambicans seemed to approve that someone was at least “doing
something.” Renamo’s improved performance in the 2014 elections—directly following
eighteen months of low-level conflict affecting both civilians and military personnel—lends
further support to an interpretation that the party’s primary appeal is its ability to oppose Frelimo
by whatever means needed. Indeed, analysis from the 2014 election campaign suggests that the
party was well aware of this:

\begin{quote}
Renamo trumpeted the efficacy and moral rightness of its return to arms. The music that
jangled from the cars on campaign convoys had lyrics about “Dhlakama – a life of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{120} Interview with Fernando Mazanga, May 2013.
\textsuperscript{121} Interview with Manuel Pereira, May 2013. This was in specific reference to an attack on a police station in
which several people were killed. The attack, allegedly carried out by Renamo gunmen, was in retaliation for a
police raid on a local Renamo office and an effort to free several party members who had been arrested during the
raid.
sacrifice!” that drew parallels between the attacks of the last two years and Renamo’s historic image of itself as the party that brought democracy to Mozambique. This message did more than simply to animate the Renamo faithful. On the streets of Maputo, deep Frelimo country, unemployed young men picked up this theme with comments like “Dhlakama went to the bush to fight for democracy.” The most remarkable reaction was from that social stratum that we call civil society... They came as close as they could to saying that Dhlakama had done the right thing, stopping just short of endorsing his call to arms. (Pearce 2015)

Before returning to arms, Renamo’s inability to actually win elections and its opposed-but-not-quite-radical reactions to Frelimo’s increasing dominance caused its supporters to largely abandon the party. While some would find a new political hope in third parties such as the Movimento Democratico de Moçambique (MDM), many more simply stayed home.

In short, since the base of support that Renamo had developed during the conflict was rooted in opposition to Frelimo, rather than loyalty to Renamo, the party has had difficulty relying on that base consistently in the post-conflict period. The popular support that existed for Renamo at the end of the conflict was thus convertible, but it was not durable. Renamo’s appeal during the conflict and after was as the anti-Frelimo. Because voters’ support for Renamo was essentially instrumental, the enthusiasm of that support withered when the party repeatedly failed to unseat Frelimo in 1994 and 1999.122

Renamo’s organizational structure. In addition to the weak ties built between Renamo and its supporters during the war, Renamo’s leadership structure was largely carried from the conflict into the post-conflict period. The organization that Renamo built during the war was a

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122 Admittedly, much of the evidence provided here is anecdotal and reflects the perceptions of elites, rather than a broad sample of Mozambican voters. Even so, that Renamo leaders believe themselves to have lost support because of their lack of sufficient opposition to Frelimo buttresses the larger argument. Renamo remains locked in a strategic pattern whereby it sees opposition to Frelimo as its strongest political appeal. The dominant political discourse has thus centered on support for or opposition to Frelimo’s dominance of politics since the end of the war. Sub-national data presented later in the chapter is also supportive of this argument, though it does not provide a direct test.
largely hierarchical one around a core group of leaders. Dhlakama himself was at the center of the organization and his authority since taking leadership has been largely constant. Weinstein’s description of Renamo’s wartime operations is instructive:

Dhlakama and his commanders, who had no basis to trust their local counterparts, maintained strict control over the strategic direction of the movement. The Estado Maior General coordinated the movement of troops, arranged for the establishment of new bases and fronts, and made decisions about when and where to launch attacks. Communications operators routed all information through the national command up to four times a day so that strategic planning could be conducted with up-to-date local information (Weinstein 2007, 148).

This was no loosely organized network of localized bandits. It was a highly organized rebel group with a top-down chain of command that saw high levels of military success, as reflected in its eventual occupation of nearly 20% of Mozambique’s vast territory by the war’s end (Vines 1996, 3). While hyper-centralization of control can be a recipe for mutiny or operational ineffectiveness, Renamo was able to retain this structure thanks to both the central control of resources and the relative weakness of most government army units (Weinstein 2007, 149). The expulsion or elimination of other potential challengers for leadership also contributed to the consolidation of authority in the hands of Dhlakama (Vines 1996, 16-17).

This hierarchical and centralized organizational structure proved quite effective during the war itself, and may even have facilitated the peaceful transition. For example, the hierarchy of the party likely both enabled and was reinforced by the international community’s investment of $17 million dollars in Renamo’s transformation into a political party in the early post-conflict period. Special Representative Francis Ajello could channel these funds directly to Dhlakama, likely knowing that he had access to and influence over all potential spoilers on the Renamo side.
At the same time, access to these funds may have helped the top brass in Renamo reinforce the centralized nature of the party.\textsuperscript{123}

Yet this organizational structure changed little during the transition period, and was not convertible to effectively meet the challenges of electoral competition. As the local head of one prominent NGO working in political party development put it, “Renamo never really went through that transformation of becoming more democratic internally, more stable and structured, more regulated at elections… Things are very autocratic internally, very centralized. That hasn’t changed.”\textsuperscript{124} While an organization with top-down directives and little in the way of consensus-building may have been effective during the war, in peacetime it put Dhlakama at the intersection of competing interests: maintaining his control over the party and attracting enough voters to unseat Frelimo. With the partial exception of the 1999 coalition strategy (discussed above), Dhlakama has typically resolved dilemmas at this intersection in favor of maintaining central control. As is commonly pointed out by scholars of Mozambican politics, since the 1999 election Dhlakama has expelled from the party any potential challengers for leadership of Renamo, even as it cost the party support. First Raul Domingos, a personally popular Renamo leader who had led the delegation to the talks that resulted in the GPA and subsequently served

\textsuperscript{123} Importantly, the centralization to which I here refer is not the same as central discipline to which I refer below in reference to Frelimo. Frelimo is a centralized party in the sense that all party actions and decisions must be channeled through the central party structures (as revealed to me by the difficulty of securing interviews with all but the most senior members of the party). That centralized structure, however, successfully constrains and satisfies the ambitions of multiple powerful individuals at once. Frelimo is thus \textit{institutionally} centralized. Renamo, on the other hand, is functionally centralized with authority resting squarely with Dhlakama himself.

\textsuperscript{124} Interview, April 2013. The interview participant also noted that Renamo’s capacity for policy formation remains low, but that there is little evidence that they have an interest in changing that. Unlike other parties, “Renamo never ever asked [the NGO] for any kind of support that would improve their ability to discuss policy or influence public policy… All their training is to provide lower-level officials with the thinking of upper-level officials. Instead of broadening their horizons, it’s to make sure that everybody speaks with one voice inside the party. So it’s a different approach.”
as Renamo’s parliamentary leader, was kicked out of the party in 1999. Nearly a decade later, the immensely popular and politically effective mayor of Beira, Davis Simango, was dropped as Renamo’s candidate for that city in the 2008 local elections. Both Domingos and Simango have gone on to establish political parties that have drawn Renamo operatives and voters away from the party. Simango’s party (MDM) has at times posed a significant challenge to Renamo’s claim to be the primary opposition force in Mozambican politics.

Renamo’s weakness, then, is not just the loss of confidence among voters looking for an alternative to Frelimo. It is also appears to be the loss of confidence among potential leaders that their personal ambitions for advancement can be met within the confines of the party. With each exit from the party, Renamo’s ability to rally supporters and maintain loyalty among its own cadres becomes more and more limited. This only reinforces the difficulties that the party has in mobilizing voters. This is an organizational weakness that can be traced directly back to the type of organization built during the conflict.

Frelimo’s resurgence. Competition is not solely about the capabilities of the rebel group making the transition from war to elections. In electoral campaigns, as in military campaigns, strength is relative. An explanation for the high-to-low trajectory of competitiveness in Mozambican elections must thus take account of Frelimo’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as Renamo’s. Renamo’s core base of support lay among the large swaths of rural peasants and traditional leaders who were opposed to Frelimo’s Marxist-Leninist policies. Economic crisis rocked the country through the 1980s and the security situation deteriorated throughout the decade. The Frelimo government was so badly weakened that it came to rely on external troops from Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Malawi to help combat Renamo and protect key economic assets.
such as railways. By the time the GPA was signed, the state that Frelimo controlled was seriously weakened.

The Frelimo party that contested the 1994 and 1999 elections was thus one that oversaw a decimated state and an economy still being reconstructed. While donor-funded socioeconomic recovery did make significant progress in areas from education to rural development during this period, external control of projects fostered aid dependence and the country’s overall economic recovery has been described as “far from ideal” (D. Girod 2015, 74). Rural voters who had been forced to work communal farms or who had been relocated to villages during the conflict (guarded by government troops) constituted a ready base of opposition in the years after the war. More urban and educated elites were similarly interested in government change after seeing long-ruling parties in other African countries lose in newly-competitive elections. Frelimo was also politically vulnerable in these early years, even to a challenge from as relatively weak an organization as Renamo.

As reconstruction of the state and economy picked up, however, Frelimo’s ability to consolidate power strengthened. Economic growth in the country has lent some genuine support to the party, but reconstruction has had less transparent effects as well. Opposition to Frelimo has increasingly become seen as a criterion for disqualification from government jobs, adding pressure for public sector employees to stay within party ranks. At the local level, access to government services such as residency cards is often in the hands of local officials who are also Frelimo party officers. Particularly where education levels are low and memories of the old

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125 Interview with Lutero Simango, May 2013.
126 Much of this section relies on Manning (2010). Manning’s arguments were supported by evidence from both formal interviews and informal conversations during fieldwork. Additional discussion of Frelimo’s strategies to rebuild its dominance can be found in Girod (2015 79-84).
one-party system are strong, the distinction between these roles is often lost on citizens, who sometimes go to the local Frelimo official for access to services, even when he does not hold the relevant government post. As economic reconstruction proceeded and government resources and services began to expand, they became so many more threads tying the population to Frelimo in return for access to the state.

Reconstruction has not only benefited the party in its ability to secure votes, it has also assisted in keeping the leadership together and the party well-funded. Frelimo’s roots as a revolutionary party have led to a cohesive group of leaders committed to the party’s success (Levitsky and Way 2013). During interviews, Frelimo leaders’ descriptions of the party emphasized the continuity with this revolutionary past and framed it as a persisting source of legitimacy. The civil war itself also likely reinforced solidarity among the leadership and party cadres. The language of revolution and struggle used by Frelimo leaders even after independence provided the party and its supporters a sense of ongoing mission, as exemplified by the rallying cry “A luta continua!” (“the struggle continues!”). References to “enemies of the people” and ill-intentioned persons seeking to undermine Mozambique’s development were common in public statements by Frelimo leadership. Often referencing apartheid neighbors or economic forces blocking economic development, such rhetoric almost certainly had a great deal more impact in the context of armed insurgency. This “enemies at the gate” mentality may well have seemed more credible and had a greater effect in binding the loyalties of party leaders and supporters because of the civil war. This type of loyalty may have helped the party to retain its central discipline and organizational strength, reinforcing the cohesion established over the

127 Interview with a Member of the International Community, May 2013. The persistence of this practice suggests that Mozambicans know where real power in the country lies.
course of the struggle for independence. The experience of the internal conflict is thus appended to the experience of the anti-colonial struggle.

Yet this historical legitimacy was not enough to prevent serious challenges to Frelimo in the 1994 and 1999 elections, and it does not provide material resources to keep the party functioning. The reconstruction process has done this instead. In addition to the material benefits of the liberalization process, which often privatized state assets into the hands of party members, senior Frelimo members often receive invitations to sit on corporate boards of directors and other opportunities for personal enrichment.128 As Mozambique’s natural resources come online, firms in the extractive and related industries (in particular) recognize the value of having access to well-connected intermediaries. Frelimo members also disproportionately benefit from licensing and financing opportunities for independent business ventures. These material benefits to Frelimo elites thus simultaneously reinforce loyalty to the party and generate a pool of wealthy members who can be called upon to help finance the party’s activities. The end result is a party that has enough organizational discipline and cohesion among its leaders to avoid overt factionalism and enough resources to keep both cadres and voters on board. The former likely helped the party survive during periods of electoral competition, while the latter has been essential to its reassertion of political dominance.

Alternative Explanations

Consistent with the alternative explanations laid out in Chapter 2, the pattern of electoral competition in post-conflict Mozambique may not be due to the effects of the conflict on

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128 See Pitcher (2002) and Manning (2010) for a more extensive discussion.
capabilities, but instead to the action of the international community or to factors unrelated to the conflict itself. In the case of Mozambique, this pattern might be due to the robust involvement of the international community early in the post-conflict period or historical patterns of mobilization.\footnote{A third possible alternative explanation in the case of Mozambique has to do with the ideological nature of the civil war. Fought along the lines of the Cold War, it is possible that the competitiveness of early elections was because of a widespread acceptance of democracy due either to the relative success of Renamo or to the collapse of the Soviet Union and seeming liberal zeitgeist more broadly. The ideological nature of the conflict might have primed the country in some way for a higher quality democratic experiment in its wake. Despite the plausibility of such an argument, three points limit the likelihood of this explanation. First, there is little evidence that party elites and operatives embraced a robust notion of democracy after the conflict. Even the 1994 and 1999 elections were rife with accusations of foul play. Second, it is unlikely that such a commitment exists among the population more generally. An Afrobarometer survey conducted between 2011 and 2013 found that only 63% of Mozambicans believe that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, well below the Africa-wide average of 71\% (Bratton and Houessou 2014, 5). Only 25\% of Mozambicans surveyed both supported democracy and rejected all forms of authoritarianism included in the survey (Bratton and Houessou 2014, 8). Put together, these findings indicate that less than two-thirds of Mozambicans prefer democracy to other forms of government and of these more than half are still open to at least one form of non-democratic rule. This suggests that competition does not necessarily come from a popular commitment to democracy. Third, and most simply, an argument rooted in the ideological nature of the conflict does not offer an explanation for why competition declined over time. Taken together, these three points suggest that ideology is an insufficient explanation for the competitiveness of post-conflict elections.} An analysis of these two factors suggests that they certainly influence the observed outcomes, they cannot on their own explain the way in which political competition developed over time in Mozambique. Instead, they matter more in the way that they contribute to the central argument of this chapter: elections in Mozambique were competitive early on and subsequently dominated by Frelimo because of the way that the civil war altered the balance of convertible capabilities between Renamo and Frelimo.

**Historical mobilization patterns.** One argument for the early competitiveness of post-conflict elections is that these elections reflect the historical weakness of Frelimo in certain regions of the country. From its earliest years, Frelimo has faced accusations that its leadership is dominated by southerners and that it systematically excludes most people from the center and north of the country from positions of real power. This led to numerous episodes of in-fighting.
during the struggle for independence and is often presented as an explanation for Renamo’s ability to recruit supporters during the early years of the war. If this explanation is correct, then the war itself had no real effect on post-conflict outcomes. Instead, the high level of competition in 1994 and 1999 would be the result of historical trends that pre-dated the war. Once Frelimo permitted multiparty elections, they were bound to be competitive, regardless of the processes and outcomes of the conflict. The drop in competition in the 2004 and 2009 elections would thus be the result of a successful co-option or marginalization of these regions.

This explanation is powerful insofar as several southern provinces clearly remain Frelimo’s stronghold. Renamo did focus its recruiting efforts in and benefit from constituencies who were disgruntled with various facets of Frelimo’s Marxist-Leninist agenda. The geography of historical support for Frelimo, however, cannot explain the pattern of competition in the post-conflict period. Just as the previous section argued that competition cannot be explained solely in terms of Renamo’s strengths and weaknesses as a party, it also cannot be explained solely with reference to Frelimo’s.

While Renamo has unquestionably benefited from widespread discontent with Frelimo’s policies over time, an opposition party as strong as Renamo likely would not have come into existence without the conflict. To say that the competitiveness of the 1994 and 1999 elections was due to Frelimo’s historical weakness in the center and north of the country, or its policies (unrelated to conflict) that were seen as coercively modernizing by a rural population uninterested in change, is to suggest that outcomes would have looked roughly similar in 1994 and 1999 even if the war had not happened. Yet it is the war itself that provided any opposition actor with the capacity to seriously challenge Frelimo. Renamo would not have risen to the level
that it did (or perhaps have existed at all) without the external support and domestic clout that it could accumulate only by framing itself as an armed resistance. Its own limitations put a ceiling on its success, but the ceiling would have been much lower if the organization had had different roots. Renamo built a nearly nation-wide network of operations during the conflict, something that no other opposition party has been able to do. This has enabled it to serve as a focal point for opposition in ways that other parties cannot. Evidence presented in the final section of this chapter revisits sub-national patterns of competition and finds further support for the argument that pre-conflict patterns of support and opposition to Frelimo do not alone explain post-conflict election outcomes.

International involvement. As in many other cases, the international community played a large role in facilitating the transition from civil war to multiparty elections in Mozambique. Accordingly, a second alternative explanation would suggest that the competitiveness the 1994 and 1999 elections was due to the support of the international community for Renamo as a party and its oversight of the electoral process as a whole. The increasing dominance of Frelimo over time would thus be linked to the declining ability (or interest) of the international community in fostering democracy in Mozambique.

