Secessionism and Civilian Targeting

Tanisha M. Fazal
University of Notre Dame
tfazal@nd.edu

Abstract

This paper contributes to a burgeoning literature on civilian targeting in civil war by arguing that rebel war aims can offer critical insight into who targets civilians, and when. Specifically, I argue that secessionists are less likely than non-secessionist rebel groups to target civilians in civil war, for two reasons. First, secessionists, who have the greatest military capacity in their claimed region, are unlikely to target civilians meant to comprise the population of their desired state. And second, secessionists are especially, and increasingly, aware of and concerned with their reputation with respect to the international community. I test these claims using an original data set on civil wars from 1816 to 2007.

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Rebel rapacity makes headlines. The recent beheadings, not to mention other major violations of international humanitarian law, committed by the Islamic State combine with the tens of thousands of civilians targeted and killed by groups such as the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, the Groupes Islamique Armées (GIA) in Algeria, and União Nacional para la Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) in Angola into a horrifying portrait of how rebels behave. Motivated by cases such as these, analyses of rebel groups in civil wars attacking civilians discriminatingly or indiscriminately have become quite common (Kalyvas 2006; Mueller 2004). Although this violence may be strategic in nature, received wisdom suggests that it is also driven by the funding and recruitment structures of rebel groups (Cohen 2013; Weinstein 2007). But many of the empirical analyses that follow these arguments have focused almost exclusively on rebels with revolutionary war aims, such as Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) in Mozambique, Sendero Luminoso (Peru), the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone.2 Restricting the empirical testing of this argument raises a critical question for an

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2 A recent exception to this trend is Mampilly (2011).
increasingly common type of conflict: do secessionist rebel groups treat civilians differently than non-secessionist rebel groups?

The answer, I argue, is yes. Secessionist rebel groups – those that claim independent statehood as a war aim – have two main reasons to exercise restraint in their treatment of civilians. First, secessionists are unlikely to target their own populations, and their reach is usually not long enough to target civilians in the center. And second, secessionists care deeply about the international community’s opinion of them, and they understand that the international community may punish rapacity in war (Bob 2005).

In elaborating and supporting the argument outlined above, this paper makes several contributions to current debates regarding civilian targeting. It adapts and employs current theorizing about civilian targeting in interstate war to the realm of civil war, a move that has gone curiously unmade. It traces explicitly the effect of international norms regarding treatment of civilians on the behavior of rebel groups in civil wars. And it redirects attention to the conduct of what is an increasingly common type of civil war: secessionist conflicts (Cunningham 2014; Walter 2009). Indeed, based on the original data set used in this paper, secessionist civil wars increase by approximately thirty percent after 1945 compared to before. Following Stanton, it also focuses on the causes of restraint, rather than targeting (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Stanton 2008, 2013).

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. After reviewing existing literature on the general question of civilian targeting by rebels, I present the main elements of an argument for secessionist restraint. I then lay out some of the challenges in testing these claims. This discussion is followed by a quantitative analysis is based on an original data set that, by going back to 1816, is unique in its temporal scope. My conclusions and discussion of policy implications follow.
What We Know: Civilian Targeting in Civil Wars

The growing and important literature on civilian targeting in civil wars has tended to take one of two approaches of late. The first, best represented by Weinstein (2007), examines the funding sources of rebel groups and argues that targeting is often a function of organizational discipline. Rebels that rely on third-party and/or contraband funding are less able to control their (mercenary) troops, have weak ties to the civilian population, and thus are uninhibited from targeting that population.\(^3\) The second approach, best represented by Kalyvas (2006), takes a micro-level look at civilian targeting, and argues that the degree and type (discriminate versus indiscriminate) of civilian targeting depends on variation in control over territory within the context of a specific conflict. Both approaches have been tested on multiple civil wars, but principally on non-secessionist civil wars. Moreover, both approaches have been tested exclusively on post-1940 cases and, thus, are not positioned to identify any changes over time with respect to belligerent behavior in civil conflict.

Recently, scholars have begun to include secessionism as a control variable or focus only on secessionists in analyses of the use of violence in secessionist civil wars, although without examining directly whether violence in secessionist civil wars differs from violence in non-secessionist civil wars. For example, Cunningham et al. examine the effect of factionalization within self-determination groups on a series of dependent variables, including civilian targeting (Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012). Wood, in arguing that the balance of power between rebels and the government is the principal driver of civilian targeting, includes a control for identity conflicts; his results suggest that, in some cases, identity conflicts are less likely to see civilian targeting and, moreover, that conflicts over

\(^3\) Cohen uses a similar logic in predicting sexual violence against civilians in civil wars. Rebels who recruit forcibly through, for example, press-ganging, often use rape as a means to cement cohesion among disparate soldiers who will otherwise have little in common. Cohen 2013.
A focus on war aims in explaining civilian targeting is consistent with literature on civilian targeting in *interstate* wars, which is rarely mentioned in the literature on civilian targeting in civil wars. There are four main strands of argument in this literature. First, there is a longstanding view that belligerents will be especially likely to target their opponents’ civilians if there is an identity difference between them (Huntington 1997). Second, it is also possible that states that are bound, by international law, not to target civilians will be less likely to do so (Morrow 2007, 2014). Third, it may be that regime type (either in conjunction with international legal obligations, as Morrow suggests, or on its own) affects the likelihood of civilian targeting.

These first three claims, however, have seen serious challenges in recent literature. Valentino et al. as well as Downes have argued strenuously against the identity argument
(Downes 2008; Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2006). Valentino et al.’s findings also cast doubt on the impact of international legal commitments on the decision to target civilians (Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2006). And Downes shows that democracies are just as likely to target civilians as are non-democracies (Downes 2006).

The strongest argument, to date, as to why civilians are targeted in interstate war focuses on the combined role of military strategy and war aims. Per Valentino et al. and also Downes, belligerents facing an opponent using guerrilla warfare will be particularly likely to target their opponent’s civilians as a strategy of last resort. This logic, however, is one that is not very transportable to a theory of rebel targeting of civilians, as rebels are rarely likely to be facing a government employing guerrilla warfare.  

The second component of Valentino et al. and Downes’ argument is more helpful. In the context of interstate war, they argue, belligerents that seek to annex territory will often target civilians in that territory for the purpose of cleansing. Both this logic and its reverse can be used to shed light on civilian targeting by rebels in civil war, especially in the context of secessionist conflicts where secessionists may have few incentives to target their own co-ethnics and many incentives to target non co-ethnics residing in the territory from which they seek to make a new state.

**War Aims and Civilian Targeting**

I define civilian targeting as the conscious use of a strategy of inflicting violence against civilians, where violence includes the infliction of death or bodily harm (but not deportation or imprisonment, unless these strategies are accompanied by the infliction of

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4 More recent scholarship, however, suggests that a re-specification of the identity variable does reveal some effects. Fazal and Greene Forthcoming.

5 For a similar assessment of the limited importability of this claim to the realm of intrastate war, see Stanton 2013, 10-11.
death or bodily harm). This definition overlaps with those employed in analyses of civilian targeting in interstate war as well as civil war. It is also similar to the definition used by UCDP’s one-sided violence data set, which is restricted to “the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians which results in at least 25 deaths” (Eck and Hultman 2007) and by the Global Terrorism Database, which codes for “threatened or actual uses of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.”

Civilians are typically thought to be targeted for four reasons: racism or ancient hatreds; lack of discipline; cleansing; and/or, coercion (Downes 2006; Kalyvas 2001; Stanton 2003; Valentino 2004; Weinstein 2007). I focus here on the latter two motives for targeting civilians in civil wars. Racism/ancient hatreds would seem to be more relevant in secessionist than in non-secessionist wars, but only in the very circumscribed area of the secessionist region (see below). And claims regarding lack of discipline among rebels (Mueller 2004; Weinstein 2007) do not necessarily vary among rebel groups; moreover, I control for these possibilities in the empirical analysis below.

The motive and manner of coercion and cleansing, however, may well see considerable variation across rebel groups. Recent research suggests that civilian targeting for the purpose of coercion may be futile (Abrahms 2012; Jones and Libicki 2008), and it will be especially counterproductive for groups in particular need of legitimacy from the

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6 For example, Downes defines civilian victimization as “a military strategy chosen by political or military elites that targets and kills noncombatants intentionally or which fails to discriminate between combatants and noncombatants and thus kills large number of the latter. Downes 2008, 13.

7 Kalyvas defines violence as “the deliberate infliction of harm on people” and limits his analysis to violence against civilians, defined as “those who are not full-time members of an armed group.” Kalyvas 2006, 19.

international community, such as secessionists. At the same time, secessionists may be more motivated to and capable of engaging in cleansing, although such cleansing is likely to be quite limited if secessionists constitute a majority in the territory they claim.

Although secessionists may be extremely militarily capable within the territory they claim, their reach beyond that territory is likely to be quite limited. This restriction, combined with secessionists’ need for international approval if they are to achieve their own aims, ought to limit considerably secessionist civilian targeting on the basis of coercion, compared to non-secessionist groups that may operate in multiple parts of the country and, also, have less need for the support of the international community.

The discrete aims of secessionists also should temper expectations regarding the use of civilian targeting for the purpose of cleansing. While secessionists might seek to cleanse non co-ethnics from their claimed territory, they are less likely than non-secessionists to seek to cleanse dissenting villages across the country, for example. Furthermore, secessionists – who tend to be geographically concentrated – would make themselves vulnerable to retaliatory attacks by attacking non co-ethnics inside and outside their region.

The main hypothesis of this paper is thus that secessionists engaged in civil war are less likely to target civilians than non-secessionists.

**H1:** Secessionist rebel groups will be less likely than non-secessionist rebel groups to target civilians.

This claim rests on two main logics that, in turn, generate corollary hypotheses. Secessionists have neither the incentive to target their own civilians, nor the reach to attack civilians in the state from which they are seceding. Moreover, they face clear risks in engaging in the latter
type of attack. At the same time, secessionists seek to convey to the international community their willingness – and capacity – to be good citizens of the international community; exercising restraint with respect to civilian targeting can help accomplish these goals. Below, I develop each causal mechanism in turn.

The Limited Nature of Secessionist Targets

Rebel groups are typically much less powerful than governments (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009). Their reach is not particularly long. When rebels target civilians, they do so most frequently in the areas over which they exert territorial control. Because secessionists’ efforts are focused in their own region, they are most likely to control this region (Toft 2003). But they are unlikely to target civilians in this region.

Secessionists seek statehood. While the ultimate goal is independence and international recognition, secessionist rebels put their would-be state at risk the moment they decide to take up arms to divorce themselves forcibly from another state.⁹ All but a very few secessionist movements are ethnically based. Targeting their own civilians would make any military or political victory hollow, and defeat especially bitter. Such targeting would diminish their own population and resources, and likely embitter combatants and non-combatants alike during and post-conflict against the secessionists. In even more immediate terms, to the extent that secessionists (or, indeed, any rebels) rely on the civilian population

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⁹ Note that secessionists differ from autonomists in this key regard: while autonomist groups seek more control over the governance of a specific region, they do not seek an independent state. Different political aims generate distinct theoretical predictions regarding secessionist versus other types of rebel groups (including autonomist rebels).
for support during a conflict, targeting their own civilians would likely be counterproductive.\(^\text{10}\)

One could argue, though, that secessionists often have sufficient reach to target the areas that border their region. Even if this is the case, a critical danger of civilian targeting is retaliation. The literature on civilian targeting in interstate war makes this point extremely clearly (Downes 2008). Secessionist regions make easy targets without provoking governments to attack their civilians, and secessionist leaders recognize this fact. The leader of the South Moluccan separatist movement, for example, sought international intervention in 1950 to prevent anticipated civilian casualties because “If it came to a clash between TNI [Indonesian Government] troops and the Ambonese KNIL soldier in Ambon, then the Ambonese civilian population would be the victim and a great bloodbath would be inevitable” (Chauvel 1990).

While most rebels control some territory, secessionist control over territory is different because the territory controlled by secessionists is typically considered homeland territory (Goemans 2003; Shelef 2013) and the people in that territory are meant to constitute the population of a new state. Thus, the Kosovo Liberation Army’s (KLA) control over Kosovo is qualitatively distinct from the Nationalists’ control over Galicia during the Spanish Civil War. While the KLA did not target civilians,\(^\text{11}\) the Spanish Nationalists did so

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\(^\text{10}\) Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) make a similar argument with respect to how armed groups will behave fighting in their home communities and in communities with co-ethnics. Two differences between their analysis and mine are that their theoretical argument and testing of these claims are based on a micro-analysis of civilian targeting in civil war, and, their testing ground for these claims is Sierra Leone, a country that has experienced ideologically-based conflict. By contrast, the empirical analysis below uses the rebel group as its unit of analysis, and includes both ideological and non-ideological groups.

\(^\text{11}\) Per the original data set used here. UCDP’s one-sided violence data set also does not code the KLA as committing one-sided violence, which is defined as “the use of armed force by a government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians which results in at least 25 deaths. Extrajudicial killings in custody are excluded.” UCDP One-Sided Violence
with frequency and brutality (Balcells 2010). The quality of secessionist control and
governance over their territory also could be higher insofar as secessionists are able to
capture the pre-existing government administrative apparatus (Mampilly 2011).

One possible exception to the rule that secessionists ought not attack their own
refers to the possibility of enclaves that are not co-ethnics with the secessionists in
secessionist regions. Here, secessionists may well enact policies and even employ violence to
try to evict non co-ethnics from the region. For instance, the GAM (Free Aceh Movement)
systematically targeted ethnic Javanese in an attempt to evict them from Aceh (Kell 1995,
72). This type of behavior would be consistent with arguments, made by Downes in
particular, that civilian targeting is made more likely by annexationist war aims. Although
secessionists do not seek annexation per se, they typically do seek full control over the
region they populate. Thus, sub hypothesis 1 is as follows:

**SH1:** Secessionists will be unlikely to target civilians in the region they
claim, unless there are non co-ethnics they seek to evict from the
region.

An extreme example consistent with SH1 is that of the Bangladeshi secessionist movement.
The unusual political geography of pre-1972 Pakistan meant that it would have been virtually
impossible for the Mukti Bahini to target what were then West Pakistani civilians. The only
West Pakistanis accessible to East Pakistanis/Bengalis were those residing in East Pakistan,
and the vast majority of these were in the military. Barring a terrorist attack, striking a West
Pakistani population center would have required breaching India’s naval blockade of West

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Pakistan, and/or medium-range missiles that were not at all available to the Bengalis of 1971 (and, indeed, are not available to them today, either).\textsuperscript{12} Less extreme, but equally illuminating, cases include secessionist groups that are parts of archipelagos, such as the Moros in the Philippines. If a secessionist group is circumscribed by and concentrated on an island, it is also less likely to be able to access and attack non co-ethnics in a different part of the country.

By contrast, rebel groups with revolutionary aims have been known to justify atrocities as being for the greater good of the entire state. Sierra Leone’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission transcript indicates that atrocities were committed to overturn “the rottenness of a system, which could not be uprooted except by brutal means….In the process of cleaning the system, however, we have wronged the great majority of our countrymen” (Bangerter 2011, 369).