There is certainly reason to take this alternative explanation seriously. As discussed above, the international trust fund that provided cash to Renamo (and other opposition parties) in advance of the 1994 election was a crucial resource for facilitating the transition.\textsuperscript{130} The United Nations largely ran the 1994 elections and several international NGOs participated actively in assisting political parties and elected officials in developing their capabilities and improving

\textsuperscript{130} See Manning (2002) for greater discussion.
effectiveness throughout the 1990s. Foreign aid has funded a substantial portion of the national government’s budget since the end of the war, which has subsequently enabled Frelimo to build both patronage and performance legitimacy. Moreover, in recent years, willingness to put pressure on Frelimo may have declined as the economy has recovered and more of Mozambique’s natural resources have been developed. As one member of the international community put it, there is a sense among some donors (especially after the 2009 election) that they had to take a stand on democracy issues “on principle,” but that it was also necessary to keep in mind that “this is a potential partner in the economic sector.”\textsuperscript{131} The implication was clear: international donors’ interests in promoting democratic competition in Mozambique is constrained by the economic interests in the country as the economy grows.

While this alternative explanation cannot be wholly discounted, it does not serve as a substitute for the main argument presented in this chapter for several reasons. First, although Dhlakama was able to raise funds for the 1999 election from international donors (D. Girod 2015, 83), multiple interview participants from Renamo insisted that assistance from the international community had been relatively limited after 1994. They instead focused on disparities in access to funds from the state itself and from Mozambican donors. Second, many of the organizations that provide assistance to political parties in Mozambique make a point of including all major parties in their activities. The inclusion of Frelimo suggests that these organizations, by themselves, cannot be credited with leveling the playing field. Finally, the increasingly tilted playing field on which Mozambican elections are held has not gone unnoticed by influential members of the international community. Prominent election observer missions

\textsuperscript{131} Interview, May 2013.
from the European Union and the Carter Center have highlighted significant concerns over recent elections. While these concerns have not led to widespread sanctioning of the Frelimo government, there is little reason to think that such sanctioning would have been more likely if similar assessments of the 1994 and 1999 elections had been issued, particularly given that significant problems of transparency were identified even before 2004.

Put simply, the main alternative examinations addressed in the dissertation—that the quality of post-conflict democratization is determined primarily by actions of the international community or by factors exogenous to conflict—do not provide an adequate explanation for the qualitative findings in Mozambique. Both the influence of the international community and pre-conflict patterns of political support are part of the story in this case, but their influence is channeled through the conflict processes and legacies discussed above. The qualitative evidence from Mozambique indicates that post-conflict electoral competition was driven by the civil war’s legacies for the organizational and mobilization abilities of both Renamo and Frelimo. Early post-conflict elections were competitive because the war contributed to a significant proportion of the population who opposed Frelimo and viewed Renamo as the best chance for turnover. International influence and historical patterns of mobilization reinforced but did not fundamentally drive this process. After 1999, Frelimo re-established its dominance because it enjoyed a strongly institutionalized political organization, something that Renamo failed to develop during the conflict and could not develop later. An examination of sub-national patterns of competition and dominance provides additional evidence for this finding.
The Legacy of Violence and the Geography of Dominance

The qualitative evidence suggests that a crucial factor for Mozambique’s declining electoral competition since 1999 has been the weakness of Renamo as a political organization, as compared with Frelimo, and the former’s inability to maintain close ties with its voters. Both of these issues are found to be closely tied to legacies of the conflict itself. Turning to a comparison of election returns at the sub-national level further supports this interpretation, as well as the overall focus on conflict’s implications for party organizations, rather than voter preferences. Renamo’s near-win in 1999 indicates that voters were available to be mobilized by the party during that period, but that it has not been successful in doing this since 1999. Do these results indicate that there are large numbers of swing voters in Mozambique who sided with Renamo in 1999 and favored Frelimo thereafter? Or do they instead suggest that Renamo has simply failed to mobilize its share of a highly-polarized electorate? An examination of the sub-national patterns of election returns indicates that the latter is the more likely explanation and that it is rooted in a legacy of polarization that occurred during the civil war.

An analysis of returns from Mozambique’s elections at the district level shows that areas with higher levels of violence during the civil war had fewer swing voters in 1999 than other districts. Additionally, although turnout was generally quite high in 1999, in 2004 it declined precipitously, with some of the biggest drops in the districts whose constituents had turned out in high numbers and favored Renamo in 1999. This suggests that conflict had a polarizing effect on the electorate and supports the conclusion that Renamo’s declining electoral fortunes are closely linked to the perception that it cannot realistically be expected to unseat Frelimo. The political legacy of civil war for civilians is not that it creates an electorate more open to playing
one side off the other. Instead, the legacy of civil war is that it polarizes populations who then become voters. Whether or not these voters turn out to the polls and whether this produces competitive elections depends not only on the distribution of preferences among the population, but also on the organizational capacity of former combatants or other parties to mobilize them.

*Sub-national Patterns of Electoral Competition*

Election results in Mozambique are typically discussed at the provincial or regional level, with commentators focusing on Frelimo’s dominance in the south, compared with Renamo’s dominance in the center and north of the country. A closer examination of election returns, however, shows that there is significant variation *within* provinces in the majority of the country. Figure 5.1 shows the district-level variation in Chissano’s vote share in the highly competitive 1999 election. As can be seen from these simple box plots, Frelimo’s dominance is not absolute, even in many provinces where the party is generally considered to be favored.

While there are unquestionably overall differences between provinces such as Sofala and Maputo Province, there is also clear variation in support for Frelimo within almost every province. Differences in region alone cannot explain why Chissano took nearly every vote in some districts in Cabo Delgado but failed to obtain even a majority in others. While Figure 5.1 shows that many districts were highly polarized in favor of either Frelimo or Renamo, it also shows that

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132 In all of the figures and regressions that follow, Maputo City is excluded. With the exception of election returns, much of the data that is of interest is not available at the district/ward level for Maputo. Rather than treat the entire capital as one district, it is simply removed from the sample. Running the regressions with Maputo included does not change any of the substantive findings.

133 The obvious exception to this is Gaza Province, although Frelimo’s dominance is also quite clear in Maputo Province. The latter is fairly unsurprising given the concentration of state operations in the region. The extreme dominance in Gaza is typically explained by the fact that much of Frelimo’s original leadership hailed from the province and residents there are inclined to retain close ties and loyalty to the party on the basis of such networks, even when their policy preferences might diverge (Hall and Young 1997, 183).
many districts were decided by a much narrower margin and that such districts were distributed across many different provinces.\footnote{Data is from the 1999 election results published by STAE (2002).}

**Figure 5.1 Chissano’s District-Level Vote Share by Province, 1999 Presidential Election**

Data is from the 1999 election results published by STAE (2002).

We also see wide variation in the level of electoral volatility across districts. Volatility, or the rate of net change across parties from one election to another, offers us a rough means of looking at the degree to which voters are loyal to their once-preferred parties over time. A high level of volatility would indicate that parties do not have stable voting bases, while lower levels suggest that voters are consistent in their choices and swing voters are relatively rare. As shown

\footnote{By polarization, I mean the degree to which a district votes overwhelmingly in favor of one party or another. This is distinct from polarization as discussed in other contexts (particularly in American politics), which refers more specifically to the distance between actors’ policy preferences. A district with a narrow margin of victory would not be considered polarized in the sense used here, but might or might not be polarized in this other sense, depending on whether the district featured a large number of moderates who happen to split their votes or simply roughly equal numbers of committed partisans with opposed policy preferences.}

171
in Figure 5.2, the geographic variation in election returns is not limited to the level of polarization across districts. Although volatility between the 1994 and 1999 elections did tend to be fairly low in general with an average of 11.3% of the vote changing parties in any given district, there is a notable range of volatility among electoral districts. As with the vote margins shown in Figure 5.1, variation in electoral volatility cannot be explained purely along provincial or regional lines. Another explanation for the presence and absence of swings in voter support is needed.

Volatility is calculated here using the standard formula $V_t = \frac{1}{2} \left( \sum \left| P_i t - P_{i,t-1} \right| \right)$, where $P_{i,t}$ is the presidential vote share of Party $i$ at election time $t$ and $P_{i,t-1}$ is that party’s presidential vote share in the previous election (Przeworski 1975). While there were 12 presidential candidates in 1994 and only two (Chissano and Dhlakama) in 1999, the volatility cannot be accounted for simply by the disappearance of candidates from the ballot. Minor candidates took a relatively low proportion of the vote in 1994, totaling just under 13% altogether. Because Renamo ran as part of a coalition in 1999, it is appropriate to add the percentages attributed to any 1994 candidates whose parties would later join that coalition (a total of 6.03% of the vote) to Dhlakama’s 1994 vote share when calculating volatility. While some might object to this approach since none of the other presidential candidates ran in 1999, the precise method of calculation for volatility is not driving the results of the regression analysis that follows. Replacing the formal calculation of volatility with a simple measure of the change in Chissano’s vote share from 1994 to 1999 does not change the substantive results in the regression models discussed below.
Conflict Violence and Electoral Outcomes

If simple regional differences are not enough to explain variation in election results in Mozambique, we must look elsewhere for an explanation. Legacies of the civil war loom large in the country’s post-conflict politics. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the conflict offered the first real opportunity for opposition to Frelimo to emerge and organize, and modes of organization established during the war persisted as Renamo sought to gain via elections the victory that it could not win by arms. Evidence from interviews suggested that Renamo’s early success was built not upon support for Renamo itself, but rather upon opposition to Frelimo. This suggests that the polarization hypothesis discussed in Chapter 2 may hold more weight than the good citizen hypothesis, at least in the Mozambican case.
Looking at the relationship between conflict violence and subsequent election outcomes provides further support for this hypothesis. If the good citizen hypothesis were correct, we would expect to see high levels of violence during the civil war associated with higher levels of electoral competition in the form of narrow margins of victory and greater volatility between elections. Instead, as Figure 5.3 indicates, we see the opposite. Districts with the highest levels of violence during the war tended to have the highest margins of victory and the lower volatility in the 1999 election. Taken together, this suggests that exposure to violence does not produce the swing voters that we might expect from the good citizen hypothesis. Instead, violence seems to polarize civilians for or against Frelimo.

**Figure 5.3 1999 Margin of Victory and Electoral Volatility by District-level Violence**

While Figure 5.3 suggests a correlation between violence and voter polarization, regression analysis can provide stronger evidence for a causal relationship. It is possible that violence during the civil war is associated with other variables that are the true drivers of polarization in post-conflict elections. As a further test of the relationship, a series of ordinary
least squares (OLS) models examine whether exposure to violence does indeed promote polarization in post-conflict elections.

There are two dependent variables in the models. The first, *Margin of Victory*, measures the difference in the vote shares of the top two presidential vote-getters in each district. Separate models are run for the 1994 and 1999 elections. In each election, the margin ranged from less than 1% of the vote in the closest districts to 95% in the clearest strongholds, with a mean of about 46%. The measure thus gives us another way to identify which were the most competitive districts in each election. The second dependent variable, *Volatility*, is the calculation of electoral volatility presented in Figure 5.2 above. This measures the net change in vote shares among parties between elections, calculated for the 1999 and 2004 elections. The mean district volatility was .11 in 1999 and .16 in 2004.

The key independent variable in all models is *District Violence*, which is a simple count variable of the number of violent events reported in a district during the period of the civil war. This data is taken from Domingues’ dataset on violence during the Mozambican civil war (Domingues 2011, Domingues and Barre 2013). The Domingues data distinguishes between various forms of combatant activity during the conflict, but specifically notes whether an event was violent or not. For purposes of this enquiry, the primary events of interest were those that Domingues codes as having involved violence, including battles, one-sided violence, and violent...
The data illustrate the widespread nature of violence during the conflict, with an average of 3.7 events per district and nearly two-thirds of districts (n=93) experiencing at least one violent event.

The benefit of a statistical approach to examining the effect of violence on subsequent electoral outcomes is that it allows us to address some of the shortcomings of drawing inferences from a simple correlation. One potential confounding factor is the question of where violence occurred during the civil war. It has been well-recorded by qualitative scholars that Renamo particularly targeted pro-Frelimo areas with its highest levels of violence, while it eventually refrained from harsh tactics after establishing control in more neutral or friendly areas (Hall and Young 1997, 168-169). If this is the case, then the most violent districts would be those in which historical support for Frelimo was already very high. Highly polarized election results would thus be driven by pre-conflict patterns of support, rather than by any effect of violence itself. To address this issue, the final models include a dichotomous variable 1974 Frelimo Control. This indicates whether or not a district is located within a province that had significant territory controlled by Frelimo during the anti-colonial struggle (Davidson 1984, 781).

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138 A major downside to the data is that not all events have location information at the district level. Nearly two-thirds of the events in the dataset are identified only at the provincial level or are coded as having taken place outside of the borders of Mozambique. The possibility that the roughly one-third of observations that do have information on district location are not a random sample of the observations does potentially introduce bias into the model’s estimations. Attempts to address this possibility are discussed via the control variables.

139 This coding is based on the map of Frelimo’s territorial control in late 1974 provided in Davidson’s discussion of the Mozambican war for independence. The map is not detailed enough to allow for district-level coding. Given that territorial control shifts over the course of a conflict, this seeming-imprecision may actually be more appropriate where district-level data is not available for the entirety of the conflict. Another issue with this approach is that territorial control is not the only measure of historical support for Frelimo. As noted earlier in the chapter, the majority of Frelimo’s leadership came from Gaza Province, which left it a remarkably high level of support in that region. Adding Gaza to the set of provinces in which we might expect historical support for Frelimo actually strengthens the findings related to conflict violence and electoral polarization.
The final models also control for the percentage of the population in a district that lived in rural areas in 1997 (Instituto Nacional de Estatística 2005). This addresses two potential confounding issues. First, violence during conflict may simply be easier to perpetrate in rural areas than urban areas. If rural areas are generally more inclined towards polarization favoring one party or another, then the relationship between violence and such outcomes would be spurious. For example, rural areas may be more prone to capture by the patronage systems of one party or another than urban areas in which options for party-switching may be higher. The second issue that this helps to address is one of possible bias in the data itself. The violence data rely in large part on media sources and lack fine-grained location information for many events.\(^\text{140}\) Reliance on media sources risks introduction of bias in terms of both the likelihood that an event will be reported and the content covering it (Woolley 2000, Earl, et al. 2004). This is particularly concerning given that violent events that lack district information drop out of the dataset used in this analysis. In both cases, violent events in more rural areas are likely to be under-represented in the data.\(^\text{141}\) The variable \textit{Percent Rural} helps to address this issue.

The final models also include a final variable, \textit{Child Mortality}, taken from the second general census conducted in 1997 (Instituto Nacional de Estatística 2005). This indicates the number of deaths of children under 5 years old per thousand live births and is a means of

\(^{140}\) Wherever possible, I used the location information available in the data to assign events to a district. Where only the province was given, however, this was not possible.

\(^{141}\) Another possible source of bias in the data comes from the selection effect of deliberate choices in media coverage rather than the simple availability of information. Mozambican media sources—those most likely to have the best access to information about events during the conflict—were tightly regulated by the Frelimo government during the war. They were thus far more likely to report violent events perpetrated by Renamo than those by state security forces. Fortunately, the data allow us to distinguish between one-sided violence and events considered battles, which are less likely to be underreported. Limiting the main independent variable to the number of battles recorded in a district does not change the main findings with regards to margin of victory, though it does reduce the statistical significance of the findings on volatility below conventional levels.
approximating the level of economic development in a district. It may be that poorer voters are more dependent on government performance and thus more willing to serve as the swing voters that (in theory) hold incumbents accountable.

The results in Table 5.2 show that the observed relationship between conflict violence and polarization largely holds, even when we account for other potentially confounding factors. The only model specification in which violent events are not statistically significant is Model 2, reflecting the results for the 1994 election with the control variables included. This should not, however detract greatly from the finding that violence increases the margin of victory. Of all of the specifications in Table 5.2, Model 2 is the least reliable because data for two of the key control variables (*Child Mortality* and *Percent Rural*) post-date the election.¹⁴²

Figure 5.4 provides a sense of the effects of violence on the margin of victory in the 1999 election, based on Model 4. For each additional violent event recorded as occurring in a district during the civil war, the margin of victory in the 1999 election increased by approximately 1.12%, all else being equal. A district that experienced no violent events during the conflict could thus be predicted to have a margin of victory of roughly 43.6% (just below the country-wide average), while a district experiencing 15 violent events would have a margin closer to 60.5%. While neither district might be considered “competitive” by many standards, the latter is clearly more secure for the locally dominant party.

¹⁴² Data for these measures was not available prior to 1997, presumably due to the difficulties of collecting nation-wide data in a context of widespread insecurity.
### Table 5.2 District-Level Margin of Victory for Top Presidential Candidate (OLS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) mov94</th>
<th>(2) mov94</th>
<th>(3) mov99</th>
<th>(4) mov99</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Violence</td>
<td>0.0102**</td>
<td>0.00314</td>
<td>0.0159***</td>
<td>0.0112***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00505)</td>
<td>(0.00471)</td>
<td>(0.00433)</td>
<td>(0.00429)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Mortality</td>
<td>-0.00161***</td>
<td>-0.00102***</td>
<td>0.0159***</td>
<td>0.0112***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000275)</td>
<td>(0.000250)</td>
<td>(0.000275)</td>
<td>(0.000250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Rural</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.161**</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.161**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0852)</td>
<td>(0.0775)</td>
<td>(0.0852)</td>
<td>(0.0775)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974 Frelimo Control</td>
<td>-0.0623</td>
<td>-0.0397</td>
<td>-0.0623</td>
<td>-0.0397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0472)</td>
<td>(0.0429)</td>
<td>(0.0472)</td>
<td>(0.0429)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.417***</td>
<td>0.799***</td>
<td>0.399***</td>
<td>0.575***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0318)</td>
<td>(0.0910)</td>
<td>(0.0273)</td>
<td>(0.0828)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Observations     | 141        | 141        | 141        | 141        |
| R-squared        | 0.029      | 0.237      | 0.089      | 0.197      |

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Estimates are produced by OLS models using Margin of Victory as the dependent variable for district-level election returns in the 1994 and 1999 presidential elections.