Note that I am not arguing that secessionists, in general, are less capable than non-secessionist rebels.\textsuperscript{13} Secessionists may be extremely capable, both politically and militarily, within their given region and, for this reason, quite competent to engage in civil war. But the structure of their military capability will differ from non-secessionist rebels. Secessionists are typically located on the periphery of a state, frequently far from the capital. Because their war aims are very local, their military capacity will also be focused on a limited area. These factors combine to limit the relative reach of secessionists – on average, they should be less able to wage major campaigns against civilians (or, for that matter, the government) outside


\textsuperscript{13} To some extent, this may be an empirical question, and is examined below.
their claimed territory. And campaigns within their territory should be constrained by the fact that they do not want to harm their own.¹⁴

The claim that secessionists will be less likely to engage in civilian targeting compared to non-secessionists runs contra Stanton (2013), who argues that rebel groups with exclusionary aims (such as secessionists) are more likely to engage in high-casualty strategies of terrorism compared to rebel groups with inclusive aims (such as revolutionaries). Stanton’s logic is that exclusionary groups do not risk alienating their domestic constituents by engaging in high-casualty attacks, while inclusive groups would, by definition, alienate the people whose support they are courting. But three factors may be missing from this logic. First, even if secessionists would in theory be happy to engage in high-casualty attacks against the government, they typically (as stated above) lack the capacity to do so. Second, secessionists are extremely vulnerable to retaliation, given that they are typically geographically concentrated. And third, the critical audience for secessionist activity in particular is much broader than the domestic population of the secessionist region or even the government against which the secessionist group is fighting. It also includes the international community, which may very well frown upon such attacks, thus harming the group’s chances of attaining international recognition.

Secessionists Want to Make a Good Impression

Secessionists have good reason to care about their reputation with respect to the international community. Even if they have acquired effective control over their territory,

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¹⁴ Initially, it might seem that one possible extension of this argument would suggest examining the location of rebel attacks against civilians, with secessionists being more likely to attack outside than within their regions. Given, however, the possibility that secessionists might attempt to cleanse non co-ethnics from their region, it is difficult to derive clear expectations regarding locations of attacks from this argument.
and exercise _de facto_ sovereignty, only the international community can give them the brass ring (via _de jure_ recognition) they seek: international recognition, status, and attendant benefits.\(^{15}\) Thus, it is critical that secessionists be able to signal both their willingness and capacity to be good citizens of the international community (Huang 2013; Jo and Simmons 2013). Exercising restraint in warfare by not targeting civilians accomplishes both goals.

As research on civilian targeting in civil war shows, such targeting is sometimes the result of poor discipline (Mueller 2004; Weinstein 2007). Weak organizational structures can lead to adverse selection in recruitment; unsavory rebel soldiers then plunder and pillage from the civilian population. Similarly, low capacity amongst rebels leads to the taking of what is needed, often by force, by even well-intentioned rebel groups. By contrast, the ideal candidate for statehood ought, in the eyes of the international community, to be able to exert control over its military and territory. The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States lists the following qualifications for statehood: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with other states. To be sure, these traditional requirements for statehood of empirical sovereignty have been under fire in recent years, with the emergence and recognition of a number of very weak states (Goggins 2011; Fabry 2010). But even for secessionists to whom great powers would like to extend international recognition, strong capacity is still preferred to weak capacity (Talmon 1993). Clearly stating and enforcing a policy of non-targeting of civilians helps rebel groups signal their capacity to the international community.\(^{16}\)

Importantly, the international community – defined here as the collectivity of actors (both states and NGOs) whose aims transcend national interest and are grounded in the UN

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\(^{15}\) On the increasing benefits of statehood, see Fazal and Griffiths (2014). On the distinction between legal and political recognition, see Talmon (2013).

\(^{16}\) On the relationship between command and control structures and compliance with IHL by rebel groups, see Sivakumaran 2012.
Charter – is not the only international audience to whom rebels are playing. All rebel groups – secessionist and not – might prefer to have support from individual states. For instance, the Syrian Free Army today benefits from the supply of arms from the US, and has certainly appealed for more forceful intervention. Coggins shows that great power patronage can have a significant effect on successful secessionism (Coggins 2014). Separately, Coggins and Kaplan show how pervasive the use of strategies by rebel groups seeking material support from third parties is (Coggins 2014; Kaplan 2014).

There are thus two important distinctions to be made with respect to international audiences and rebel groups. First, potential great power interveners may have different preferences from those of the international community. To the extent that rebels value great power patronage over the support of the international community, we might therefore expect these rival preferences to win the day. This insight leads to a second point on this subject: the assent of the international community is a necessary condition for successful secessionism. By contrast, non-secessionist rebels can achieve their political aims without the support of the international community. Thus, secessionists must pay close attention to the preferences of the international community if they are committed to their own political aims.

Many of the observers of civil conflict empowered to recognize new states value greatly the international normative landscape in which any new state would be operating. Key features of this landscape include major international humanitarian law (IHL) treaties such as the fourth 1949 Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians.17 It is particularly important for secessionist groups to let the international community know that they will be

good, as well as able, citizens of the international community.\textsuperscript{18} The distinction between secessionist and non-secessionist rebels’ relationship with the international community rests on the fact that the climb to recognition is much steeper for secessionists than for non-secessionists (Roth 2010). It is much harder to achieve recognition for an entirely new state than it is to achieve recognition for a new government in an existing state, a condition of which secessionists are well aware.

While recognition policy is a complex mosaic that varies from country to country, a brief description of the United Kingdom’s (UK) recognition policy helps illustrate this point. Until 1980, the UK would recognize governments – that is to say, new regimes of existing states, including those that came to power via coups d’état or revolution – if they held effective control over the state’s territory, and this control was firmly established and expected to continue (Talmon 1993, 239, quoting Morrison). This policy, however, led to negative political ramifications for the British when they recognized autocratic and unsavory regimes that technically met the above criteria. Thus, in 1980, the British changed their policy to recognize states, but not governments.\textsuperscript{19} This shift in policy meant that, as long as the British government maintained diplomatic relations with a specific government, it was implicitly recognizing that government, and provided the political cover lacking under the previous policy.

By contrast, the UK’s bar for recognizing a new state is considerably higher. In addition to meeting the Montevideo criteria for statehood (see above), the British government has required that the would-be state not be in violation of any UN resolutions,

\textsuperscript{18} Jo and Thompson make a similar claim, arguing that rebel groups seeking legitimacy are especially likely to grant the ICRC access to detainees, although they do not distinguish secessionist from non-secessionist groups. Jo and Thomson 2013.

\textsuperscript{19} In doing so, they joined an increasing number of states moving away from the approach of recognizing specific governments/regimes. Talmon 1993, 244-48; Warbrick 1992.
that it respect the UN Charter and basic principles of international law, guarantee the rights of minorities, accept commitments regarding disarmament and regional stability, and commit to a raft of human rights obligations (Talmon 1993, 251). These standards are quite different from those laid out for even implicit recognition of new regimes of existing states. The international community in general appears more willing to abide political than cartographic alterations. Knowing that theirs is the more difficult path to follow, secessionists also understand that courting the international community is especially critical to their chances of success.

John Lee Anderson, in a journalistic account of rebellions around the world, makes this point in his discussion of the Polisario in the Western Sahara, who aspire to independent statehood: “In spite of its frustrations, the Polisario has refrained from using terrorism to strike at Morocco beyond the wall. Because it pretends to nationhood, the Polisario affects the sober demeanor seemingly appropriate for a sovereign state…Similarly, the lives of enemy soldiers taken prisoner are spared.” The restraint exercised by the Polisario contrasts with the behavior of the Afghan mujahedin of the 1980s, who tortured and killed the families of Soviet military advisors and later bombed government-controlled cities after the Soviet withdrawal (Anderson 2004, 152, 141). More generally, rebels also may view compliance as a means of embarrassing the state from which they seek to exit. According to one legal scholar, “National liberation movements have been more willing to apply and to declare their intention to apply the Geneva Conventions than ‘parent states’ in self-determination conflicts in an effort to ‘internationalise’ and legitimize their struggle and their “just cause”” (Higgins 2004, 97).
Rebel groups in general and secessionist groups in particular have invented and adopted several platforms for this type of signaling. The Zapatista declaration of independence invites the International Committee of the Red Cross to monitor its conduct. The FMLN in El Salvador explicitly incorporated the Geneva Conventions into its training manuals. More generally, Huang (2013) finds that rebel groups – particularly those, like secessionists, seeking international approbation – are increasingly likely to engage in practice that bears a striking resemblance to traditional interstate diplomacy.