### Figure 5.4 Predicted Margin of Victory by District Violence

Predictions are based on Model 4 in Table 5.2. The variable 1974 Frelimo Control is set to zero and all other controls are set to their means. The shaded area represents a 95% confidence interval.
Table 5.3 shows the results for models of electoral volatility as the outcome. Violence during the civil war does indeed decrease volatility between elections for both the 1994-1999 period and the 1999-2004 period. Though the effect is not large, it is statistically significant and worth noting. Figure 5.5 shows that civil war violence can have important effects on volatility at the margins. A district with average levels of child mortality and urbanization that did not have historical control by Frelimo but experienced twenty violent events during the war had roughly half the volatility in 1999 as an identical district that recorded no violent events. In 2004, the effects were even greater. All else being equal, the experience of violence appears to reduce the willingness of voters to change their support from one party to another.\textsuperscript{143}

Taken together, the results support the notion that violence during war is essentially polarizing. Rather than creating a civilian population with no allegiances, the sub-national evidence suggests that conflict leaves civilians with either very strong allegiances or very strong resentments. This leads to communities voting overwhelmingly against those perceived as responsible for past wrongs, with less competitive elections and fewer swing voters. Electoral competition at the national level thus comes from swing votes from areas not affected by conflict

\textsuperscript{143} There are some potentially confounding factors that could not be controlled for in the models in Table 5.3. Most significant among these is the issue of displaced persons and migration. The interpretation of the results presented proceeds as if voters in a given district in 1999 and 2004 were exposed primarily to the violence that occurred in that particular district during the conflict. The conflict in Mozambique resulted in an estimated 5 million internally displaced persons and refugees, so this assumption may not be entirely accurate. This should not prove fatal to the findings, however. Other studies have used rates of displacement themselves as a partial indicator of exposure to violence (Bellows and Miguel 2009). Districts that experienced high levels of violence can be thought of as most likely to have produced large numbers of displaced persons. If some of these persons were not exposed to the full measure of conflict violence due to their temporary relocation and thus more willing to act as swing voters, this would cut against the findings. Similarly, if these displaced persons elected to remain in “quieter” areas after the conflict rather than return to their district of origin, this would cut against the findings. A negative and statistically significant effect is observed despite these potential issues, lending greater credence to the finding.
and the overall balance of civilians who perceive their exposure to violence to be the result of one combatant or another. In Mozambique, the competitiveness of the 1999 election appears to follow this pattern.

### Table 5.3 District-Level Volatility for Presidential Elections (OLS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(5) volatility99</th>
<th>(6) volatility99</th>
<th>(7) volatility04</th>
<th>(8) volatility04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Violence</td>
<td>-0.00306**</td>
<td>-0.00218*</td>
<td>-0.00515***</td>
<td>-0.00341*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00129)</td>
<td>(0.00126)</td>
<td>(0.00195)</td>
<td>(0.00175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Mortality</td>
<td>0.000182**</td>
<td>7.27e-05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.36e-05)</td>
<td>(0.000102)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Rural</td>
<td>0.0499**</td>
<td>0.102***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0228)</td>
<td>(0.0317)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974 Frelimo Control</td>
<td>0.0216*</td>
<td>0.100***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0126)</td>
<td>(0.0176)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.125***</td>
<td>0.0212</td>
<td>0.178***</td>
<td>0.0184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00812)</td>
<td>(0.0244)</td>
<td>(0.0123)</td>
<td>(0.0338)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors in parentheses

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

*Estimates are produced by OLS models using Volatility as the dependent variable for district-level election returns between the 1994 and 1999 and 1999 and 2004 presidential elections.*
Predictions are based on Model 6 in Table 5.3. The variable 1974 Frelimo Control is set to zero and all other controls are set to their means. The shaded area represents a 90% confidence interval.

If the legacy of conflict violence is to polarize populations and fix their preferences (or at least their animosities), how is it that Mozambique experienced such a reversal in the national political picture? Why were elections after 1999 so dominated by Frelimo? The qualitative examination of the case provided anecdotal evidence that voters who supported Renamo in 1994 and 1999 did so primarily out of a desire to see Frelimo displaced. Once it became clear that Renamo could not accomplish this, these voters simply stayed home on subsequent election days. Lacking a strong political organization or deep appeal of its own, Renamo was unable to mobilize these would-be voters after 1999.

An examination of the 2004 election data lends further support to this explanation. As noted earlier, turnout in 2004 was almost universally lower than it had been in previous
elections. However, the extent of the drop in turnout varied greatly across districts, with the largest drop-offs being concentrated in those areas that had high turnout and favored Dhlakama in the previous election. Figure 5.6 shows the basic relationship between presidential election turnout in 1999 and turnout in 2004. We see a strong positive relationship between 1999 turnout and 2004 turnout in districts won by Chissano in 1999. This indicates that Frelimo was relatively consistent in its ability to mobilize supporters in some voters, despite the overall drop in turnout. For districts won by Dhlakama in 1999, however, the relationship is much weaker and turnout appears to have dropped greatly in areas that had previously seen high rates of voter participation. This suggests that the decline in turnout between 1999 and 2004 is indeed somehow related to Renamo’s capabilities.

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144 Turnout here is calculated as votes cast as a percentage of registered voters in a district. One district, Chókwê, is excluded from the dataset for purposes of turnout analysis because its 1999 turnout of 159% makes it an extreme outlier. No other districts reported over 100% turnout in the final results reported by STAE for 1999 or 2004.
The regression results in Table 5.4 lend further support to the idea that increasing electoral dominance by Frelimo was in significant part driven by disillusionment among voters who had previously supported Renamo as the most viable alternative. Models 9 and 10 use OLS regression to examine district-level changes in voter turnout between the 1999 and 2004 elections. The models use an interaction between the margin of victory and the presidential candidate who received the most votes in 1999 to identify the types of districts with the greatest drop in turnout in 2004. Model 10 controls for the same factors as prior models in this chapter, as well as the level of turnout in 1999.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(9) Turnout Change 1999-2004</th>
<th>(10) Turnout Change 1999-2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhlakama 1999</td>
<td>-0.0119</td>
<td>0.0663*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0413)</td>
<td>(0.0357)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margin of Victory 1999</td>
<td>0.0902*</td>
<td>0.215***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0486)</td>
<td>(0.0498)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhlakama 1999*</td>
<td>0.00941</td>
<td>-0.223***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0796)</td>
<td>(0.0778)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnout 1999</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.684***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Rural</td>
<td>0.0248</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0316)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Mortality</td>
<td>-0.000168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000119)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974 Frelimo Control</td>
<td>0.115***</td>
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<td>(0.0196)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0280)</td>
<td>(0.0762)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
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<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.385</td>
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</table>

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Estimates are produced by OLS models using Volatility as the dependent variable for district-level changes in voter turnout 1999 and 2004 presidential elections.
Figure 5.7 Change in Turnout between 1999 and 2004 by 1999 District Winner

Predictions are based on Model 10 in Table 5.4. The variable 1974 Frelimo Control is set to zero and all other controls are set to their means. The shaded area represents a 95% confidence interval.

Figure 5.7 shows the predicted change in turnout between 1999 and 2004 based on the margin of victory in a district in 1999 and the candidate who won the most votes in that district. Two things from this figure are particularly striking. First, all else equal, the largest declines in turnout between 1999 and 2004 occurred in those districts narrowly won by Chissano in 1999, though there is overlap in the confidence intervals between Chissano- and Dhlakama-favoring districts at this level of competition. This provides tentative support for an argument that Renamo voters disappointed with the 1999 election outcome and the party’s reaction to it simply decided to stay home on election day in 2004. Renamo voters in these closely-contested districts may well have seen their efforts in 1999 as wasted and concluded that if Renamo could not cross the finish line to victory then, it likely never would. Second, among stronghold districts (i.e., those with high margins of victory for either Chissano or Dhlakama), turnout dropped at
consistently higher rates among Renamo strongholds. This again supports an explanation that Renamo’s inability to retain and mobilize a loyal voter base is a key component of Frelimo’s return to dominance after the 1999 election.\textsuperscript{145} Frelimo’s superior organizational capacity, likely bolstered by a base whose commitment to the party (or at least animosity towards Renamo) was reinforced by its exposure to wartime violence, enabled it to maintain relatively high levels of turnout in its strongholds.

Conclusion

Mozambique’s political trajectory since 1992 has presented a series of puzzles for observers. A rebel group best known for mass atrocities and foreign sponsorship became a political party capable of winning enough votes to nearly unseat an incumbent party of 24 years. A political system with this high a level of electoral competition then reverted to political dominance by the incumbent within just two election cycles. Twenty years after making peace and participating in normalized politics, former rebels returned to violent tactics to pursue their objectives and actually \textit{gained} in popularity.

Using both qualitative and quantitative evidence, we can see how this pattern of post-conflict political competition was launched and shaped by features of the civil war itself. Renamo’s early success as a political opposition was rooted in its ability to present itself as a viable alternative to a then-unpopular Frelimo. Having turned increasingly to reliance on

\textsuperscript{145} The combination of dropping turnout in both Renamo strongholds and Frelimo-favoring competitive districts also helps to alleviate concerns that changes in turnout were primarily driven by electoral manipulation. It is unlikely that successful manipulation occurred in both types of districts. Moreover, one of the most common tactics reported for electoral manipulation is the spoiling of ballots cast for Renamo by polling station counting officers. Because turnout is calculated based on ballots cast, rather than valid ballots cast, this tactic should not affect the results.
domestic support during the conflict and a population increasingly alienated by Frelimo’s economic and security policies, Renamo enjoyed a relatively high level of mobilization capacity in the transition period. Without a durable and effective political organization, however, this capacity was fragile. Voters’ experience of violence during the war may have left them with loyalties or animosities that reduced their propensity for swing voting, but Renamo never developed the organizational capacity to convert opposition to Frelimo into sustained mobilization at the ballot box. When the party’s credibility as a force capable of defeating Frelimo was called into question, would-be supporters simply stayed home. With a strong organizational unity forged during the independence struggle and strengthened by credible narratives of “enemies at the gate” during the civil war, Frelimo was able to ride out the early period of competition and re-establish its political dominance in subsequent periods as the country recovered from the social and economic toll of the war.
CHAPTER 6: ELECTORAL COMPETITION IN SIERRA LEONE

“The reason for that [the war] was that most of the young men and women were suffering... The good effect of the war is that we will fight for our rights now because we are a democracy now.”
-Civil Defense Force Ex-Combatant

“The Kamajors disarmed after the war but they did not demobilise and some former commanders wield more influence than do local chiefs.”
-NGO Leader

The cross-national analysis presented in Chapter 4 suggests that rebel groups’ ability to organize and mobilize popular support has important, but complex, effects on post-conflict electoral competition. Sierra Leone presents a very different, but difficult, test for the theory laid out in Chapter 2. In Sierra Leone, the main rebel group failed to make the transition from insurgent organization to viable political party, largely because it lacked the kinds of organizational and mobilization capabilities necessary for success in electoral competition. With its primary military rival unable to successfully organize as a political force, the incumbent Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) might thus have been expected to establish political dominance in the post-conflict period. Yet after a resounding victory in the 2002 national elections, the incumbent SLPP lost control over the presidency and parliament in 2007 to a resurgent All People’s Congress (APC), the party that had held power as a single party regime in the decades before the war. With so little viable opposition in sight in 2002, how is it that the SLPP was not able to retain power in 2007? The theory would suggest that high levels of electoral competition should be the result of a dispersion of political resources during conflict, which were then mobilized by multiple actors (ideally just two) in post-conflict campaigns.

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146 Quoted in Peters (201129).
147 Quoted in IRIN (2007).
Sierra Leone presents a hard case of the theory insofar as the conflict left a seemingly unipolar distribution of convertible assets concentrated in the hands of the SLPP. With a highly competitive election and electoral turnover occurring just 5 years after the war’s official end, Sierra Leone appears to be a case that is “off the regression line” relative to the findings in Chapter 4. Accordingly, it presents an opportunity for more closely examining and potentially modifying the theory (Lieberman 2005).

A closer analysis of the case presents support for the core theory that conflict modifies the distribution of assets that drive post-conflict political competition, but suggests that it is necessary to expand our notion of the relevant actors beyond the primary combatants in place at the end of conflict. The war did not leave the insurgent Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with either organizational or mobilization capabilities. Yet the RUF was not the only potential opponent for the SLPP. The incumbent party survived the war in control of an extremely weak state and with a leadership that was vulnerable to splits. At the same time, the APC was able to rebuild its organization and popular support by mobilizing resources and constituencies made available or salient by the conflict itself. This resulted in an extremely close election in 2007 that saw the party credited with ending the war lose its place to the party whose rule was blamed for causing it.

**Conflict Background: State Collapse to Peaceful Turnover**

In late March 1991, insurgents from the RUF crossed the border from Liberia into Sierra Leone’s Kailahun District, sparking a brutal civil war that would last more than a decade and claim the lives of an estimated 50,000 people in a country geographically smaller than the
American state of South Carolina. The RUF insurgency was launched against an APC government that had, by that point, come to preside over an extremely weak state and an economy whose main resources were largely funneled into the private hands of a small portion of the population.\(^{148}\) The weakness of the Sierra Leonean army, combined with extensive early support for the RUF from Liberia’s Charles Taylor, led to a rapid escalation of the conflict in the eastern regions on the country.\(^{149}\) Abuse of civilians became a hallmark of the conflict, perpetrated by both RUF and government soldiers. The term “sobels” was coined to describe units that acted as soldiers by day but rebels by night and there is evidence that government and RUF forces eventually colluded to maximize their respective opportunities for predation (Keen 2005, 107-131). As discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, the conflict led a group of junior officers to stage a coup d’état in 1992 that replaced the APC government with the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), which would hold onto power until pressure for democratization mounted and elections were held in 1996.

The government elected at that time, led by the SLPP’s Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, attempted to bring peace to the country by signing the Abijan Peace Accord with the RUF in November 1996. The agreement rapidly collapsed, however, and was rendered moot when a second coup in 1997 forced the Kabbah government into exile and installed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) as government. Led by 37-year-old Major Johnny Paul Koroma, the AFRC declared its own peace with the RUF and invited the rebel organization to join a unity

\(^{148}\) For a more extended discussion of the weakness of the Sierra Leonean state, and the political strategies of APC Presidents Siaka Stevens and Joseph Momoh, see Reno (1998113-125). For a more in-depth examination of Sierra Leone’s political history, see Cartwright (1978) and Harris (2014).

\(^{149}\) For more detailed accounts of the war itself, see Keen (2005) and Gberie (2005). The final report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2004) provides an additional overview of the causes, conduct, and consequences of the war, including an attempted accounting of abuses faced by civilians.
government in partnership with the military. RUF leader Foday Sankoh was named Koroma’s number two as Vice President—despite being incarcerated in Nigeria on weapons charges—and several ministerial positions were given to other prominent members of the organization.

Many consider the time that the AFRC government was in power to have been one of the periods of lowest political legitimacy and highest violence experienced during the conflict. Rampant looting and violence against civilians occurred as RUF forces entered Freetown, spurring several countries to evacuate citizens and embassy personnel from the capital. Not only did foreign nationals flee the chaos, much of Sierra Leone’s middle class and anyone who could afford the journey emigrated as well, leaving the city “in their thousands” (Abdullah 1998, 233). Despite pressure from both domestic groups (particularly student organizations) and international partners, the AFRC refused to cede power until Nigerian-led military forces from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) invaded Freetown and reinstated the civilian government. AFRC and RUF forces retreated into the countryside, expanding the conflict zone from its concentration in the south and east (prior to the coup) to encompass the country’s northern districts.

The Kabbah government continued to prosecute the war, depending primarily on the loose configuration of civil defense forces (CDFs) that had emerged in the previous years, now increasingly coordinated by Deputy Minister of Defense Sam Hinga Norman. Sometimes referred to simply as the Kamajors (the largest of the groups), the CDFs offered an alternative to the predatory national army and were initially largely organized around local networks and
loyalties.\textsuperscript{150} With the military support of the CDFs and continued presence of ECOMOG forces, the Kabbah government fought to a relative stalemate with the RUF and residual forces of the AFRC.\textsuperscript{151} Negotiations produced the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999, which laid the groundwork for the political, military, and socio-economic recovery from the conflict. The agreement was criticized from the beginning, with some Sierra Leoneans believing that it rewarded the RUF for years of destruction, particularly with provisions that gave Sankoh a large measure of control over the country’s natural resources. Not long after the agreement, the security situation deteriorated and the RUF engaged in a number of hostile actions, including taking peacekeepers and observers hostage. When civilians protesting this action were shot outside of Sankoh’s home in May 2000, Sankoh was arrested. Additional skirmishes continued, but a cease-fire was signed in November, and the war was declared officially over in January 2002. In May, the country held its first post-conflict elections.

\textit{The RUF’s Failed Transition from Battlefield to Ballot Box}

One of the core features of the Sierra Leonean case making it a hard test of the theory is that high levels of political competition emerged after 2002, despite the failure of the RUF to become a viable political opposition party. Combatant organizations are the most obvious actors around which post-conflict political parties can coalesce, and so are often the focus of analysis in

\textsuperscript{150} For a discussion of the origins of the CDFs and the way in which their character evolved over the course of the conflict, see Hoffman (201155-123). The Kabbah government’s earlier preference for the CDFs was a major point of tension with the national armed forces in the period leading up to the AFRC coup. However, the actual degree to which the CDFs were ever centralized into a fighting force over whom Freetown exercised reasonable command and control is a point of some debate that formed a central question of the trial when Deputy Minister of Defense Sam Hinga Norman was later indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL).

\textsuperscript{151} The RUF was able to sack Freetown on January 6, 1999 but unable to hold the city. This event is often cited as a crucial turning point towards achieving a negotiated settlement.
understanding the transition from military to electoral competition. If the theory presented in Chapter 2 finds support in the Sierra Leonean case, the RUF’s failure to make the transition from rebel group to political party should have its roots in its failure to develop convertible capabilities during the civil war. The high level of political competition that emerged after the conflict (discussed below) should have its roots in other actors’ development of equitable levels of convertible capabilities during the conflict. The following section takes up the latter issue.

There has been a robust debate among scholars as to the nature and origins of the RUF and the civil war. In their influential work on the economic causes of civil wars, Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler have cited Sierra Leone as a case in which the ability to exploit alluvial diamond resources was linked to conflict (20002). Others have seen the RUF as a revolutionary project led by excluded intellectuals and rooted in the dislocation of rural youth (Richards 1996, 25-29). Still others have argued that the RUF was never a revolutionary project insofar as it lacked a coherent narrative for the injustices it claimed to fight or a political agenda beyond removing the current government from power, citing instead its inheritance and escalation of a longer tradition of lumpen, urban youth rebellion in Sierra Leone (Abdullah 1998). More recent work has argued that “the RUF is to be considered an extremely violent revolt of marginalized young rural Sierra Leoneans, triggered by weaknesses in a collapsing neo-patrimonial one-party state” (Peters 2011, 14).

Whatever the underlying cause driving the emergence of the RUF, scholars have widely agreed that the organization of the RUF managed to adapt militarily but not politically to the changing demands of the war. Initially utilizing “special forces” from Charles Taylor’s National

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152 The discussion here is necessarily brief. For a more extensive overview of the debate as to the origins of the conflict, see Harris (201481-100).
Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and controlling territory, by 1992 the RUF became vulnerable to attack. The organization adapted its approach, turning instead to a more guerilla-oriented strategy and relying on rapid light movement from secluded bush camps that were difficult to locate (Keen 2005, 39). Despite its widespread use of child soldiers and forced recruits, the RUF proved to be reasonably effective as a fighting force, managing to survive militarily for over a decade. Authority within the RUF was also more or less centralized. Early in the war, Sankoh had the other two initial leaders of the organization, Abu Kanu and Rashid Mansaray, executed on questionable charges (Abdullah 1998, 226). This left him in sole and centralized control of the RUF, adopting “a charismatic style of patrimonial leadership” over his followers (Richards and Vincent 2008, 92).

Despite its relatively centralized command and ability to adapt militarily, the RUF failed to meaningfully develop convertible capabilities. While there is evidence that some RUF members received political instruction as part of their training (Richards and Vincent 2008, 88), the implementation of this instruction evidently did not extend to the creation of organs tasked with mobilizing support among the civilian population. Analysts of the conflict regularly point out that there was little love between rural communities and the APC government in many areas of Sierra Leone at the beginning of the conflict, and this provided a potentially willing base of civilian support for the RUF. Instead of actively reaching out to these potential supporters, however, the RUF opted for a highly coercive strategy towards civilians. Forced conscription of young men and women sometimes involved killing family members as a part of initiation, rape

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153 This is not to say that there were no divisions within the RUF at any point in the conflict. Indeed, there were. Sankoh appears to have proven himself capable of largely remaining at the head of the organization despite these factions.
was commonplace, and amputation of civilian limbs was used as a strategic form of violence. When it then attempted to make the transition from a military organization to a political party (the Revolutionary United Front Party, or RUF-P), the group lacked both a base of civilian voter support and an organization capable of mobilizing one.\footnote{This is, predictably, not the explanation for the RUF-P’s electoral failures offered by its leadership. Instead, the reasons for 2002’s weak performance are given in terms of harassment of the party and its supporters and broken promises regarding assistance in making the transition to a political party. 2012 Presidential candidate Eldred Collins has stated that the RUF-P “knew that if there was no harassment we would have done much better [in 2002] and even won... because of our popularity” (Interview, April 2013). Though they recognize the internal problems of the organization, Richards and Vincent have also argued that the RUF-P could have been much more successful as a political party, had it received the type of international support provided to rebels-turned-parties in other countries rather than being marginalized by international actors (Richards and Vincent, Sierra Leone: Marginalization of the RUF 2008, 100).} The RUF-P’s most successful electoral performance came in 2002, but even this amounted to less than two percent of the presidential vote and not a single seat in Parliament. The party did not even field candidates in 2007 before returning to the ballot in 2012.\footnote{In an ironic turn of events, RUF-P leadership encouraged former RUF members to vote APC in 2007 and the APC recruited ex-combatants from the RUF to serve as security on the campaign trail (Christensen and Mats 2008). Thus just five years after the conflict, RUF members found themselves voting for and protecting the very party that they had initially fought to remove from power.}

*Post-Conflict Competition from 2002 to 2012*

Despite the failure of the main rebel group to make the transition to a viable opposition party, post-conflict elections in Sierra Leone have been remarkably competitive when compared with other cases. The first post-conflict elections were held in 2002, having been postponed from 2001 due to ongoing concerns about security. As seen in Table 6.1, the results overwhelmingly favored the incumbent SLPP, who achieved a hefty majority in Parliament and retained the presidency with just over 70% of the vote. The former ruling party took a distant
second, with 22.35% of the vote going to its candidate, Ernest Bai Koroma. The RUF-P failed to win enough votes for a single seat in Parliament and garnered less than 2% of the vote in the presidential election, less even than Johnny Paul Koroma and the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP), which took 3% of the presidential vote and gained two seats in Parliament.

At the time, some observers viewed the overwhelming victory of Kabbah and the SLPP as a poor indicator for the likely future of Sierra Leonean democracy. As the International Crisis Group put it:

With the SLPP bestriding the political landscape, parliamentary democracy may prove to be only a shadow of real democracy. Since the governing party dominates the parliament, legislative oversight of Kabbah policies may well have to come from the SLPP’s own parliamentarians. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that this will happen in the near future... While local election pundits have argued that the All People’s Congress is a new party under Ernest Koroma, its inability to put forward a united front has reduced its strength as an opposition force. There are low expectations that the APC will provide a venue for constructive engagement for change. (12 July 2002)

With the SLPP firmly in control of government, the APC seemingly sidelined, and the RUF neutralized as a political force, Kabbah dispensed with the multiparty cabinet that he had assembled after the 1996 elections. Instead, most government positions and their attendant benefits went to party loyalists (Harris 2014, 127).

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156 Koroma, a former insurance executive, was a controversial choice within the APC to serve as flag bearer. A relatively young man not from among the leaders of the ancien régime, Koroma was selected by the party in 2002 only after significant debate and negotiation within the party’s leadership. Importantly, however, the party remained relatively unified once the choice was made.

157 APC members claim that the party was actively repressed and its supporters violently harassed in the years following the NPRC coup. To the extent that this is true, the party’s ability to resurrect itself is even more notable.
### Table 6.1 – Presidential and Parliamentary Election Results, Sierra Leone (1996-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996(^{158})</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2012(^{159})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Vote</td>
<td>1st round</td>
<td>2nd round</td>
<td>1st round</td>
<td>2nd round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLPP</td>
<td>35.69</td>
<td>59.49</td>
<td>70.06</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>22.35</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMDC</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUFPI</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>59.19</td>
<td>40.51</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Seats(^{160})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLPP</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMDC</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUFPI</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for the 1996, 2007, and 2012 elections was obtained from the National Election Commission in Freetown. Data for the 2002 election was taken from Conteh (2012).

Despite the predictions of entrenched power from contemporary observers, the SLPP’s overwhelming victory in 2002 did not lead to the entrenchment of its position as a dominant party. The 2002-2007 period was marked by a steadily improving security context and large amounts of foreign aid but increasing disillusionment on the part of many Sierra Leoneans with the pace of recovery and economic growth. Poorly institutionalized and failing to anticipate a serious challenge at election time, the SLPP was surprised by the level of competition in the 2007 election. On election day, the party did not even have representatives in all of the polling

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\(^{158}\) Electoral law in Sierra Leone requires a run-off between the top two vote-getters if no candidate receives 55% of the vote in the first round. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP won the run-off over John Karefa-Smart.

\(^{159}\) These are the results of the parliamentary election as announced on November 26, 2012. Three parliamentary constituencies were not announced that day: two because of challenges in court and one in which the race was postponed due to the death of a candidate shortly before election day. The APC subsequently took all three seats.

\(^{160}\) The electoral system for Parliament evolved in response to the security situation. Different forms of proportional representation were used in 1996 and 2002 before the country returned to its historical single-member districts with plurality voting in 2007 and 2012.
stations to monitor the vote, as permitted by the electoral law.\textsuperscript{161} Internal divisions also
hampered the party leadership. Kabbah tapped his Vice President, Solomon Berewa, to succeed
him as the party’s presidential candidate. Berewa was confirmed as the SLPP nominee at the
party’s convention. Convinced that the convention vote had been manipulated, prominent party
member Charles Margai split with the SLPP and went on to found his own party, the People’s
Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC).

As Table 6.1 demonstrates, the SLPP lost its majority in parliament and failed to retain
the presidency in the 2007 elections. Because no presidential candidate reached the 55%
threshold required for a first-round win, the APC and SLPP were forced to a run-off. In a shock
to many SLPP supporters, Margai called on PMDC members to vote for APC candidate Ernest
Bai Koroma in the second round. Bolstered by many (though not all) PMDC voters, Koroma
won the final vote with 54.6% and the SLPP found itself in opposition for the first time since the
return to a multiparty system in 1996.

The PMDC’s influence did not last long. Debates and rivalries among leadership and
even the parliamentary bench weakened the party, while the SLPP made concerted efforts to win
rank-and-file PMDC supporters back to the party. By the 2012 election, the PMDC was all but
eliminated as a relevant force. Riding a wave of popularity rooted in improving economic and
infrastructural conditions, Koroma won re-election in 2012 with 58.7% of the vote, avoiding the
need for a run-off but falling short of the massive victory won by Kabbah in the 2002 polls.

Much of the APC’s success in parliamentary races drew on Koroma’s personal popularity, with

\textsuperscript{161} Interview with Ambassador Alie Bangura, former SLPP Elections Committee Chair, April 2013. Bangura
described the last-minute effort to organize such party representatives between the first and second rounds of the
election. Prior to those efforts, the party had no centralized protocol for recruiting representatives and training them
in their duties.
campaign events focused more on rallying around Koroma’s accomplishments than the parliamentary candidates themselves. Several APC members of parliament and officials emphasized this aspect of campaigning and enjoying the spillover effects of having such a popular president. One prominent APC leader acknowledged that “[The President] is more popular than the party.”162 Another described the APC’s popularity at the election as being such that “A monkey with the [APC] party symbol could have won [a seat in Parliament].”163

The failure to win back the presidency in 2012 sparked new, very public, rivalries within the SLPP, though not to the extent of generating a split of the kind seen in 2007.164 Despite these rivalries, the SLPP has continued to serve as the opposition in Parliament amidst the many challenges faced by the Koroma government while in office. The APC has also found itself constrained from completely entrenching its position. Amidst rumors that he might attempt a constitutional change allowing him to seek a third term as president, for example, Koroma was forced to issue a press release denying the allegations (Office of the President of Sierra Leone 2013). The APC has thus demonstrated that its success in 2007 was not ephemeral, but it has not yet been able to consolidate control over the political system to the extent that it enjoyed before the war. The political system in Sierra Leone thus has the potential to remain sustainably competitive.

162 Interview with Hon. Alimamy Kamara, Minister of Youth Affairs, April 2013.
163 Interview with Hon. Bliss Osho-Williams, Member of Parliament, April 2013.
164 In particular, the party has been split by factions loyal to former SLPP Chairman and President John O. Benjamin and to 2012 presidential candidate Julius Maada Bio.
Sources of Competition: Incumbent Weakness, Fractured Loyalty, and New Constituencies

Testing the theory qualitatively in this case requires that several questions be answered. First, how did the SLPP organize itself for the elections in 2002 and 2007? To the extent that the SLPP secured victory in 2002 solely on the basis of pre-conflict patterns of support (namely, members of the Mende tribe in the south and east) and lost office when those support bases were insufficient or demobilized in 2007, then the conflict itself cannot be said to have had any meaningful effect on the outcome. If, instead, the SLPP’s 2002 victory or 2007 defeat relied on voters whose preferences were shaped by the conflict itself, my theory will find support. Second, how was the APC able to make its remarkable comeback in 2007? While the APC did not consolidate control over militarily-specific assets during conflict (indeed, its relationship with the armed forces so deteriorated during the early years of the conflict that it was unseated in a coup d’etat), did the conflict still provide it with an opportunity to consolidate control over convertible assets? If the APC’s comeback was in some way reliant on such assets, and not only on its pre-conflict support networks, then the theory finds support.

In the following section, I suggest that the absence of a viable rebel political party in Sierra Leone did not translate to lower levels of political competition because the SLPP was not able to consolidate durable political control over convertible assets during the conflict or in its immediate aftermath. Rather than the war creating a unipolar distribution of such assets (favoring the SLPP at the expense of the RUF), it mobilized groups of potential voters whose support was unsought or mistakenly taken for granted by the SLPP, leaving them available for

165 Importantly, the convertible nature of assets does not require that they actually be used for both military and electoral purposes. The accumulation of financial assets, for example, would be useful in combat for the procurement of arms and payment of soldiers, but it need not actually be used as such. Financial assets deployed solely for an election campaign remain convertible.
mobilization by other parties. More specifically, the conflict itself had three effects that were crucial to explaining these outcomes. First, the conflict reduced the value of incumbency, as compared with non-conflict states, making the concentration of political power via state capture extremely difficult. The coincidence of an extremely destructive war and the inability of any government to hold power for more than a few years between 1992 and 2000 meant that no one actor had fully-mobilized networks committed to supporting any of the parties. The SLPP’s control of government at the end of the war was thus valuable as a convertible asset, but not overwhelmingly so.

Second, the inability of the SLPP (or the prior military government) to maintain order also meant that it was militarily reliant on a dispersed network of combatants in the form of the CDFs. This left them with a key base of support whose loyalty was as much to individual commanders as to any centralized leadership, making the party vulnerable to splits. Prominent figures within the SLPP were able to take advantage of these fault lines in 2007.

Finally, the overthrow of the APC early in the war and the poor security environment in the 1990s drove many middle- and upper-class Sierra Leoneans into exile in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany. This presented them with professional opportunities that allowed for the accumulation of personal wealth that would prove a crucial campaign resource once the conflict was concluded. Along with strategic mobilization of key constituencies left largely untapped by the SLPP, this enabled the APC to gain victory in 2007. Taken together, the case study suggests that competition was indeed the result of the SLPP’s inability to concentrate its control over the convertible assets made available during conflict.
Fractured Political Control and the Weakness of Incumbency

In some ways, the key legacy of the conflict in Sierra Leone for electoral politics is the way in which it broke the APC’s monopoly on political power, while preventing the SLPP from building a new one. The APC’s power until 1992 was based on a combination of personal patronage networks funded by natural resources, systematic co-opting or dismantling of state institutions, and the sideling of the state’s coercive apparatus in favor of loyal security services. The war disrupted many resource revenues, provided the previously-sideline military with the opportunity and motive to intervene in politics, allowed political elites to seek power outside of APC networks and structures, and caused the Sierra Leonean state to be almost entirely dependent on international aid for its reconstruction before mining operations could be re-established. This opened up space for political competition because the APC was no longer dominant, but it also created conditions that inhibited political dominance by any party until reconstruction was well under way.

While the SLPP was able to win the 1996 and 2002 elections, it was not an incumbent in the usual sense, having come into power in the middle of the war and even being temporarily removed from power by the AFRC government in 1997-1998. It did not have the same incumbent advantages of political control of state resources because, simply put, there was very little state to control. As one member of the international community involved in the 2002 election process put it, while there were no restrictions on campaigning at the time and the SLPP did what it could, the incumbent advantage was limited by the relative lack of public resources. In several ways, this prevented the SLPP from consolidating its hold on political

166 Interview with a member of the international community, March 2013.
power and opened up space for the APC to make its comeback. Most importantly, the SLPP government was heavily dependent on international aid for revenue in the immediate post-conflict period. This reliance meant that any funneling of state resources to support patronage networks could be (and was) subject to being shut off by international actors unhappy with the SLPP’s perceived waste of aid. Shortly before the 2007 election, the United Kingdom suspended its aid to Sierra Leone over concerns about corruption. In addition to the public embarrassment of being abandoned by such a major donor, SLPP candidates thus found their ability to deliver on promises of development and recovery to be limited.