Various IGOs and NGOs have also developed strategies to increase the likelihood of compliance with international humanitarian law in civil wars. The ICRC deploys a series of strategies to induce rebel compliance with IHL, including encouraging rebel groups to issue unilateral declarations and conclude special agreements regarding their comportment (Hoffmann 2012, 17). As a result, some rebel groups have deposited a statement with the ICRC that conveys publicly their intent to comply with IHL. Beginning in 2001, the UN Security Council requested that the Secretary-General publicly list armed groups that used child soldiers, a strategy explicitly designed to name and shame; notably, few of the rebel groups on the most recent list are secessionist. Reportedly, knowing that they are listed has caused several rebel groups and governments to change their recruitment strategies so that they can be delisted (Coomaraswamy 2010, 5-6). And in 2005, UN Resolution 1612 empowered the United Nations to request “action plans” from belligerent groups that

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20 The most comprehensive list to date of these instruments can be found in Sivakumaran 2011. Most recently, also see www.theirwords.org. Access date: August 20, 2013.
22 These include: Biafran authorities (1963); the African National Congress and Zimbabwean African People’s Union (1977); and, SPML (1988) Ewumbue-Mono 2006, 907-908.
outlined their strategies for complying with laws of war such as those pertaining to child soldiers.\(^2^4\)

Additional mechanisms to signal publicly a commitment to comply with *jus in bello* have become available to rebel groups quite recently. Beginning in 2000, the NGO Geneva Call offered non-state actors the opportunity to pledge their commitment to abide by specific norms of international humanitarian and human rights law. Geneva Call now offers three “Deeds of Commitment” that non-state actors may sign— one on land mine usage (with 42 signatories), one on children’s rights in conflict, and one on the prohibition of sexual violence.\(^2^5\) It should be noted that, by signing these deeds of commitment, rebel groups (or, in the language of international law as well as the international NGO world—organized armed groups, also known as non-state actors, or NSAs) accept extensive monitoring of their engagements by Geneva Call (Bongard and Somer 2011).

Geneva Call reports a 93% self-reporting compliance rate amongst signatories to the Deed of Commitment Banning Anti-Personnel Mines and, more generally, high rates of compliance as verified by Geneva Call (Bongard and Somer 2011, 691).\(^2^6\) Bearing in mind the possibility of a selection effect— that those groups that sign the deed either are already in compliance or fully intend to comply (von Stein 2005)\(^2^7\) — a brief examination of signatories and non-signatories is instructive. Especially responsive signatories include: the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), which was particularly receptive to Geneva Call’s overtures in the early 2000s as the SPLA was looking ahead to a peace agreement and, quite

\(^{2^4}\) NB: These are not systematically made available to the public, although specific action plans are available via theirwords.org.


\(^{2^6}\) Also, author’s correspondence with Pascal Bongard. May 2, 2013.

\(^{2^7}\) Note, though, that it is typically Geneva Call that contacts rebel groups, and not the other way around. A recent exception to this norm is the case of the (separatist) Tuareg in Mali, who initiated contact with Geneva Call. Interview with Pascal Bongard, February 14, 2013.
possibly, secession; the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK), with the caveat that the PKK took several years to sign the deed and also made some reservations to its commitment; and, the Polisario Front, which has been especially compliant with its commitments (and has destroyed more than 10,000 stockpiled anti-personnel mines). Field investigations in response to accusations of non-compliance revealed that autonomy-seeking rebels in Puntland (Somalia) and the Philippines (Moro Islamic Liberation Front, or MILF) were, in fact, in compliance with their commitments (Bongard and Somer 2011, 696-701). Geneva Call has also had limited success with groups such as the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC), a separatist group in Senegal, which has agreed to a moratorium on antipersonnel land mines as well as demining. All of the above groups are secessionists or, in the case of Puntland, autonomist. By contrast, groups such as the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN – also in Colombia), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, and the New People’s Army in the Philippines have been unwilling to sign the Geneva Call deeds of commitment. With the exception of the LTTE, all of the unwilling groups are non-secessionist.

When asked why some groups were more willing to sign the deed of commitment banning antipersonnel landmines than others, a Geneva Call program director suggested several reasons: internal pressure mitigating against the use of weapons that could harm the local population; job opportunities provided by demining; limited military efficacy of land mines; humanitarian and development concerns; international reputation and standing;

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29 Preliminary analysis of more systematic data suggests the interesting finding that autonomist groups may actually be the most likely to sign Geneva Call’s deeds of commitment (compared to secessionist and non-territorial groups).
putting pressure on the government and maintaining the moral high ground with respect to
the government, and, (as in the case of the SPLA) timing with respect to peace talks.
Additionally, “armed non-state actors which aspire to statehood may be more inclined to
comply with states’ rules and willing to operate in accordance with international standards.
This is the case of the Polisario Front and Somaliland.”

Rebel groups learn which rules the international community values in at least two
ways. First, as discussed above, international NGOs such as Geneva Call and the ICRC
engage with these groups and frequently offer training in international humanitarian law.
And second, members of these groups – such as former state military personnel and political
leaders with legal expertise – may come to the conflict already armed with knowledge of
IHL. As such, while not every rebel group will be versed in international humanitarian law,
those that seek to engage the international community – secessionists especially – should be
among the most likely to be aware of this body of law. They will therefore likely be

  cognizant of the Fourth 1949 Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Civilians as well as
  the extension of this body of law to civil conflict per the Second 1977 Additional Protocol to
  the 1949 Geneva Conventions. More generally, secessionists in particular ought to be aware
  of the international community’s commitment to the principle of distinction – which entails
  protection of civilians – and of the fact that this commitment has deepened considerably
  over the past century.

  The ICRC uses a similar argument when dealing with rebel groups. Gleditsch et al. have
  found that rebel group and government decisions to sign a Deed of Commitment (for
  rebels) or the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and
  Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (for governments (a.k.a., the
  “Ottawa Treaty”)) are, indeed, interdependent. Gleditsch, Hug, Schubiger and
  Wucherpfennig 2011.

  Interview with Pascal Bongard, Geneva Call. February 14, 2013.

  For an excellent analysis of the development of the principle of distinction over time, see
  Kinsella (2011).
The development of international humanitarian law, and rebels’ increased awareness of this body of laws, leads to a second sub-hypothesis:

**SH2:** As additional humanitarian laws regarding civilian targeting are codified, rebels, and especially secessionists, should be less likely to target civilians.

Scholars of international law might justifiably object to the focus on codified international humanitarian law in this hypothesis. Rebel groups are not parties to these treaties. Indeed, they are not able to become parties to them, nor did they participate in negotiating these treaties (Roberts and Sivakumaran 2012). Nonetheless, secessionist groups frequently make claims to international recognition based on the position that they already constitute a state. And indeed, legally (although not empirically) speaking, conflicts involving national liberation movements are supposed to be treated as international conflicts subject to the full extent of international humanitarian law. As such, secessionists make every effort to behave as a state would in the international community. These efforts include an acceptance of international humanitarian law, whose level of acceptance in the international community is most clearly signified by the conclusion of multilateral treaties on the subject. From the perspective of secessionist groups themselves, then, a focus on IHL treaties as a measure of the obligation to comply with the principle of distinction ought not be amiss.

**Research Design**

The hypotheses outlined above can be tested on at least two sets of cases: all rebel groups, and only secessionist rebel groups. Another dimension that could delimit the sample

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33 Although some national liberation movements were invited to observe the negotiations for the 1977 Additional Protocols Higgins 2009, 108.
examined here is time. Most quantitative studies of civil wars have focused almost exclusively on the post-1945 era. Table 1 lists a handful of recent quantitative studies of civilian targeting in civil war by rebels, as well as the time period they cover, to illustrate this point.