The level of destruction wrought by the war also contributed to the SLPP’s inability to establish dominance because of the sheer scale of work needed to achieve a basic level of economic and social recovery. Even with high levels of international assistance, some voters were bound to be disappointed. In what may have been a rare act of disinterested governing by an otherwise very corrupt administration, the SLPP government did not focus the majority of its recovery efforts on Freetown, widely considered to be the greatest “swing district” in national elections. As one prominent political leader noted, “when you come from war, people are eager to see development,” but there were too many issues to address at once. People in Freetown wanted electricity, but there were many other issues such as refugees, establishing law and order, and dealing with the fact that entire villages had been burned to the ground. The SLPP thus focused on laying the foundations of recovery in providing rural areas with seeds, schools, and some health posts.¹⁶⁷ No matter where the government focused its efforts, however, some voters

¹⁶⁷ Interview with a National Political Leader, April 2013.
who had faith in the SLPP in 2002 were likely to be disappointed in advance of the 2007 elections.

*Wartime Reliance on Civil Defense Forces and the SLPP-PMDC Split*

The weakness of incumbency was not the only comparative disadvantage that the SLPP faced after 2002. The SLPP also lost key support in 2007 after it failed to keep the party leadership together. When prominent political figure Charles Margai failed to secure the SLPP’s nomination for president during the 2005 convention, he chose to form a breakaway party, the PMDC, which was able to secure 10 seats in parliament and enough of the presidential vote to force the APC and SLPP into a run-off election. Though many SLPP leaders claim conspiracy between the international community, the APC, and the National Election Commission as being the reason for their 2007 electoral loss, the numbers suggest that the PMDC breakaway vote cost them dearly. Margai comes from a prominent political family (both his father and uncle were prime ministers in the 1960s) and is a well-known lawyer in the SLPP’s stronghold in the southern part of the country.

Margai himself attributes the success of the PMDC in 2007 to his family and personal reputation, and his charisma and “man of the people” persona have been cited by others as reasons for his popularity.\(^{168}\) However, there is some evidence that the party was also able to capitalize on militia networks from the war in order to build a base of support. On the campaign trail, the PMDC frequently blamed the SLPP government for handing Chief Sam Hinga Norman over to the Special Court of Sierra Leone (SCSL) and for his death during the trial. Hinga

\(^{168}\) Interview with Charles Margai, March 2013. Interview with Daniel Benson Sillah, PMDC Southern Region Young Democrat Leader, April 2013.
Norman, the former Deputy Minister of Defense, had been seen by many as a national hero for his role in organizing and leading the civil defense forces who fought back against the RUF when the army was unable or unwilling to do so. He was indicted by the SCSL for war crimes, something which was unthinkable to many voters, who thought that the SLPP government “would have been smart enough” to protect him.169 The PMDC took advantage of this and expanded the base of support that they would have had if their only appeal had been Margai’s personal popularity. Having fallen out with Kabbah, Hinga Norman himself encouraged this and reportedly called for his supporters to vote PMDC prior to his death (Harris 2014, 146). Many of Hinga Norman’s former fighters and supporters did in fact privilege that loyalty over their historical loyalty to the SLPP, with one PMDC leader noting that the “Hinga Norman factor made people move away from SLPP”170 and another estimating that 90% of Hinga Norman’s chiefdom voted PMDC in 2007.171

The success of the PMDC in breaking the SLPP base of support came as a surprise to the SLPP leadership, who had previously been able to count on broad support from the Mende tribe in the south and east. SLPP leaders perceived Margai and the PMDC as manipulating a complex legal matter for electoral gains. While one SLPP party leader felt that Margai “used [the Hinga Norman issue] very effectively,” he also emphasized that the “CDF did not go in a block” and that there were efforts by the SLPP to tap family and social networks to persuade voters to stay

169 Interview with Daniel Benson Sillah, PMDC Southern Region Young Democrat Leader, April 2013.  
170 Interview with Kobbah M. Bangura, PMDC Southern Region Financial Secretary, April 2013.  
171 Interview with Daniel Benson Sillah, PMDC Southern Region Young Democrat Leader, April 2013. This was a bit of an over-estimation, though Margai did take a solid 64% of the first-round vote in Hinga Norman’s home chiefdom of Valunya. Other scholars have also noted that the Kamajors, the CDF most closely tied to the SLPP government due to its Mende base, were loyal to individuals within the SLPP, such as Hinga Norman and onetime Vice President Albert Demby. The Kamajors were thus both linked to the SLPP and essentially autonomous (Ero 2003, 240-241).
with the incumbent party.\textsuperscript{172} That these efforts were at least partially successful was reflected in the choices of Hinga Norman’s two widows: one publicly supported the SLPP, the other the PMDC. Despite this limited success, the PMDC breakaway was a major contributing factor to the SLPP loss in 2007.\textsuperscript{173} The Hinga Norman issue resonated with more than just Kamajor ex-combatants themselves, contributing to an expanded PMDC appeal.\textsuperscript{174} As one SLPP party activist who later emigrated to the United States put it,

> When PMDC formed that party, people who were already disgruntled about the way that Hinga Norman was handled thought that, ‘Yes, SLPP is an ungrateful party’ or ‘Pa Kabbah is an ungrateful person, so we have to break away, we have to move away.’ So PMDC was a major factor, a major factor for Solomon Berewa to lose that election.\textsuperscript{175}

By having to rely on a relatively de-centralized fighting force during the war, the SLPP left itself without a united leadership or a genuinely loyal bloc of veterans in the subsequent period. Such veterans are frequently the core of a party’s rank-and-file members in post-conflict situations, so the SLPP’s inability to rely on them was a serious political weakness.\textsuperscript{176}

\textit{Resurgence of the APC: Mobilizing New Constituencies}

The conflict in Sierra Leone not only inhibited the ability of the SLPP to establish political dominance, it also empowered potential opposition members and mobilized previously-
marginalized segments of the population. This provided an opportunity for the APC to transform its old networks and rebuild itself as a viable competitor. In particular, the conflict appears to have increased the political activism of three groups: the diaspora, women, and youth.

As previously noted, the incumbent advantage in most developing countries is very large because employment and most economic activity are dependent upon the state. Whoever controls access to state jobs and contracts has a large advantage in mobilizing popular support in a country where independent wealth and resources are difficult to come by. Yet in Sierra Leone (perhaps unlike some other cases), this advantage has not been insurmountable. This is both because of the extreme weakness of the state at the end of the conflict (as discussed) and the role played by the diaspora. The diaspora population is a major exception to this dependence on the state and represents a crucial source of funding for political campaigns. Once the war had been settled and political stability seemed more secure, individuals from the diaspora who had become financially secure in the United States, United Kingdom, or elsewhere could even return to Sierra Leone in advance of elections and personally fund the kind of local development projects that build political support. These projects—from building bridges to providing scholarships for girls to go to school—create the sorts of patron-client relationships that form the grassroots of political support in Sierra Leone. When the SLPP government had major sources of aid cut off by international donors in advance of the 2007 elections, their candidates lost any advantage in this area and other candidates (some freshly arrived from New York or London) could rise to prominence. Of the members of Parliament interviewed for this study, many had spent significant portions of the last twenty years living and working abroad, only to be recruited by family and friends to return to Sierra Leone and run for office. For the APC, cultivating the
relationship with the diaspora included facilitating these returns in advance of 2007. The party leadership reserved 11 parliamentary nominations for members of the diaspora, and many other diaspora members were appointed to high-ranking positions.\(^\text{177}\)

The diaspora is important even among those who do not return, as international branches of the major political parties provide an important source of funding. Presidential candidates make regular campaign trips abroad and even candidates for more local office build external financial support through family and friendship networks. Koroma made two extended trips to the United States in advance of the 2007 election, for example, during which the chapters he visited organized large fundraising events. A high-ranking official of the United States branch described the motivation and activities for the diaspora’s 2007 fundraising efforts:

We were the opposition and we have been hungry for power. As a result, people’s enthusiasm was high at the time and people were willing to do whatever it takes to bring back the party into power. So some of the things we did to fundraise because the party was in need of money at that time... we used [Koroma’s] popularity – he was very popular. So each time he comes we would do a huge fundraiser, like a social function. The majority of the time we would do a dinner and people would pay a good sum. I remember one time we raised about $77,000 in one night that was spent all for the party. After that, periodically if the party needed money they would call on us and say “we have this expenditure pending and right now we are out of money, so we need money.” And we would call on every chapter [and] set up an amount to say “We need $5,000 from every chapter by the end of the week.” And we had up to 14 chapters, so it was easy to raise money quickly in that way... people were willing to pitch in.\(^\text{178}\)

\(^{177}\) Interview with Ibrahim Kamara, Chairman of the APC-USA branch, November 2014.
\(^{178}\) Interview with Ibrahim Kamara, Chairman of the APC-USA branch, November 2014.
These external resources are key to success at the highest levels. As one prominent member of
the diaspora in Dallas, TX put it, “If you want to be president [in Sierra Leone], you have to have
a good relationship with the diaspora.”

While many parties (including the SLPP) had their share of diaspora support, it does
appear that the APC did the best job of mobilizing support among women and youths. “Women”
and “youth” became politically relevant (if only nominally powerful) categories during and after
the war, and the APC seems to have made a much greater effort to utilize their capabilities as
supporters and appeal to their identities as voters. The APC, for example, used female members
to begin to mobilize old party networks in the 1990s because women were less scrutinized by the
military and SLPP governments and thus less subject to harassment. This trend continued in
2007, with one APC Member of Parliament from the Western Area (typically considered a swing
district) noting that his biggest lesson from that election was that “if you want to win an election
in this part of the world, you need the women.” Another APC Member of Parliament noted
that his 2007 campaign was deliberately focused on women and youth, campaigning on projects
such as microcredit.

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179 Interview with Jeneh Juanah Koroma, May 2014. Koroma’s husband, Sheku Koroma, organized fundraisers for
APC presidential candidate Ernest Bai Koroma in advance of the 2007 election and subsequently joined the
administration, eventually being promoted to Minister of Health and Sanitation.
180 Interview with Tamba R. Sandi, APC Assistant National Organizing Secretary, March 2013.
181 Interview with Hon. Bliss Osho-Williams, APC Member of Parliament, April 2013. It is worth noting that this is
an area where researcher identity may have unintentionally but unavoidably biased the interviews. Mainstreaming
gender issues has been a consistent policy for Western aid organizations in Sierra Leone (including USAID), so it
may be that interview participants (particularly male participants) gave more weight than they otherwise would have
to the importance of women, had the researcher not been a caucasian American female. That being said, the most
important finding from these interviews is that the APC mobilized female party supporters as campaign agents. As
this falls outside the usual NGO scripts of female empowerment and equality, the likelihood of bias in this area is
low.
182 Interview with Hon. Alpha Lewally, APC Member of Parliament, April 2013.
The APC also continues to rely on women to mobilize support in areas of the country that are SLPP strongholds. One district party chairman went so far as to claim that the APC is the only party that has “sympathy for women” and that they make particularly good party operatives in SLPP strongholds because Sierra Leoneans tend to “underrate” women. On behalf of the APC, “women took the party to every village,” without the SLPP even realizing it.\(^\text{183}\)

While the APC was quick to mobilize women for electoral purposes, mobilizing youth support took longer. As the same APC official noted:

> At the end of the war, most of the fighting was youth… [you didn’t want to use them for campaigning] because they can go out of track… After the war, you can’t just send youth to the field, [you have to] bring them under control, tell them what to do.\(^\text{184}\)

There is also a perception that this ambivalence is not solely about concerns over violence; Sierra Leone’s traditionally rigid social structure appears to play a role as well. As one NGO leader pointed out, senior men in the political parties do not really want to open themselves up to challenges for party leadership. Yet he also noted that “we lost eleven years during the war” and without opportunities for schooling or self-improvement, even at age thirty or thirty-five younger people are in the same position as other “youth.” They recognize that they thus have to be active because they don’t want to be excluded, and at roughly half of the voting population, party leaders cannot ignore them.\(^\text{185}\)

Likely for these reasons, since the APC’s coming to power, there have been efforts to expand support among the young population. These have included raising the profile of

\(^{183}\) Interview with an APC District Chairman, April 2013.

\(^{184}\) Interview with an APC District Chairman, April 2013. This association of youth with violent political behavior remains fairly widely shared. After election-related violence marred the campaigns in 2007, various members of the international community, election management bodies, and civil society resurrected the All Political Parties Youth Association, which was intended to target youth and focus on the common good. This is one of several efforts to promote constructive youth engagement with the political process.

\(^{185}\) Interview with Mohamed Konneh, National Democratic Institute Senior Program Officer, March 2013.
relatively young leaders, as well as institutionalizing youth affairs in both the party and government.\textsuperscript{186} Koroma himself was considered a relatively young man when he first obtained the party’s presidential nomination in 2002. He also tapped a young man (now the Minister of Youth Affairs) to take his place in parliament after being elected to the presidency in 2007. The APC is in the process of opening a youth political training center and in 2013 the Koroma government created a separate Ministry of Youth Affairs.\textsuperscript{187}

A key question for the dissertation, however, is whether these efforts are rooted in the conflict itself. Are these groups available for mobilization because of the conflict, or do party leaders at least see them as such? As discussed earlier, accounts of the conflict almost universally highlight the role that self-aware marginalized youth played in the conflict, and women are also singled out as a group deeply affected by the conflict. A flurry of civil society activity geared towards mobilizing or assisting these groups suggest a growing self-awareness following the conflict. With regards to the diaspora, many of the individuals most active in the diaspora party chapters going into the 2007 elections were individuals who had left the country during or just before the civil war.

There is also evidence to suggest that party leaders recognize the connection between these constituencies and the war. The reliance on networks of female party activists was clearly

\textsuperscript{186} At times, the constituencies discussed here overlap. Youth in the diaspora, for example, have at times played key roles in shaping the relationship between diaspora chapters and Freetown. The APC, for example, has established online forums using social media that occasionally provide an opportunity for question and answer sessions between leaders and activists in the diaspora and APC cabinet ministers. The initiative for this came from youth activists within chapters in the United States. (Interview with Ibrahim Kamara, Chairman of the APC-USA branch, November 2014). Similarly, a former president of the APC-Washington Metro Area chapter actively encouraged women in the diaspora to increase their involvement in the party and politics (Interview with a member of the APC-Washington Metro Area chapter, November 2014).

\textsuperscript{187} Previously, there had been a Youth Commission and a Ministry of Education and Sports. In 2010 the Ministry of Youth and Sports was separated from the Ministry of Education and in 2013 a separate Ministry of Youth Affairs was established.
rooted in the dynamics of conflict. Not only were women more self-consciously mobilized by the experience of conflict (as discussed in Chapter 3), the APC found it to be a strategic necessity. To a limited extent, this appears to have had effects lasting into the 2007 election. In the case of the APC’s youth vote, pursuit of their support appears to have developed largely since the 2007 election.\textsuperscript{188} Does this mean that it is unconnected to the conflict itself? Not necessarily. There is evidence that the APC is capitalizing on the sense that youth voters remain an under-utilized electoral resource whose concerns are still tied to the legacy of conflict. At the ceremony formally establishing the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the new Minister forcefully argued in his public address that job creation would have to be a major focus of the ministry’s activities, rather than job training, because “we are tired of training. We have been training since DDR [disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration].”\textsuperscript{189} Eleven years after the end of the civil war, the APC appears to believe that a key constituency sees its main concern (unemployment) as a legacy of conflict. By adopting this framing, the party can both deflect blame for the problem and take credit for any improvement.

The Geography of Violence and Electoral Competition

Unlike the Mozambican case, in which voters’ primary electoral choices were between former combatants, post-conflict elections in Sierra Leone featured the incumbent political party credited with ending the war pitted against a breakaway faction and the former party of

\textsuperscript{188} I draw a distinction here between seeking to mobilize youth support and some of the other ways in which youth were connected with political campaigns. In 2007, all three major parties mobilized networks of ex-combatants to serve as private security during the campaign period (Christensen and Mats 2008). While this is a clear conversion of capabilities from conflict to elections, the use of these groups was primarily ancillary to the campaign itself. Some did reportedly engage in efforts to “sensitize” others to vote a particular way, but this does not appear to have been their primary role (Christensen and Mats 2008, 534).

\textsuperscript{189} Public address by Hon. Alimamy Kamara, Minister of Youth Affairs, April 3, 2013.
authoritarian rule. Given the chaotic nature of the violence during the civil war, in which civilians were heavily (and often repeatedly) victimized by forces that were at times indistinguishable from one another (as reflected in the phenomenon of “sobels”), Sierra Leone should provide the ideal case for the “good citizen” hypothesis discussed in Chapter 2. Having been abused by all sides, citizens may not have maintained post-conflict animosities and loyalties based on conflict experiences. Accordingly, those exposed to violence during the conflict might be expected to be more willing to hold leaders accountable and engage in the kind of swing voting on which many theories of democracy rely. If this is so, we might expect elections to feature narrower margins of victory in areas exposed to high levels of violence during the conflict.

An examination of returns in the crucial 2007 election reveals that this is not, in fact, the case. As shown below, chiefdoms whose residents were exposed to higher levels of civil war violence featured higher margins of victory for the candidate achieving the most votes, once regional differences are taken into effect.\(^{190}\) This result is robust even when we control for the level of urbanization, the economic status, and the geographic location of the chiefdom.