**Table 1 about here**

To begin to test the hypotheses outlined above, I employ a preliminary version of an original data set on 285 civil wars from 1816-2007. This data set, known as Civil War Initiation and Termination (C-WIT)\(^34\), is based on the Correlates of War (COW) version 4 list of wars,\(^35\) but includes much more extensive information on the initiation, conduct, and termination of war, including measures of the war aims of the rebels as well as of civilian targeting by all parties to a given conflict.\(^36\) The unit of observation is the war-dyad, such that the same government can be fighting more than one distinct rebel group at any time. For example, the Liberian civil war that began in the late 1980s was prosecuted by several rebel groups, including the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO). The NPFL and ULIMO had separate and distinct military structures, but also different political goals; the NPFL sought

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\(^34\) Fazal and Fortna 2013.  
\(^35\) Sarkees and Wayman 2010. COW’s list of intra-state wars include 335 conflicts, 50 of which we exclude typically because they are what COW calls “regional or inter-communal wars” (26 cases), where the state is not a party or because, upon investigation, we found that they did not meet the COW criteria for war. For example, two of our coders independently came to the conclusion that the Bolivia War of 1952 (COW War #737) did not meet COW’s battle death threshold, and coders also found that what COW codes as the Second Nepal Maoists War of 2003 (COW War #931) is in fact a direct continuation of what COW names the First Nepal Maoist Insurgency of 2001 (COW War #921). Additionally, in some cases, the war was sufficiently obscure that our coders could not locate enough reliable sources to code the conflict.  
\(^36\) To date, each war has been coded by one person, and we are now in the process of having each war coded by a second person. Our second round of coding is random – that is, we randomized the war numbers and have been coding the second round in “random order.” Approximately one-half of the wars have undergone second-round coding as of this writing.
to overthrow and take over Samuel Doe’s government, while ULIMO (constituted of the remains of Doe’s army) fought to prevent the NPFL from attaining its goals. Hence, they are coded as separate dyads in the same (multi-episode) war.

**Description of Variables**

The dependent variable, *Rebels’ Civilian Targeting*, codes for whether the rebels used a strategy of significant violence against civilians. Violence is defined here as death or bodily harm, and is distinct from deportation or imprisonment alone. Such a strategy implies a conscious decision to inflict violence upon civilians, and thus would preclude any conflicts where rebel actions only generated unintended, minimal collateral damage. It is meant to capture cases where there is a sustained campaign of civilian targeting on the part of the rebels. The RUF in Sierra Leone, for example, has been widely criticized for systematic violence against civilians, including amputations (*Sowing Terror: Atrocities against Civilians in Sierra Leone* 1998) and sexual violence (Cohen 2010), while the LRA in Uganda is roundly condemned for its recruitment of child soldiers (Beber and Blattman 2013). Because the current version of C-WIT exhibits a great deal of missing data for this variable, I standardized missing values to zero, on the assumption that campaigns of civilian targeting tend to be fairly visible. Tables 3 and 4 report results for both the original and standardized versions of this variable, respectively.

*Secessionist* codes for the war aim of the rebel group. Rebel groups that seek their own independent state are coded as secessionist. Groups that seek to overthrow the central government, or seek only autonomy, are not coded as secessionist. Examples of each type of war aim include: the FMLN in El Salvador, coded as aiming to overthrow the center; the

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37 Unless otherwise noted, all variables are from the C-WIT data set.
Yemeni Young Faith Believers, which sought, among other things, autonomy (but not secession) for the northern Saada region; and, groups such as the Acehnese, Chechens, and Poles, who at various times have fought for independent statehood.

*Insurgency* captures the overall military strategy employed by the group. Despite the fact that insurgency and civil war (or insurgents and rebels) are often equated, it is important to distinguish how wars are fought from the fact that they are fought, as well as from who is doing the fighting (Fazal and Fortna 2013). Here, insurgency means the use of guerrilla warfare, which is characterized by small, lightly armed groups practicing hit-and-run tactics, usually from rural areas (Fearon and Laitin 2003), as in the Chinese Civil War.\(^{38}\) Insurgency is typically contrasted to conventional warfare, which is characterized by the use of heavy artillery and set-piece battles, such as in the American or Spanish Civil Wars.\(^{39}\) I include this control to test for the possibility, suggested by scholars such as Mueller (2004), that guerrillas will be more likely to target civilians than will non-guerrillas.

*Post-Additional Protocols* is a dummy variable for conflicts fought after 1977, when two Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions were created. The Protocols – especially Protocol II – are meant to extend the 1949 Conventions explicitly to civil wars.\(^{40}\) Protocol I is also relevant, in that it extends the scope of existing international humanitarian law to include “armed conflicts in which people are fighting against colonial domination and

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\(^{38}\) Which, per Mao’s advice regarding insurgency, eventually became a conventional war.

\(^{39}\) Kalyvas & Balcells (2010) code for a third type of military strategy, “symmetric non-conventional” (SNC), which they say occurs “when the military technologies of the states and rebels are matched at a low level.” C-WIT does not code for SNC wars. For the purpose of this paper, this exclusion is not relevant, as SNC refers to government, not rebel, warfighting. Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, 418.

\(^{40}\) Earlier attempts to include civil wars, or “non-international armed conflicts,” under IHL include Common Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions as well as Article 19 of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property.
alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-
determination.”

Protocol II Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed
Conflicts
develops and supplements Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of
12 August 1949 [and] shall apply to all armed conflicts … which take place in
the territory of a High Contracting Party between its armed forces and
dissident armed forces or other organized armed groups which, under
responsible command, exercise such control over a part of its territory as to
enable them to carry out sustained and concerted military operations (Article
1).

On its own, this variable tests for whether rebels in general are less likely to target civilians
once international humanitarian law has been extended in this way. The 1977 Additional
Protocols represent the culmination of the first stage of a movement to extend formally
application of IHL to civil wars, or “internal armed conflicts” (Sivakumaran 2011).

Secessionist-Post-AP tests SH2, which suggests that it is secessionist rebel groups that will be
most likely to respond to this development in international law and, thus, be less likely to
target civilians after 1977 than before.

Government Civilian Targeting is defined exactly the same way as Rebels’ Civilian Targeting,
except with the government being the perpetrator of any attacks against civilians. It is
included here to control for the strong possibility that rebels may target civilians in response
to government targeting of civilians (or vice versa). Examples of government targeting of
civilians include the Sierra Leone (v. RUF) civil war, the Chechen civil war, the Bengali
Independence War and, albeit too recent to be included in these data, the ongoing Syrian
civil war (Death from the Skies 2013).

41 Article 1(4) of Protocol I. Available at
C86520D7EFAD527C12563CD0051D63C. Access date: June 28, 2013.
Contraband captures the financing structure of the rebel groups, and codes for whether the rebels finance their fighting at least partly through illegal means such as the mining, production or sale of gems or drugs. It is meant to control for the possibility, advanced most strongly by Weinstein (2007), that rebel groups that rely on contraband financing are freer to target civilians because they are less reliant on the support of the civilian population to prosecute their wars.

Force Ratio is the size of rebel forces divided by the number of government troops deployed for this conflict. This variable captures the balance of power between the government and rebel forces, speaking to the basic principle that the stronger side is the more likely to win (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009). It is similar to Wood’s measure of relative rebel capability, which is “a ratio of insurgent troops to a scaled number of government troops” (Wood 2010, 606). Per Wood, the balance of power may determine the use of civilian targeting as a strategy (Wood 2014). Similarly, Hultman argues that, as rebels sustain losses, they are more likely to target civilians (Hultman 2007). Importantly, I use the number of government troops deployed for this conflict, rather than the total size of government’s army, given that a significant portion of government troops is likely to be held back for international defense and/or other internal conflicts, while the totality of the rebel force should be expected to be deployed against these government forces. For example, a number of civil wars in China and Russia in particular have been characterized by the deployment of only a small fraction of government forces to the conflict. By focusing on the ratio of troops actually fighting in a given conflict, the analysis remains somewhat more local.

Note, however, that Hultman’s theory is a dynamic one, requiring conflict-month data, which is not used here.
*Fragmentation* measures the number of factions in the rebel group, defined here as distinct, but related, groups fighting the same opponent and sharing political goals, but which have separate military commands (and sometimes different names). While most rebel groups in the data set are not factionalized, some, such as the Kashmiri insurgents fighting India currently, contain dozens of factions (Staniland 2012). I include this variable to control for the possibility, raised by a number of scholars, that more factionalized rebel groups will be especially likely to engage in outbidding that leads to higher levels of violence against civilians (see for example Chenoweth 2010; Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012).

Finally, *Polity* controls for the level of democracy of the government. Per Stanton, as well as many others, it may be that rebels are especially likely to target civilians when they are fighting a democratic opponent (Eubank and Weinberg 1994; Li 2005; Stanton 2013). Note that there is possible feedback here to the extent that democracy may affect both rebel incentives to attack civilians as well as government incentives to attack civilians (Downes 2007) – which may, in turn, invoke a logic of reciprocity that leads to rebel targeting of civilians. *Polity* uses Polity2 from the Polity IV data set as a measure of regime type, which ranges from -10 (most autocratic) to 10 (least autocratic). While other measures of

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43 Note that C-WIT distinguishes between groups and factions. In order to be considered a separate group, a rebel organization must have distinct political aims as well as military structures (e.g., ULIMO v. NPFL). Factions are subsets of groups; they share the same political goals, but may have distinct military commands. Thus, ULIMO v. Liberia and NPFL v. Liberia constitute two separate observations (war-dyads) in the data set, but the multitude of Kashmiri factions are all part of one rebel group and hence constitute only one observation in the data set.

44 Unlike the standard Polity measure, Polity2 converts values missing in Polity to the regular -10 to 10 scale according to the reason for the missingness of the data (foreign interruption, interregnum/anarchy, or transition). Using Polity2 (versus Polity) allows the inclusion of more observations, especially because a disproportionate number of missing observations in Polity are country-years in which a civil war is ongoing.
democracy are arguably superior to the Polity measure, none go back as far in time.\textsuperscript{45} It is important to note, however, that the practice of using Polity in analyses of civil war has been criticized because Polity includes measures of civil war in some of its coding (Vreeland 2008). But this issue is more salient for analyses of the onset versus the conduct, as here, of civil war.

\textbf{Table 2 about here}

Table 2 provides summary statistics for these variables. Note especially the columns for missing data and correspondence rates. One reason that most quantitative analyses of civil wars focus exclusively on the post-1945 period is that it is very difficult to obtain data on earlier conflicts. Although the data collection effort underlying the C-WIT data set is ongoing, and we expect that the final version will not have as much missing data as the version used in this analysis, we do expect a significant portion of missing data. One relevant question to ask is whether the data are missing systematically. This question is especially pertinent for the variable with the greatest amount of missing data: Force Ratio (Deployed). While there are 75 observations with missing data on the numerator for this variable (size of rebel group), there are 114 observations with missing data on the denominator (government troops deployed to the conflict). Moreover, the overlap of missing data between these two variables is considerable (at 54 observations), but by no means perfect, further restricting the number of observations in the analysis when this variable is included. There does appear to be some bias in the missingness of this variable, in that, oddly, post-1950 civil wars are much more likely to exhibit coding of “missing” compared to earlier civil wars. This has particular

\textsuperscript{45} For example: the Freedom House “Freedom in the World” data set which, after the Polity score, contains the most commonly-used measure in the political science, covers from 1972 to the present; Pzeworski et al.’s measure of democracy covers the post-1950 period; Bernhard et al. cover from 1991 to 1995; and, the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index project began in 2007.
implications for sub-hypothesis 2, which predicts changes over time in rebel civilian targeting. I attempt to mitigate the effects of the missingness of this variable by including alternative measures of the balance of power between the rebels and government in robustness checks, where results are largely stable.

The “correspondence rate” column reports the degree to which first and second coders agreed on the coding for that particular variable. With one exception, the correspondence rates for the variables used here are well over fifty percent. The variable with the least degree of correspondence, Force Ratio, differs from most of the other variables in the analysis in that it is continuous rather than categorical or even binary. Thus, minor discrepancies may deflate the correspondence rate for Force Ratio. If we allow a twenty-five percent deviation in Force Ratio, the correspondence rate for this variable rises to 73 percent.

An important, related question is whether secessionists are systematically different with respect to their capabilities than non-secessionists. Insofar as civilian targeting is related to capabilities in some way, if capabilities are correlated with war aims, a focus on war aims could obscure other causes. Additionally, it is possible that capabilities determine war aims, with less capable rebel groups seeking secession and more capable groups seeking to take over the entire state. Depending on the measure of capability used, it appears that there may be a weakly positive relationship between secessionism and capability. Thus, to the degree that capability enhances a group’s likelihood of engaging in civilian targeting and decreases a group’s likelihood of engaging in secessionism, the data are biased against the argument advanced here. Moreover, if secessionists are indeed less likely to target civilians than non-secessionists, their strength relative to non-secessionists suggests that they are truly exercising restraint.
Analysis

Given the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, logistic regression is employed to analyze rebel use of civilian targeting as a military strategy. Consistent with the general argument of this paper, I find that secessionists are significantly less likely to target civilians compared to non-secessionist rebel groups. Tables 3 and 4 report these results based on standardized and original codings of the civilian targeting variables, and finds this claim to be robust to multiple model specifications. Based on results from Models 2 and 3 in Table 3, secessionists groups are between twenty-eight and forty-one percent less likely to target civilians compared to non-secessionist rebels.

Table 3 about here
Table 4 about here
Table 5 about here

Although the main hypothesis of the paper is supported by the analysis, the subsidiary hypotheses require additional interpretation. In particular, SH2 suggests that all rebels, and particularly secessionists, will be less likely to target civilians as international humanitarian law develops and, especially, as it is extended to apply to civil wars. The consistently positive and significant coefficient on post-Additional Protocols indicates that it is not, in fact, the case, that rebels in general are less likely to target civilians after 1977 as opposed to before. Indeed, the results suggest that rebels as a whole are up to forty percent more likely to target civilians after 1977 as compared to before. The interaction terms between secessionism and the post-1977 period reported in Models 4 in Tables 3 and 4 tell a

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46 Results using OLS instead of logistic regression are stable.
47 It is possible that there is a reporting bias in the data set that is driving this result. As these violations become less acceptable to the international community, they may be more likely to be written about, and thus more likely to be noted by the coders for later wars. A related logic has been used to show that terrorism is systematically overreported in democracies as compared to other regime types. Drakos and Gofas 2006; Fariss 2014.
similar story. In particular, non-secessionist rebels are significantly more likely to target civilians after 1977 (compared to non-secessionist rebels prior to 1977); and while the coefficient on the interaction term between secessionist rebels and the post-1977 period itself is not significant, it is positive, contrary to the prediction of SH2.\footnote{Splitting the data into pre- and post-1977 samples yields insignificant findings for all coefficients, largely because the post-1977 sample is quite small. That said, previous scholarship focused primarily on post-1989 cases has found secessionism to have a negatively significant impact on civilian targeting. Rotating the base category yields indeterminate findings, with the most consistent result being that pre-1977 secessionists are especially unlikely to engage in civilian targeting (compared to all other base categories).}