2007 Election Returns

While Table 6.1 shows the national-level returns for post-conflict elections in Sierra Leone, Figure 6.1 shows that the chiefdom-level results of the first round of the 2007 election

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\(^{190}\) Chiefdoms are the second-most local level of administration in Sierra Leone. The only units of national government administration that are smaller are Sections. While electoral returns are available at the Section Level, the other data available is not. Under Sierra Leone’s electoral system, chiefdoms are not themselves relevant districts (some, but not all, overlap with constituency boundaries for Parliament), though they are relevant demarcations for traditional authority structures.
featured a range of outcomes. As noted earlier in the chapter, campaigning in Sierra Leone typically takes place in the form of material incentives to voters or appeals to traditional party support along ethnic lines. Additionally, however, the mobilization of traditional authorities and networks is equally important. Candidates seek to gain favor of locally-important individuals such as chiefs and leaders of Poro and Bundu secret societies, who are then expected to mobilize their followers to vote one way or another. Given these patterns, which typically dominate both casual and scholarly analysis of Sierra Leonean politics, it is notable that the range of polarization across chiefdoms is quite broad. Unlike the primarily polarized districts seen in Mozambique, roughly 30% of chiefdoms in Sierra Leone featured less than 20% between the top two vote-getters. On the other hand, 35% of chiefdoms saw one candidate take more than 75% of the vote.

Some, but not all, of this variation is attributable to the role that the PMDC played as a viable third party. The correlation coefficient between margin of victory and Margai’s vote share is a strong but not overwhelming -0.53. The geographic concentration of PMDC voters in the South and East also suggests that the mere presence of a prominent third candidate is not responsible for the variation. Nor can the variation be explained solely in terms of ethnicity, the

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191 Data for Figure 6.1 comes from the official results of the National Election Commission, which was aggregated from the polling station level to the chiefdom level. There are 149 chiefdoms in Sierra Leone, with the Western Area province excluded from the system. The models and figures in this chapter include those equivalent administrative units in the Western Area Rural district for which data is available. Freetown (Western Area Urban district) and parts of several other urban centers are excluded either because polling stations could not be clearly matched to an appropriate administrative unit or because data was not available on the key independent variable.

192 Direct comparison between Mozambique and Sierra Leone is difficult, given the differences both in legal electoral structure and in the number of major candidates. While a measure of margins of victory in Mozambique is essentially a measure of the absolute value of the difference in vote share between Frelimo and Renamo, a more nuanced approach is necessary in Sierra Leone because of the influence of Charles Margai and the PMDC. This chapter thus emphasizes that margin of victory should be taken as the difference between the top two vote-getters, regardless of their identity. Including dummy variables in Model 3 for the highest vote-getter in a chiefdom does not change the findings.
most common explanation for voting patterns in Sierra Leone. The correlation between a chiefdom’s margin of victory and its level of ethnic fractionalization is just 0.25. Given that these explanations fail and the connections identified above between the effects of the war and parties’ electorally-relevant capabilities, we turn to voters’ experience of violence as a possible explanation.

**Figure 6.1 – Box Plot of Chiefdom Margin of Victory, 2007 Presidential Election**

*Figure shows variation in the margin of victory for 2007 presidential candidates (by chiefdom) across the four major regions in Sierra Leone. Margin of victory is calculated as the difference in vote share between the top two vote getters in each chiefdom in the first round of the presidential election. Data is from the National Election Commission of Sierra Leone.*

193 Fractionalization estimates the probability that any two persons randomly drawn from a population will be of the same ethnicity. For a more extensive discussion of fractionalization, see Alesina et al (2003). Ethnic fractionalization data is only available for about half of the chiefdoms in the sample.
Conflict Violence and Electoral Outcomes

As with the conflict in Mozambique, the experience of violence was not uniform across Sierra Leone. Several sources provide us the opportunity to map the violence experienced by civilians. The most useful of this data has been collected and organized by John Bellows and Edward Miguel. Drawing on surveys from the Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project that covered 10,471 households in 539 enumeration areas, Bellows and Miguel provide an estimate of the percentage of households in a chiefdom that answered yes to the question “Were any members of your household killed during the conflict?” (20091148). This provides us with \% Household Member Killed, a reasonably good measure of the proportion of the population in a chiefdom that was exposed to high-level violence during the conflict. The relationship between violence and electoral outcomes is tested using OLS regression models, the results of which are in Table 6.2.

To distinguish between the effect of conflict violence itself and other factors that might be correlated with violence, several control variables are included in the final model. First, regional dummy variables are included as the sole control in Model 2 and then in the full specification in Model 3. This is important because it captures two key features of the context in which the election took place. First, as shown in Figure 6.2, violence was not randomly distributed around the country. Instead, violence was particularly concentrated in the South and East regions, though there was clearly significant variation within these regions in the level of violence.

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194 The authors note that this provides a relatively high measure of conflict violence that appears—at first blush—to be an overestimate relative to national-level figures on the conflict’s casualties. They interpret this result as likely being due to survey respondents’ interpretation of “household” as including members of their extended family.

195 This variable more directly measures the experience of conflict by voters than the violent events data available for Mozambique. Unfortunately, I am aware of no similar data available in the Mozambican case.
violence to which civilians were exposed. This regional variation is particularly concerning as a confounding variable in the Sierra Leonean case because historical patterns of political mobilization are also geographically-oriented. The South and East are the historic strongholds of the SLPP. To the extent that violence specifically targeted supporters of the post-1996 regime, it would create an endogeneity problem. Controlling for region helps to address this.  

It is also possible that electoral competition is driven by other factors more than by either regional politics or conflict legacies. Accordingly, the final model in Table 6.2 includes controls for average body mass index of children aged 0-5 in the chiefdom (Childhood BMI), road density in kilometers of road per square kilometer of land area (Road Density), and the natural log of the distance to Freetown (Freetown Distance). The first is included as a measure of economic development to control for the possibility that the least developed communities are those most willing to serve as swing voters, whether to hold incumbents accountable or to seek out the most effective patron. The second measure provides a proxy for urbanization. Voters in more isolated and rural areas may be more likely to engage in bloc voting as directed by a local chief

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196 Altering the estimation method to use regional fixed effects does not change the primary findings. Nor does controlling for district effects via either dummy variables or fixed effects. See the Chapter Appendix for additional detail. An alternative approach to controlling for the historic dominance of parties in particular areas, as well as the ethnically-based nature of Sierra Leonean politics, would be to control for the ethnic fractionalization of a chiefdom. The expectation would be that higher levels of ethnic diversity within a chiefdom would lead to more competitive electoral outcomes. While the measure can be calculated for many chiefdoms from data available via the 2004 National Household Survey, adding this variable to Model 3 results in significant lost data. See the Chapter Appendix for further discussion.

197 All three variables are provided in the dataset cited earlier from Bellows and Miguel (2009). The original source of Childhood BMI is the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey, 2003-2004. The original source for the Road Density and Freetown Distance are from the 2002 GIS Data provided to the authors by the Government of Sierra Leone.

198 This serves a similar purpose to child mortality in the Mozambique analysis.

199 A measure of whether respondents reside in an urban or rural area is available directly from the 2004 Household Survey and could be used to estimate the percentage of a chiefdom population that lived in an urban or rural area. However, as with the measure of ethnic fractionalization, this would result in significant loss of data because the survey only makes publicly available data for chiefdoms with over 20,000 inhabitants. The Bellows and Miguel data do not aggregate smaller chiefdoms and so their measures are preferable.
or other leader. Finally, distance to Freetown may serve as a measure of state capacity. While qualitative evidence indicated that the nationwide collapse of the state contributed to the inability of the SLPP to retain their electoral advantage, this measure provides a slightly more systematic test. If chiefdoms further from Freetown (where the state is presumably always weaker) were less competitive than those closer to the capital, it would suggest that the collapse of the state was not so widespread or as linked to electoral competition as the qualitative evidence would suggest.

Table 6.2 Chiefdom-Level Margin of Victory for Top 2007 Presidential Candidate (OLS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Household Member Killed</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.362***</td>
<td>0.424***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0987)</td>
<td>(0.108)</td>
<td>(0.135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Density</td>
<td>-0.296</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.384)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood BMI</td>
<td>-0.00144</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00264)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freetown Distance</td>
<td>0.00808</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0514)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>0.224***</td>
<td>0.293***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0599)</td>
<td>(0.0798)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>-0.165***</td>
<td>-0.135**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0509)</td>
<td>(0.0650)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>-0.0466</td>
<td>0.0510</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.120)</td>
<td>(0.172)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.398***</td>
<td>0.274***</td>
<td>0.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0448)</td>
<td>(0.0727)</td>
<td>(0.642)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>0.351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Estimates are produced by OLS models using Margin of Victory as the dependent variable for chiefdom-level election returns in the first round of the 2007 presidential election.
The results in Table 6.2 indicate that the violence experienced by civilians does play a role in explaining variation in the competitiveness of the 2007 presidential election. While violence levels do not have a direct, statistically significant relationship with electoral competition at the national level when considered in isolation, such a relationship does emerge once we control for regional effects (a dominant feature of political life in Sierra Leone). As in Mozambique, the experience of violence in Sierra Leone reduces the competitiveness of elections at the local level, even when we take other factors into account.

Figure 6.3 illustrates the magnitude of this effect, showing that more violent chiefdoms were less competitive in the 2007 election. Under the predictions from Model 3, a chiefdom in which approximately 20% of households lost a member during the conflict (the 25th percentile) could expect a roughly 15% margin of victory in the first round of the presidential election. A
Similarly situated chiefdom in which 54% of households lost a member to the conflict (the 75th percentile) could expect a margin of victory of 29%. High-violence chiefdoms were thus nearly twice as secure for the winning party as low-violence chiefdoms. Equally striking, these predictions are calculated specifically for the southern region of the country, where the effectiveness of Charles Margai and the PMDC yielded the highest level of competition in the country. Even here, in a high violence region with high levels of competition, the relationship that would be predicted by the good citizen hypothesis laid out in Chapter 2 is absent.200

Figure 6.3 Predicted Margin of Victory by Chiefdom Violence

Predicted values based on Model 3 in Table 6.2. The control variables are all set to means, while the region is set to the South. Shaded area indicates 95% confidence interval.

200 The South had the second-highest overall level of violence, after the East. As would be expected from the model structure, similar results hold for the other regions with a roughly 14-point increase in margin of victory. The difference is not statistically significant when examined in isolation in the West, due to the very limited number of observations.
Even in Sierra Leone, where the election was not a direct choice between two former combatant forces, areas in which more individuals were exposed to violence were less electorally competitive than those whose residents were more insulated from the conflict. At the heart of the polarization hypothesis is the notion that exposure to violence creates strong attachments and resentments. Although the direct perpetrators of violence were sometimes indistinguishable and many communities were targeted by multiple combatant groups, exposure to violence may have led them to form collective narratives about the conflict that cemented loyalties and animosities in much the same way that is suggested by the Mozambican case. Electoral success at the national level is thus a product not of persuading voters interested in particular policy outcomes, but of mobilizing blocs of voters whose understandings of the conflict are compatible. This is particularly true in Sierra Leone, where violence was widespread, though it appears to have mattered more for the SLPP, whose core constituencies were most affected by the conflict.

**Alternative Explanations**

I have argued that the re-distribution of convertible assets during conflict is an important part of the explanation for the shifting electoral fates of the APC and SLPP between 2002 and 2007. I have also argued that party leaders became increasingly aware of these advantages and disadvantages over time, and that the APC has made moves to consolidate its political position on the basis of these factors in the years since its 2007 victory. Yet these are not the only possible explanations for the level of political competition in the country. As in Mozambique, the Chapter Appendix includes a discussion of the relationship between violence and the “Margai effect” on the 2007 election in the SLPP’s traditional strongholds in the South and East.
two alternative explanations are worthy of particular attention: the fact that the two major parties pre-existed the conflict and the heavy involvement of the international community in reconstruction.202 This section investigates whether these factors carry greater explanatory power than the argument provided above.

The first possibility is that Sierra Leone presents something of an anomalous case because—unlike many conflicts in which the incumbent government is part of a military or one-party regime—the two major parties predated the conflict. The pattern of events in Sierra Leone is indeed challenging to the main explanation: a one-party state was overthrown by a military coup, which was replaced by a civilian government headed by the former ruling party’s historical rival and itself a former ruling party. That the APC emerged as the SLPP’s main opposition and that it was ultimately successful may have more to do with the pre-war mobilization networks than with the dynamics of conflict itself.203 If this is the case, then post-war electoral competition is merely a continuation of pre-war patterns of political organization.

There is some evidence to support this explanation, so it cannot be simply dismissed out of hand. In discussing current political strategies, SLPP leaders do talk about identifying strongholds and “protect[ing] them,” as well as the necessity of relying on “natural support” in

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202 A third alternative explanation, specific to the Sierra Leonean case, is that state institutions are more autonomous in Sierra Leone than in other cases. Of particular interest is the decisive role played by the National Election Commission (NEC). This is discussed in the Chapter Appendix.

203 Another possible alternative is that the outcomes of the 2007 election represent support for findings from the general democratization literature that opposition coalitions are crucial to liberalization in electoral regimes (Howard and Roessler 2006). This would be another way in which conflict could be causally irrelevant to post-conflict political outcomes and could nullify the dissertation’s focus on post-conflict cases. This explanation is less powerful than the one presented in this chapter because it overlooks the sources of multiparty competition in Sierra Leone in 2007. The results on paper appear to be a fairly straightforward case of opposition parties teaming up to defeat an incumbent. Yet the success of the PMDC’s split from the SLPP was deeply connected to the conflict in the ways discussed above. Theories of coalition politics thus may explain the decisions that precipitate particular electoral outcomes, but in the case of Sierra Leone they cannot explain the context that made those decisions possible without reference to the war.
the 2012 election (an apparent reference to the SLPP’s traditional base of support in Mende-majority districts in the South and East). They also accuse the APC of re-introducing tribalism into electoral politics in 2007 in order to win the election. APC leaders also acknowledged the importance of the old networks for re-establishing the party after the “underground” years of the NPRC. The APC’s choice of a vice presidential candidate from the Kono tribe (traditionally considered a very independent group) also appears to have been a calculated move to garner Kono support in 2007. The strong influence of regional variables in the sub-national regression analysis lends further support to this explanation.

Given this context, does my theory still hold weight? There is good reason to believe that it does, on at least two fronts. First, the APC’s loss of its monopoly over political life is a direct result of the war itself. The RUF insurgency and the resulting NPRC coup d’état shattered the APC’s ability to rule in the manner that was established under Siaka Stevens. When multiparty politics were re-introduced, the APC was forced to make a sharp break with its past and adopt a new strategy for gaining support. While interview participants frequently acknowledged that “President Koroma is more popular than the party” they also emphasized that the key to his success was his image as “Mr. Clean” and his lack of connection with the pre-war APC government. The popular experience of war, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission inquiry that followed it, highlighted the shortcomings and abuses of power of the old APC government. The historical legacy of the APC was thus as much of a liability as an

204 Interview with John O. Benjamin, SLPP President and Chairman, March 2013.
205 Interview with Camillo Kamara, SLPP Bombali District Chairman, April 2013.
206 Interview with Hon. Sheku B.B. Dumbuya, APC Parliamentary Majority Leader, April 2013. Interview with Tamba Sandi, APC Assistant National Organizing Secretary, April 2013.
207 Interview with Hon. Sheku B.B. Dumbuya, APC Parliamentary Majority Leader, April 2013.
asset. Without a major strategy shift, the APC would have been discredited for good and its support networks co-opted by other parties, as the United National People’s Party did in 1996. Indeed, the APC appears to have taken this lesson to heart, and we can read its increasing efforts to mobilize youth and—to a limited extent—women (who were largely excluded from power previously) as a recognition that the conflict politicized these groups and multiparty elections makes their support valuable.

Second, while the SLPP’s electoral rise in 1996 may be attributable to its traditional base of ethnic support, its fall in 2007 has less to do with this traditional support than its inability to consolidate control over the assets mobilized during conflict. The success of the PMDC breakaway and the belief that the SLPP had misused donor money were fundamentally related to legacies of the conflict that overwhelmed the traditional dividing lines between the SLPP’s Mende supporters and the APC’s coalition of Temne and other tribal groups. If the PMDC had not run, we can assume that a significant number of their voters would have turned out for the SLPP. Had this happened, SLPP candidate Solomon Berewa would likely have won the presidency. He would have needed fewer than half of PMDC supporters to vote SLPP in the first round to go into the run-off ahead of the APC, so long as the other half did not vote for Koroma.\(^{208}\) While the SLPP would not have retained control of Parliament, if all PMDC voters had voted SLPP, the split would have been a much closer 55-57 in favor of the APC. Several of the races that the APC won would have been decided by fewer than 1,000 votes. Even if the APC’s long history and tribal support could be thought of as a necessary condition for its re-

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\(^{208}\) As seen in Table 6.1, the combined first-round presidential vote shares of the SLPP and PMDC were just over 52% of the total vote. This would not have reached Sierra Leone’s 55% threshold for a first-round presidential victory, but it would have boded well for the SLPP going into a run-off.
emergence as a viable opposition party, this is not itself sufficient to explain the SLPP’s fall from power. The two parties’ histories made it plausible that elections could be competitive, but the tarnished image of the APC and the prevalence of “honeybee” politics (in which prominent politicians flock to the party in power for material gain) are enough to make that competition far from certain in the counterfactual case that multiparty politics returned to Sierra Leone without the experience of the war. Under the alternative counterfactual implied by my theory—that the SLPP had more successfully consolidated its hold on the available convertible assets—turnover would have been far less likely.