Tables 3 and 4 also generate interesting findings with respect to control variables, some of which are inconsistent with previous scholarship. Insurgency is always positive, but only attains statistical significance at the .1 level in the most stripped-down model. This result is generally, although not strongly, consistent with the claim that guerrillas are more likely to target civilians compared to rebels not using guerrilla warfare, but it is inconsistent with the logic that guerrillas are less likely to target the civilian population because they depend upon civilians for support. Not surprisingly, rebels who are on the receiving end of civilian targeting are approximately three times more likely to engage in such targeting themselves, as compared to rebels whose governments do not target civilians. This finding, which speaks directly to the role of reciprocity, is consistent with previous scholarship on civilian targeting in interstate wars (Downes 2008; Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004; Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2006) as well as more generally with compliance with international humanitarian law in interstate wars (Morrow 2007, 2014). The results also reinforce existing claims about the relationship between group fragmentation and civilian targeting; more fragmented groups are between thirty-five and forty percent more likely to target civilians compared to less fragmented groups.
Contrary to Weinstein’s argument, however, contraband financing is never a significant predictor of civilian targeting. Indeed, in some specifications, the coefficient on this variable is negative. The coefficient on regime type also fails to attain statistical significance, in contrast to Stanton’s argument and findings. Also in contrast with Stanton but, particularly, Wood, the indicator of the relative strength of the rebels vis-à-vis the government is consistently negative, but never statistically significant. This result does not change when alternative measures of relative strength – using C-WIT’s measure of total government forces as well as COW’s measure of the same – are substituted, even though these alternative measures have less missing data than the ratio of forces deployed to the conflict.

Tests for robustness that include alternative specifications for SH2, particularly an indicator variable for the post-Geneva era or a variable for the year in which the war began (to provide a more gradual test of SH2), yielded largely stable results. The coefficient on secessionism was always negative, although in some cases it dipped below the p=.1 level. Similar results obtained when using an OLS instead of a logit model. In sum, the findings from Table 3 and 4 suggest roles for secessionism as well as period effects as demarcated by the passage of international humanitarian laws in predicting civilian targeting, albeit in sometimes unexpected directions.

Whom Do Secessionists Target?

SH1 suggests that, when we observe secessionists engaged in civilian targeting, this targeting should be directed at non co-ethnics – those that would be a minority in a new state and, quite probably, a majority in the current, status quo state. This logic is consistent with the incorporation of war aims into theories of civilian targeting in interstate war, where
such targeting is expected when belligerents have territorial aims. In these cases, belligerents target civilians as a means of cleansing territory of unwanted populations.

Table 6 presents the distribution of targets among those secessionists that target civilians. Note that this table self-consciously selects on the dependent variable, on the principle that we can learn a great deal from examining variation among secessionists’ targets. Certainly, if it had been the case that secessionists were more frequently targeting their own than targeting populations they would prefer leave their area, SH1 would be challenged. To some extent, such a finding would be consistent with some relatively high-profile, and recent, cases. In Kurdish, Chechen, and Palestinian villages, respectively, central governments have successfully recruited locals to inform on their neighbors. Likewise, the LTTE is infamous for its extensive (although not exclusive) targeting of co-ethnics.

These cases notwithstanding, the data tell another story. The vast majority (70%) of instances of secessionists targeting civilians occur when secessionists target non co-ethnics residing in territory claimed by the secessionists. This is consistent with the notion that such targeting is for the purpose of cleansing. This percent drops a bit when we look at the cell where secessionists target non co-ethnics exclusively (that is to say, they do not also target co-ethnics), but still demonstrates that even when accounting for civilians that target their own as well as others, targeting non co-ethnics remains the most common strategy.

Table 6 about here

A more robust test of this hypothesis employs regression analysis of the 82 secessionist conflicts in C-WIT. To test this hypothesis, additional data was collected on the secessionist group’s relative ethnic balance within the claimed secessionist region. Two measures of this variable are used below: Ethnic Balance (1) is coded in equal quintiles, ranging from the

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49 Data on targets were taken from coder’s reports on wars in C-WIT.
secessionists in question comprising a clear minority (0-20%) to an overwhelming majority (80-100%). Ethnic Balance (2) is coded in unequal quintiles to account for skewness in the data and allow for a slightly finer-grained analysis. Ethnic Balance (2) is coded as follows: 1 (0-25%), clear minority; 2 (25-50%), minority; 3 (50-75%), clear majority; 4 (75-90%), predominant; and 5 (90-100%), overwhelming. As with the C-WIT data, this variable was coded using mostly secondary sources.

The logic underlying SH1 suggests that, among secessionists, those that are more dominant in their region will feel less of a need to cleanse non co-ethnics. Thus, as Ethnic Balance increases, the likelihood of civilian targeting should decrease. Table 6 reports results on analyses of civilian targeting by secessionist groups exclusively. It provides strong evidence in favor of SH1. According to Model 2 of Table 7, the most dominant secessionist groups in the regions they claim are approximately twenty-five percent less likely to target civilians when compared to the least dominant secessionist groups in the regions they claim. Interestingly, robustness tests that collapse the ethnic balance variable to a binary value and consider the possibility that the effect is curvilinear (where ethnic groups with mid-level dominance would be most likely to target non co-ethnics) do not yield particularly strong results; in this case, the effect of ethnic dominance on civilian targeting may in fact be linear.

Table 7 about here

The results of this analysis are also consistent with Cunningham et al.’s claim that factionalized secessionists are particularly likely to target civilians. Moving from the 25th to 75th percentile on this variable yields an approximate ten percent increase in the likelihood of civilian targeting; note that the substantive effect of this variable is smaller than that of the degree of secessionist ethnic dominance in the region. The logic of reciprocity continues to exert the strongest influence on civilian targeting, with secessionists on the receiving end of
government targeting more than two-and-a-half times more likely to engage in civilian targeting themselves, compared to secessionists not experiencing government targeting of civilians.

**Does International Humanitarian Law Matter?**

Another explanation for the finding that secessionists are less likely to target civilians than are non-secessionists refers to historical changes in the international legal landscape. As international humanitarian law has developed, the argument goes, secessionists – rebels who are in particular need of international approval in order to achieve their war aims – will be especially likely to make efforts to comply. According to SH2, then, secessionists operating in the post-Geneva Convention era and, in particular, in the post- Additional Protocol (AP) era, will be especially likely to link their chances of international recognition to their conduct during war. As such, they will be less likely to target civilians as compared to other rebel groups at other times.

The quantitative analysis in Tables 3 and 4 appears to contradict this hypothesis, which predicts a negative, significant coefficient on the interaction term between secessionism and the post-1977 era. Instead, the coefficient on the interaction term is positive and insignificant. One possible explanation for this non-finding is that secessionists feel the pressures of the international system to conduct themselves in a certain manner even prior to the decision to engage in political violence. It is not just international humanitarian law that has proliferated over the time period discussed here, but also the international law regarding the resort to force. As scholars such as Mikulas Fabry (2010) have shown, successful secessionists in the 19th century earned statehood the hard way, literally by fighting for their state. With the rise of the principle of self-determination, however, statehood has
become more of a right – perhaps especially for those movements that do not engage in violence. Thus, international recognition may well be tied to restraint, not just during war, but even preceding a possible conflict (Goertz, Diehl, and Balas 2014). If this is the case, we should expect that secessionists who have already made the decision to violate one set of international principles – those that oppose unilateral secession – will perhaps be more determined to win and therefore less concerned about violating other principles of international law, such as those prohibiting the targeting of civilians (for a similar logic, see Fearon 1994).

This reasoning suggests, as a first step, that secessionism has become less violent over time. While most data on secessionism focuses on the post-1945 period, Ryan Griffiths’ data set identifies and codes a series of variables for all secessionist movements from 1816 to 2011 (Griffiths Forthcoming). These data demonstrate a clear decline in the percent of secessionist groups using violence, even though secessionism itself is on the rise (Fazal and Griffiths 2014). Figure 1 graphs the percent of secessionist movements accompanied by major violence and demonstrates a clear decline over the course of the past two centuries. After 1949, secessionist movements were half as likely to turn to major violence as compared to the pre-1949 period.

Figure 1 about here

Thus, it seems at least possible that a selection effect is driving the result on the interaction term. The secessionists most likely to exercise restraint in light of modern international humanitarian law may well also be those least likely to resort to violence in the first place.