If electoral competition cannot be explained solely with reference to the historical legacies of the parties, what of the involvement of the international community? A key element of my explanation is that the war severely limited the incumbency advantage to the SLPP because of the collapse of the state and patronage structures that had existed prior to 1992. The United Nations, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund largely substituted for these structures at the end of the war. Even after a decade, the depth of entanglement between these international organizations and the Sierra Leonean state is hard to overstate. International technical advisors and funding have flooded the system and are seen (at least by the international community) as the fuel that make the Sierra Leonean government run. Does the depth of this involvement help to explain the failure of the SLPP to consolidate its hold on political power?

It is true that the deep involvement of international actors cannot be excluded from the story. The reliance on international assistance did provide a meaningful check on the SLPP’s power, particularly when the United Kingdom cut off development aid in advance of the 2007 elections due to concerns over corruption and the misuse of funds. An international conspiracy
is sometimes offered by SLPP leaders as a major part of the explanation for their loss in 2007. As one prominent party leader put it, “we believe that there was a regime change agenda” on the part of the international community, the National Election Commission, and the security apparatus.209

Importantly, though, we must take a closer look at the argument that deep international involvement leads to higher-quality democracy in the form of political competition. If this explanation were correct, what would be the causal mechanism? Short of directly funding the opposition, either international actors themselves would have to be the arbiters and managers of the electoral process, or they would have to successfully build and back autonomous national election management bodies. A third possibility is that international leverage over incumbents constrains their strategic behavior; aid-dependent incumbents know that they will lose international support if they manipulate elections or abuse power and this leaves a more even playing field for the opposition.210 This last possibility is likely accurate in a general sense, but it does not provide a better explanation for competition in Sierra Leone than the theory advanced above. Its reliance on international actors was more symptomatic than causal of the SLPP government’s weakness. If the SLPP had a more consolidated political base or alternative (perhaps ideological) resources at its disposal, it might well have been able to withstand the pressures of the United Kingdom’s suspension of aid or even more successfully subvert the World Bank’s efforts to facilitate autonomous state institutions. As other scholars have

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209 Interview with Amb. Allie Bangura, former SLPP Elections Committee Chair, April 2013.
210 A fourth possibility not considered in depth here is that the deep penetration of society by international NGOs may facilitate the building of a democratic culture among voters, making them more willing to hold leaders accountable and buck trends of bloc voting. This possibility can be tested by examining the relationship between NGO activity and electoral competition in the subnational analysis. Such an analysis does not provide any support for this hypothesis, as shown in the Chapter Appendix.
emphasized, the effectiveness of international democratization efforts is strongly contingent on the interests and behavior of local elites (Zürcher, et al. 2013).

The 2002 elections were conducted in an environment of trust in the international community and the head of the United Nations peacekeeping operation was seen as running the country in many ways. Peacekeepers were involved in nearly every decision related to the election and could bring stakeholders together in cases of dispute. The elections not only took place in an environment “supervised” by international actors, they were also largely managed by international actors. The National Election Commission lacked the capacity to execute the elections without significant international assistance. If the United Nations or any individual donor country were interested in influencing the outcomes of Sierra Leonean elections, 2002 would have been a perfect opportunity. There is no evidence, however, that the international community influenced the 2002 elections in any way that was biased in favor of the SLPP.

Sierra Leone: From Conflict to Competition

To summarize, the civil war led to a collapse of the APC’s monopoly on political power. The military government that replaced the APC was unable to consolidate its hold on power because it could not win the war but also because war created new networks of information and social support which created the space for political opposition (see Chapter 3). Elections and a return to civilian government thus became synonymous with peace for key civil society actors, whose efforts the military government was unable to block. When the war ended, the SLPP failed to capitalize on the political dividends of peace and build a durable and cohesive regime, partially because it came to power in the midst of a devastating civil war that prevented it from
building an incumbency advantage, partially because it was reliant during conflict on a highly decentralized organizational structure, and partially because it underestimated the potential challenges to its position. Other parties, particularly the APC and PMDC, were able to capitalize on some of the networks and identities mobilized by the war, notably the diaspora, women, and youth. The result in 2007 was a highly competitive election and the victory of the APC.

The Sierra Leonean case thus provides support for fundamental aspects of the theory advanced in Chapter 2. In its legacy for political parties, the war led to a wide dispersion of political resources and capabilities. Some groups such as the RUF failed to develop any meaningful level of convertible capabilities, but none of the other potential dominant parties could truly be said to have consolidated control over the system. The SLPP enjoyed control of the (admittedly weak) state and the legitimacy of being able to claim itself the party of peace, but it lacked the organizational capacity and cohesion to prevent a split with the PMDC that was exacerbated by decentralized wartime loyalties. The APC was able to rebuild organizational capacity and overcome its association with the abuses of pre-war governments, but only by drawing upon constituencies made salient or empowered by the conflict. In its legacy for voters’ ties to political parties, the subnational analysis revealed evidence for a negative relationship between the experience of violence and the competitiveness of elections. Even in a conflict as chaotic as that in Sierra Leone, communities tend to respond to violence with bloc voting, reducing the space for electoral competition and accountability.

Taken altogether, the findings from the case support the core argument that post-conflict electoral competition is heavily influenced by the legacies of war, both in terms of the capacity of political parties and the behavior of voters. War creates new identities and loyalties in some
case and reinforces them in others. It also creates opportunities for resource accumulation outside of previously-dominant channels. In the case of Sierra Leone, no one group engaged in the war was able to effectively mobilize and co-opt all of these constituencies and resources. This left important groups “on the table” and allowed the APC to re-build itself and establish an unexpectedly high level of competition in post-conflict elections.
Chapter 6 Appendix

Alternative Model Specifications & Robustness Checks

As discussed in the text of the main chapter, the results reported in Table 6.2 are robust to a number of different checks. As shown in Table 6A.1, below, the core results of the model do not change when the province variables are replaced with province fixed effects. Similarly, substituting district effects (which represent the administrative unit sized between chiefdoms and provinces) does not alter the findings.

Table 6A.1 also provides additional evidence that the involvement of international actors or non-governmental organizations drives political competition in Sierra Leone. Models D and E test the hypothesis that greater NGO activity in a chiefdom should result in more competitive electoral outcomes. While the primary alternative explanation related to international actors discussed in the chapter is that they operate to facilitate competition at the national level, a modified version of this alternative might argue that interaction with international actors at the local level influences voters’ behavior. Greater interaction with international NGOs, particularly those based in the West, might provide voters with alternative sources of information about candidates or the election process, foster democratic values, or reduce voters’ dependence on patronage. Any of these might have competition-promoting effects. The models introduce a variable, NGO Activity, also from Bellows and Miguel (2009), for the number of NGO projects...
ongoing in each chiefdom just after the conflict ended.\textsuperscript{211} As we can see from the results, NGO activity has no statistically significant relationship with electoral competition.

A final alternative specification is presented in Models F and G. As noted in the chapter, a major driver of voting patterns in Sierra Leone is ethnic identification. Mende voters tend to favor the SLPP, while Temne and some other groups tend to favor the APC. While this pattern is not absolute (as with the split in the Mende vote between the SLPP and the PMDC and with the tendency for some politicians to join whichever party is in power), it does offer a potentially strong alternative explanation for voting patterns in Sierra Leone. As can be seen in Model F, ethnic fractionalization does appear to have a significant impact on competitiveness when considered in isolation, suggesting unsurprisingly that more homogenous chiefdoms are associated with higher margins of victory. Yet ethnic fractionalization is also geographically-bound, with some areas of the country seeing great variation in levels of homogeneity and others seeing very little. When we include the measure of ethnic fractionalization in the main model with district dummy variables (to most completely capture the other possible effects of locality), the significance of fractionalization disappears. \textit{\% Household Member Killed} also becomes statistically insignificant in this model. However, this is not reason for major caution with regards to the main finding. Fractionalization data is available for only about half of the chiefdoms in the sample and Model B passes a simple link test, while Model G does not. Taken altogether, Model B thus appears to be the more reliable specification.

\textsuperscript{211} Bellows and Miguel report that data for the NGO projects in the chiefdom are based on the 2003 Encyclopedia of Sierra Leone published by Sierra Leone Information Systems.
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>(A) Region FE</th>
<th>(B) District Dummies</th>
<th>(C) District FE</th>
<th>(D)</th>
<th>(E)</th>
<th>(F)</th>
<th>(G) District Dummies</th>
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<td>0.458***</td>
<td>0.458***</td>
<td>0.424***</td>
<td>0.265</td>
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<td>(0.0939)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>West</td>
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<td>0.101</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.555</td>
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Standard errors in parentheses  
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
The Margai Effect and Violence

The discussion of the case in the main chapter presents evidence that Charles Margai’s relative success as a third party candidate depended in part on the perception that the SLPP had failed to protect Sam Hinga Norman from the Special Court and that a war hero had thus been improperly persecuted. This helped to split the SLPP’s traditional base of support among the Mende tribe, from which the Kamajor militias had originated. Is there evidence that voters in the SLPP’s traditional strongholds with a greater experience of violence were more likely to break ranks and vote for Margai? If Margai’s candidacy was rooted in the types of conflict-generated loyalty that leads to electoral bloc voting, more violent chiefdoms might have greater reason to act based on loyalty to Hinga Norman.

The regression results presented in Table 6A.3 find no such effect. The table presents results from a multinomial logit model looking at the likelihood that each of the three major candidates received the most votes in a chiefdom, but limits the sample to chiefdoms in the South and East in order to focus on the SLPP’s traditional stronghold. In the results reported, we can interpret the coefficients as comparing the effect of covariates on the likelihood that Koroma (models H and I) or Margai (models J and K) will be favored, as compared to Berewa. While Model H suggests that high-violence chiefdoms were actually less likely to favor Margai over Berewa, the effect is not statistically significant once the controls are added. Exposure to violence itself thus does not seem to have driven support for the PMDC. Interestingly, however, more rural areas (indicated by lower road density) do seem to have favored Margai. These areas are precisely those from which many Kamajor fighters would have been recruited, lending
support for the qualitative finding that the CDFs themselves were an important source of support for the PMDC.

Taken together, do these findings detract from the more general finding that more violent chiefdoms saw significantly less competitive elections in 2007? There is reason to think that they do not. First, the data do not allow us to measure who perpetrated the violence on which the \% Household Member Killed variable is based. It might well be that some of the violence captured in the measure was the responsibility of CDF fighters, who also utilized brutal tactics against civilians in some cases. Violence might thus have had cross-cutting effects on loyalties to various candidates. Second, the qualitative evidence specified that it was the Kamajors in particular who supported Margai. This is consistent with the polarization hypothesis and finds further support in Model J insofar as more rural areas (the recruiting bases for the Kamajors) were more supportive of Margai.
Table 6A.1 – Multinomial Logit: Highest Presidential Vote-Getter (Chiefdom)

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>(H)</th>
<th>(I)</th>
<th>(J)</th>
<th>(K)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Koroma</td>
<td>Margai</td>
<td>Koroma</td>
<td>Margai</td>
</tr>
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<td>% Household Member Killed</td>
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<td>-5.077***</td>
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<td>(16.52)</td>
<td>(6.432)</td>
<td>(0.106)</td>
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<td>0.0858</td>
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<td>(0.0431)</td>
<td>(0.106)</td>
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<td>54.99**</td>
<td>22.55*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1.977)</td>
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<td>(21.82)</td>
<td>(11.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>1.430**</td>
<td>54.99**</td>
<td>22.55*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1.599)</td>
<td>(0.687)</td>
<td>(21.82)</td>
<td>(11.54)</td>
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</table>

Standard errors in parentheses

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

Coefficients should be interpreted relative to the likelihood of Solomon Berewa obtaining the most votes in a district. Only chiefdoms in the South and East provinces are included.

The Role of the National Election Commission

An additional alternative explanation is that—whether because of international support or some other factor—the SLPP failed to sustain dominance of Sierra Leonean politics because of the independence of the election management bodies. After all, the 2007 presidential run-off election was significantly impacted by the cancelling of allegedly questionable results from 477 polling stations, 415 of which were in districts that the incumbent SLPP had carried in the first round. A NEC beholden to the incumbent would hardly be capable of such a move. Is this adequate evidence that the NEC is an impartial arbiter of national elections?

Interview evidence suggests that the NEC is not perceived by the key players to be the autonomous managerial body that an alternative theory would require. In 2002, the NEC’s
offices were located within the ruling SLPP headquarters building and in 2005 Christiana A.M. Thorpe, who served with several prominent SLPP leaders in the civilian cabinet of the NPRC government, was named Chief Election Commissioner. In 2007, Victor Foh, longtime Secretary-General of the APC, accused the incumbent SLPP of “planning to rig the vote,” suggesting a lack of confidence in the NEC’s ability to run a fair election (Nation Casts Votes, War Casts Shadows 2007).

While the physical location of the NEC headquarters staff has been moved across Freetown since 2002, the NEC is still perceived as “professional, but not independent” if for no other reason than that it is “answerable to the Minister of Finance, who is a member of the ruling political party.” Importantly, however, the perception of bias is now towards the APC, not the SLPP. The speed with which the APC government seems to be prepared to publicly respond to NEC announcements has others convinced that more backchannel communication occurs than might be technically proper. Furthermore, the NEC Chairwoman Dr. Christiana Thorpe’s stepson has served on President Koroma’s cabinet as the Minister of Water Resources. The now-opposition SLPP believes that the NEC systematically favors the APC, a belief that started with the 2007 disqualification of polling stations. According to former SLPP President and Chairman John Benjamin, “People were denied their rights because of the bad performance of NEC” and any over-voting that may have occurred is the responsibility of NEC and their management of voter ID cards and registration. By the time the 2012 elections took place, trust between the SLPP and NEC was so low that the party stopped sending high-level officers to NEC’s Political Party Liaison Committee meetings, eventually refraining from sending any representatives at all.

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212 Interview with a member of the international community, March 2013.
213 Interview, March 2013.
and declaring that they “are no longer participating in NEC activities.”214 Given such low levels of trust and perceptions of impropriety from whichever party is in opposition, it is difficult to set much store in the autonomy of state institutions as an explanation for the competitiveness of Sierra Leone’s national elections.

214 Interview with Mohammed N’fah Alie Conteh, NEC Commissioner for the Northern Area, March 2013.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

The preceding chapters have shown how the legacies of civil war impact the quality of post-conflict democracy. By breaking the study of post-conflict democratization into studies of its constitutive parts, we have been able to increase the argument’s precision and identify linkages between different aspects of the conflict and important substantive outcomes. By reconnecting the pieces of the whole in this chapter, we can begin to get a better sense of how democracy might emerge after conflict, and the factors that make its success relatively rare. By way of conclusion, this chapter offers an overview and synthesis of the findings presented in Chapters 3-6. I then outline the implications of these findings for scholars of democratization in fragile environments and for policymakers considering intervention in armed conflict. Finally, I offer several avenues for future research.

The Findings

The theory in Chapter 2 argued that the quality of post-conflict democracy depends on the legacies of armed conflict. In particular, these legacies affect the choice to adopt democratic institutions, the competitiveness of national-level elections, and voters’ commitment to political parties. The connections between conflict legacies and post-conflict electoral politics were examined in Chapters 3-6 using a variety of methods, including cross-national statistical analysis, qualitative case studies, and sub-national analysis of election returns in Sierra Leone and Mozambique. Together, these three empirical approaches complement one another and offer a variety of evidence supporting the argument that the foundations for competitive democratic politics are laid during conflict.
Chapter 3 took up the question of why democratic institutions are nearly ubiquitous in the aftermath of major internal armed conflict. Examining the broad cross-national patterns, the chapter showed that the adoption of democratic institutions is more common in countries recovering from conflict than in those that have not experienced this kind of unrest. Statistical analysis of cross-national data demonstrated that conflict does not always lead to the adoption or maintenance of such institutions, but that more costly conflicts are more likely to do so. In particular, closed regimes that experience lengthy conflicts suffer material and legitimacy costs that make the adoption of de jure competitive political institutions highly likely. Incumbents who preside over conflicts that entail high levels of economic hardship are similarly likely to fail to maintain closed systems, though this effect only emerges once the superpower competition of the Cold War ended. Both in terms of conflict length and economic performance, more costly conflicts are associated with a higher likelihood of democratic institutions being adopted.

Chapter 3 also provided case evidence from Sierra Leone and Mozambique to demonstrate how processes of institutional change can be driven from above (Mozambique) or below (Sierra Leone) as a response to conflict.

Chapter 4 shifted the focus from de jure competition to de facto competition in national-level elections after armed conflict. It used survival analysis to show that electoral turnover was most likely after conflicts in which rebel groups develop convertible capabilities that can be transferred from use in military campaigns to electoral campaigns. In particular, turnover was most likely after those conflict episodes in which one rebel group developed a distinct political wing and episodes in which multiple rebel groups developed mobilization capabilities. In
distinct ways, both of these circumstances provide the opportunity for a robust electoral challenge to an incumbent government.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyze hard tests for the theory in the cases of Mozambique and Sierra Leone. In Mozambique, a rebel group with little political organizational capacity and initial dependence on external backers posed an initial electoral challenge to a longstanding incumbent government but could not prevent that incumbent from reconsolidating its political dominance in the longer term. Chapter 5 presents evidence that it was Renamo’s lack of organizational capacity that made its competitiveness so short-lived. Without a well-established capacity to recruit and sustain the support of civilian populations during wartime, Renamo had a difficult time maintaining the participation of a group of voters more opposed to Frelimo than supportive of Renamo. Sub-national statistical evidence lent additional support to this argument by demonstrating that violence had distinctly polarizing effects on communities and that the decline in Renamo’s voteshare over time was attributable to reduced turnout in its support communities. The Mozambican case shows the importance of distinguishing among types of convertible capabilities (organizational vs. mobilization), as well as taking a longer view of the relevant time period for understanding the effects of conflict.

Sierra Leone, on the other hand, provided a different sort of hard test for the theory. Here an overwhelming international peacebuilding presence and two pre-conflict parties with historical and ethnic roots make the case a strong one for the alternative explanations. The conflict in Sierra Leone featured a rebel group that developed few convertible capabilities, so the high level of electoral competition that followed represents a hard case for my theory. Yet Chapter 6 demonstrates that the theory still provides explanatory power when we expand our
notion of relevant actors beyond the combatant organizations that remained party to the conflict at its end. The war mobilized new constituencies whose support could not be effectively co-opted by any side during the highly chaotic conflict. The APC’s core organizational networks survived despite being sidelined as a political force for a decade and the party was able to mobilize these constituencies to provide a serious challenge to the incumbent SLPP, which was organizationally weak. As in the Mozambican case, sub-national data analysis indicated that violence had polarizing effects. Here again, competition in post-conflict elections is driven by the ability of parties to mobilize voters whom violence has left with strong affinities and animosities.

Across the different elements of the empirical work of this dissertation, several broad conclusions emerge. The first of these is that the effects of conflict on the incumbent government are just as important for subsequent democratization as the effects of conflict on the rebel group. A focus on the success or failure of rebel groups’ transformation into political parties is thus incomplete. Conflict weakens incumbents’ ability to maintain closed political systems, which realigns the incentives for institutional change. Moreover, the competitiveness of post-conflict elections is driven as much by the capabilities (or lack thereof) of the incumbent as of the opposition. We saw this with the SLPP in Sierra Leone. The SLPP government relied on the relatively autonomous CDFs for security during the war, but found itself unable to rely on their political support afterwards. This was a crucial shortcoming that opened the door to competition. Incumbent weakness thus facilitates democratization.

A second general conclusion to be drawn from the findings is that the organizational capacity of conflict-relevant actors matters more than perhaps any other convertible capability.
Specifically, groups involved in violent conflict who wish to remain relevant in the post-conflict period are best advised to invest resources in building an organization that includes specialists in political mobilization. These individuals may serve many functions, but their particular role must go beyond simply soliciting (or requisitioning) supplies from civilian populations to include activities such as ideological education or service provision. As seen in both Sierra Leone and Mozambique, political violence is polarizing at the communal level. Exposure to violence leads communities to vote in a bloc and swing voting is relatively rare. Success at the polls is thus not derived from persuading undecided voters through mass media campaigns. It is reserved for parties that can manage to maintain cohesion among their leaders and organize supporters to get to the polls. Groups that do not begin to build this capacity during the conflict will be at a disadvantage later on.

Finally, the quantitative and qualitative evidence together indicate that an understanding of post-conflict democratization requires that we expand our lens beyond the international level and focus on the incentives and capabilities of domestic actors. Throughout the preceding chapters, international actors have played an important role, but they have not been the ultimate arbiters of political outcomes. Where international actors have had influence at critical moments—as when the British suspended foreign aid to Sierra Leone or the United Nations established a trust fund for Renamo in Mozambique—this influence has operated within an opportunity structure that is fundamentally domestic. International pressure is only effective insofar as domestic actors are vulnerable, and these actors’ strengths and weaknesses in the post-conflict context are shaped by their strategies, actions, and constraints during the preceding violence.
Implications

The implications of the dissertation for the study of post-conflict politics are fairly straightforward. In short, the findings suggest that in such a weakly institutionalized context scholarship should be concrete in the object of study and holistic in the factors it considers. More specifically, studying democracy in the aggregate is likely to be counter-productive in future studies that focus on the recovery from intrastate violence. The dissertation has shown how de jure changes are not always met with de facto changes. Continuing to think of democratization as movement towards some ideal type risks obscuring the reasons that certain steps are taken while others are not. Breaking the study of democracy down into the study of institutional choice or electoral management bodies or voter behavior is likely to be much more fruitful. Additionally, the findings imply that a focus on one particular type of actor or one particular type of international intervention is unlikely to provide accurate findings related to post-conflict democratization. To understand qualities of a political system as a whole, it is necessary to look at the playing field as a whole. Electoral competition cannot be explained by focusing solely on the capacity of the opposition without considering the strength of the incumbent. The choice to adopt democratic institutions cannot be explained by focusing solely on international pressure without also considering the domestic context that might make that pressure effective.

The dissertation also has implications for policy. The implications for international actors engaged in peacebuilding efforts are unfortunately sobering. The findings presented in the dissertation indicate that it may be harder than previously appreciated for democratization to play its intended role within the peacebuilding framework. Democracy is supposed to be a means for
social conflict to be transferred from the battle field to ballot boxes and legislatures. To accomplish this, it must (a) provide elites with an incentive to remain in the system by guaranteeing another shot at power in future elections and (b) offer voters the ability to hold accountable any leaders who fail to act in the public interest. Genuinely competitive elections are key to both of these processes. The ability of international actors to foster competitive elections, however, is fiercely constrained by the legacy of conflict. Combatants build organizations and support systems that will allow them to pursue their aims during conflict, but those structures, networks, and habits become sticky and persist into the post-conflict period. If most relevant actors have built capabilities that are specific to war, it will take a large investment of time and resources to try to transform enough of those actors to prevent political dominance by another.

The United Nations appears to now recognize that peacebuilding is a necessarily lengthy process and the operations of the Peacebuilding Commission reflect this. Despite this commitment and the work of such actors to improve the democratic playing field, there is only so much that they can do to improve the competitiveness of elections. Such competitiveness would require multiple parties capable of organizing and mobilizing significant shares of the electorate. Short of bankrolling the opposition for an extended period, peacebuilders are stuck with the political parties that violent conflict has given them. If conflict has produced a system in which convertible capabilities are diffused among many actors, elections will be competitive. If it has not, and such capabilities are concentrated with one group, elections will become dominated over time and any pacifying effect that democratization may have had will begin to erode.
The findings also have implications for the foreign policy of individual governments, including the United States. In conflicts such as that ongoing in Syria at the time of writing, the United States often seeks to identify local combatants whom it can support in order to influence the outcome of the war. To the extent that the United States has a preference regarding the longer term political outcomes of conflict, the findings suggest more than simply military considerations in the selection of local proxies and the type of assistance provided to them. If the United States were to support a group that was rich in capabilities specific to war but poor in convertible capabilities, its ability to survive the war may be strong but the group’s relevance to post-war politics may be minimal. The findings suggest that the United States should either identify proxy organizations that already possess convertible capabilities or else include training in political organization and mobilization skills and strategies as part of its support.

This holds regardless of whether or not the United States has an interest in promoting democracy after the war. If democratization is a goal, then a broad distribution of convertible capabilities is desirable for all of the reasons discussed above. Even if the United States is primarily concerned with stability rather than democracy, policymakers should still choose their partners carefully and consider the alternatives. If the individual or party put into power by conflict lacks convertible capabilities, ruling by coercion alone will be a massively expensive undertaking. Particularly if other parties to the conflict survive with convertible capabilities intact, unrest (violent or otherwise) may persist throughout the post-conflict period. To set post-conflict democratization aside as a policy goal when confronted with an intractable civil war does not necessarily clear a path to sustainable stability. A group with capabilities specific to
conflict may seem an attractive local partner in the effort to end a war, but that group may well lack the capabilities that would allow it to manage post-conflict politics in any sustainable way.

**Future Research**

The findings of the dissertation lay the groundwork for two avenues of future research. First, the character of conflict is changing. In Afghanistan, Somalia, Turkey, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere, conflicts do not end with victory or peace agreements. Instead, they persist for extended periods, often at relatively low violence levels, but are never actually resolved. Cease-fires and partial agreements are reached and then abandoned. All the while the political life of the country continues to operate in parallel to conflict, often in a state of partial but perpetual crisis.

These cases differ from those examined in this dissertation in potentially important ways. With conflict ongoing, the ability of certain actors to participate in elections or other political processes may be limited by circumstance or by their opponents. Incumbents still face mounting costs of conflict, but seem to find ways to cope. Elections are held, but competition is typically between moderates and hardliners of the same broad camp. How would the arguments of the dissertation apply to these cases? Are convertible assets still largely tied up in pursuing military goals and, if so, why are elections *ever* competitive in these cases? One strong possibility is that actors involved in these types of conflicts diversify their portfolios and pursue goals by violence and other means simultaneously. Future research may help to reveal the strategies incumbents and insurgents use to pursue short and long-term goals in these types of conflicts and how these strategies affect the quality of democratic politics.
Second, our understanding of the *procedural* quality of post-conflict elections is limited. Chapters 4-6 dealt only lightly with questions of manipulation and irregularities in the elections under examination. Political dominance is built not only by popularity and licit mobilization efforts, but also by activities that bend or even break the basic principles of democratic competition. Electoral manipulation is difficult to measure by its very nature, but we may have reason to think that the incentives for manipulation are slightly different in the post-conflict context. Do incumbents facing electoral challenges from former rebels with convertible assets manipulate elections at a higher rate than those facing former rebels whose assets were specific to warfare? On the one hand, it would appear that there would be a strong incentive to do so. The course of the conflict would likely have revealed to the incumbent that the opposition had or could build support among some segment of the population. Manipulation might serve as an insurance policy against the possibility of an incumbent surviving the conflict only to lose the election. The weakened state institutions that typically accompany large-scale conflict are likely to make this easier.

On the other hand, the very context that makes manipulation easier may also make it more dangerous. Particularly in the early years after conflict, peace is fragile. Former rebels may once again take up arms if they perceive that elections offer no realistic path to power. An incumbent who overplays his hand risks not just protests, but a return to war. How do incumbents manage the risk of losing office against the risk of renewed instability? How do challengers decide whether to continue playing a rigged game or to engage in violence?

These questions are not trivial and there is no obvious solution for avoiding manipulation and keeping all parties committed to a democratic process. Peacebuilding missions can only do
so much, particularly once the initial phases of a mission are over and peacekeeping troops begin to withdraw. In the longer term, the challenges of managing conflict through elections rather than arms will have to be met by the competing parties themselves.

The course of events in Mozambique shows just how difficult this is. At the time of writing in late 2015, the 2014 agreement that was signed to end the renewed tensions that emerged in 2013 is essentially dead. International monitors who had arrived to oversee the demobilization of the last Renamo fighters have gone home without ever having the chance to fulfill their mandate. After violent clashes that claimed the lives of a number of combatants and some civilians, Afonso Dhlakama once again returned to the bush.

Mozambique has avoided a return to full-scale civil war for over twenty years and the political institutions put in place by the peace agreement have aided this outcome. Over time, however, these institutions have proven themselves inadequate to fulfill the larger role intended for them. Where one side is nearly guaranteed victory in election after election, democracy no longer serves the functions of holding leaders accountable to the public and binding elites to the system.

Time will tell whether democratic institutions are more effective in Sierra Leone. The post-conflict distribution of convertible assets in that case provides ground for cautious optimism. If Sierra Leone does manage to maintain a system that is both stable and competitive in the long run, it will have succeeded where many others have failed. Democratization after civil war does not transform the nature of competition, it simply changes its form. Many would-be political parties are ill equipped to compete on the new field and this has inhibited the emergence of robust democracy after all but a few conflicts.
Moving forward politically from civil war requires the emergence of new cleavages, a new political rhetoric not dominated by references to struggle or victimization, and the possibility of realigned voter coalitions. These might emerge in the long run, but the legacies of civil war loom large for political life in the years after the shooting has stopped. Until generational turnover can open up the possibility for a politics not dominated by these legacies, the contours of post-conflict politics are shaped by the earlier pressures of violent competition. These contours constrain the likelihood of competitive, accountable democracy, but understanding them may illuminate opportunities to promote incremental improvements in the quality of post-conflict political life. For societies that have survived the horrors of war, such improvements hold the promise of a secure future.
APPENDIX A: LIST OF ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFRC</td>
<td>Armed Forces Revolutionary Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>All People’s Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARENA</td>
<td>Nationalist Republican Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDF</td>
<td>Civil Defense Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMLN</td>
<td>Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPLM</td>
<td>Popular Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>General Peace Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDM</td>
<td>Democratic Movement of Mozambique</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Election Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPFL</td>
<td>National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPRC</td>
<td>National Provisional Ruling Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLP</td>
<td>Peace and Liberation Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMDC</td>
<td>People’s Movement for Democratic Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUF-P</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLPP</td>
<td>Sierra Leone People’s Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAE</td>
<td>Technical Secretariat of Electoral Administration</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Sierra Leone

Mr. David Fornah
Mr. Tamba R. Sandi
Mr. Alie M. Kargbo (and Members of the Bombali District Executive Committee)
Hon. Alimamy A. Kamara
Hon. Sheku B.B. Dumbuya
Hon. Alpha Lewally
Hon. Bliss Osho-Williams
District Chairman
Hon. Komba Koedoyoma
Hon. Mohamed Tholley
Mr. Kanja Sesey
Mr. Camillo Kamara
Ambassador Allie Bangura
Mr. John Oponjo Benjamin
Hon. Frances Rogers
Mr. Kobba M. Bamgura
Mr. Amadu M. Koikoi
Mr. Daniel Benson Sillah
Mr. Steven J. Kamara
Mr. Raymond Bamidele Thompson
Mr. Charles Margai
Mr. Eldred Collins
Mr. Ibrahim Sesay
Mr. Ibrahim Siloku
Mr. Victor King
Mr. Boson Koroma
Mr. Mohamed Bangura
Dr. James Fullah
Mr. Mohammed N’fah Alie Conte
Mr. Philip Fara Kargbo
Mr. Abubakarr Koroma
Mr. Edmond Alpha
Mr. Abraham John
Mr. Sallieu Kamara
Dr. Abubakkar Kargbo
Ms. Marcella Macauley

APC
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SLPP
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SLPP
SLPP
PMDC
PMDC
PMDC
PMDC
PMDC
PMDC
RUF-P
Citizens Democracy Party
Citizens Democracy Party
Citizens Democracy Party
Citizens Democracy Party
United Democratic Movement
United National People's Party
National Election Commission
National Election Commission
National Election Commission
National Election Commission
Political Parties Registration Commission
Political Parties Registration Commission
National Commission for Democracy
Campaign for Good Governance
Mr. Alhaji Mohamed Warisay
Democracy Sierra Leone

Mr. Mohammad N. Jehloh
Democracy Sierra Leone

Mr. Ngolo Katta
National Election Watch

Mr. Patrick Sinnie (aka General Sisco)
Action Group for Peace & Development

Dr. Charles Silver
Fourah Bay College

Mr. Mohamad Konneh
National Democratic Institute

Ms. Lucy Hayes
Department for International Development

Representative of the USAID Office in Freetown

Member of a Major International Development Agency

Members of an International Democracy Advocacy Organization (2)

Member of the International Community

Member of the Non-State Actors Programme

Senior Political Leader

Women's Civil Society Leader

Anonymous (2)

Mozambique

Mr. Manuel Tomé
Frelimo

Senior Frelimo Leader
Frelimo

Mr. Raul Domingos
Renamo (former), PDD

Mr. Manuel Pereira
Renamo

Mr. Vicente Ululu
Renamo

Dr. Maria Ivone R.B. Soares
Renamo

Mr. Albino Mumafaene Dueza Muchanga
Renamo

Mr. Meque Bras
Renamo

Mr. Isequiel Molde Gusse
Renamo

Mr. Fernando Mazanga
Renamo

Mr. Lutero Simango
MDM

Mr. Geraldo Alexandre Carvalho
MDM

Dr. Ismael Mussa
MDM

Mr. Ya-qub Sibindy
PIMO

Mr. Felisberto H. Naife
STAE

Mr. Felizberto Mulhovo
Westminster Foundation

Rev. Dinis Matsolo
Christian Council of Mozambique

Mr. Guilherme Mbilana
Observatorio Eleitoral

Head of a Local NGO

Leaders of Veterans Advocacy Group (2)

Member of the International Community

Individual working and very familiar with political party development

Person working with the electoral process in Mozambique
United States/Canada

Mr. Ben Abu Daboh
Ms. Jeneh Juanah Koroma
Mr. Robert Yankson
Member
Mr. Ibrahim Kamara
Dr. Lawrence Sandi
Mr. Julius Aruna
Mr. Saidu Amara
Dr. Scott Taylor
Dr. David Pottie

APC Dallas Chapter
APC Dallas Chapter
APC Dallas Chapter
APC Washington-Metro Chapter
APC United States Branch
SLPP North America
SLPP Washington Metro Chapter
SLPP New Jersey
Georgetown University
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