50 Coded as having reached the Correlates of War threshold of 1,000 battle deaths.
51 These findings are consistent with Cunningham’s analysis of self-determination movements, although she only examines the post-1960 era. In separate work, Cunningham finds that secessionists are more likely to use violence than non-secessionist self-determination groups, but does not explore variation amongst secessionists that do and don’t use violence to press their claims. Cunningham 2011, 279, 282. Cunningham 2013.
The secessionist groups in the data analysis above, then, may represent particularly hard
cases for SH2 in that they have all selected themselves into conflict, and therefore are already
arguably acting in ways contrary to the contemporary international legal landscape. This
result is to some extent consistent with Stanton’s finding that, when exclusionary (e.g.,
separatist groups) engage in terrorism, they are more likely than inclusive (e.g., ideological)
groups to focus on high-casualty targets.52

Conclusion

Secessionism – both successful and unsuccessful – is on the rise. It therefore makes
sense to examine the wartime conduct of secessionists in comparison to each other and to
non-secessionists. The finding that secessionists are both less likely to target civilians when
engaged in civil war than non-secessionists and, moreover, less likely to engage in civil war
today compared to earlier eras, generates a series of puzzles and questions for scholars and
policy makers.

First, insofar as policy makers seek to encourage the current trend of non-violence
among secessionists, they may need to consider offering carrots to non-violent secessionists
that violate the sovereignty of the secessionists’ home states. The historically low rate of
secessionist violence that we observe today may be unlikely to persist in the face of constant
rejection from the international community.

Second, and related, practitioners concerned with civilian targeting in civil wars also
ought to examine ways to incentivize secessionists – the groups that seem most receptive to
international advice, and for good reason – against civilian targeting as well as other

52 Note, though, that Stanton does not find that exclusionary groups are more likely to
engage in terrorism generally – just that, when they do engage in terrorism, they are more
likely to engage in high-casualty terrorism when compared to inclusive groups.
violations of international humanitarian law. The strategic argument advanced in this paper also suggests that secessionists should be unlikely to target their own cultural property. According to Cohen’s logic of gang-raping for the purpose of generating group cohesion, secessionists may have less need to create cohesion than non-secessionists because they are already fighting in ethnically-delimited groups. By focusing on secessionist groups that care deeply about their international reputation, monitoring organizations like Amnesty International and the ICRC might be able to amplify any “naming and shaming” effects, thereby, for example, increasing protections for prisoners of war. It is important to remember, though, that a focus on secessionists bears the possible cost of antagonizing the secessionists’ governmental foes and/or allies concerned about preserving the principle of state sovereignty.

This calculation is especially important when considered from the perspective of the secessionists. One unanswered question is whether restraint hinders or advances the secessionist cause. On one hand, rebels rarely win the civil wars they fight, and even when they do, the climb to international recognition is much steeper for secessionists than for non-secessionists. Recent research suggests that while non-violence can be effective for many groups, this is not the case for secessionists (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Long odds might therefore make secessionist civilian targeting more likely, especially in the face of the reality of government targeting of civilians in the secessionist region. Indeed, the most robust – in terms of both statistical significance and substantive size – predictor of secessionist (and rebel) civilian targeting is government targeting. Secessionist groups such as the Chechens have certainly justified targeting civilians as a response to previous government targeting of their own population (Bangerter 2011, 379). The logic of reciprocity looms large
despite the fact that civilian targeting tends not to be a particularly effective strategy for political or military victory.

Related, there are important questions regarding sequencing that require future research. The Chechen conflict exploded onto the international scene with an October 2002 attack on a Moscow theater and, two years later, a September 2004 attack on a school in Beslan that killed nearly 200 schoolchildren. Neither incident would be predicted by the hypotheses above; not only did a separatist group target civilians, it traveled well outside the bounds of its claimed territory to do so. It is important to remember, however, that these attacks occurred ten years after Chechnya’s declaration of independence and several years into the Chechen civil war. Insofar as targeting non co-ethnics outside their territory is a last resort for secessionists, there may exist a window of opportunity to prevent such attacks early in a secessionist conflict.

Even beyond the political tightrope that practitioners must walk in dealing with secessionism, this analysis also holds important implications for existing research on civilian targeting in civil conflict. Notably, the claim that contraband financing will be associated with higher levels of civilian targeting does not receive strong support when the universe of cases is expanded beyond secessionist groups (although an interesting, unaddressed question is whether secessionist financing differs from non-secessionist financing). More broadly, the analysis serves as a corrective to what has been a fairly truncated literature in terms of the war aims of the groups studied as well as the historical eras under consideration. By taking both a longer and broader view, we are able to distinguish more clearly the behavior of secessionists, who face a distinct set of strategic and political realities, from non-secessionists. In the end, secessionist conflicts may be among the most civil of wars.
Table 1: Scope of Existing Scholarship on Civilian Targeting by Rebels\textsuperscript{53}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Temporal and Geographic Scope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanton (2013)</td>
<td>1989-2010, worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalyvas (2006)</td>
<td>1944, Greece only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphreys and Weinstein (2006)</td>
<td>2003, Sierra Leone only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{53} NB: This list is not comprehensive. In particular, there are many additional studies of transnational terrorism not included because their universe of cases is not rebel groups in civil wars.
Table 2: Summary Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Correspondence Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Rebels</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Rebels (standardized)</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secessionism</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurgency</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Government</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Government (standardized)</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Additional Protocols</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraband</td>
<td>0, 1</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force Ratio (deployed)</td>
<td>.05, 26.15</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>.30&lt;sup&gt;54&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
<td>1, 38</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity</td>
<td>-10, 10</td>
<td>-2.80</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>54</sup> Given that this variable is based on continuous (rather than dichotomous) components, it makes sense to allow some range of variation between coders. If we allow a 25 percent range, the correspondence rate rises to 73 percent.
Table 3: Logistic Regressions of Civilian Targeting by Rebels
(Standardized Coding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secessionist</strong></td>
<td>-0.82</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>-1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.53)</td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.09</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.09</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.06</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.04</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insurgency</strong></td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.55)</td>
<td>(0.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.07</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.22</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.35</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.26</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civilian Targeting by Government</strong> (standardized)</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
<td>(0.56)</td>
<td>(0.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Additional Protocols</strong></td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.65)</td>
<td>(0.85)</td>
<td>(0.95)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.22</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.35</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secessionist * Post-Additional Protocols</strong></td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.76)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.29</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contraband Financing</strong></td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.90)</td>
<td>(0.89)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.60</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.74</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fragmentation</strong></td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.17)</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.01</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polity</strong></td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.25</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.19</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Force Ratio (Deployed)</strong></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.99</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.80</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.65</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.52</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td>-1.92</td>
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<td>-3.05</td>
<td>-3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.43)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
<td><em>p = 0.00</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>148</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pseudo-R^2</strong></td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi-2</strong></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Correctly Predicted</strong></td>
<td>79.05</td>
<td>81.76</td>
<td>82.31</td>
<td>82.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Logistic Regressions of Civilian Targeting by Rebels
(Original Coding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secessionist</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>-1.68</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.49)</td>
<td>(.55)</td>
<td>(.74)</td>
<td>(1.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.05</td>
<td>*p=.04</td>
<td>*p=.02</td>
<td>*p=.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurgency</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.44)</td>
<td>(.49)</td>
<td>(.56)</td>
<td>(.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.07</td>
<td>*p=.21</td>
<td>*p=.37</td>
<td>*p=.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Government (original)</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.45)</td>
<td>(.49)</td>
<td>(.58)</td>
<td>(.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Additional Protocols</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.70)</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
<td>(.95)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secessionist * Post-Additional Protocols</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.185)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>*p=.16</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contraband Financing</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.90)</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.52</td>
<td>*p=.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.20)</td>
<td>(.19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.01</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.06)</td>
<td>(.06)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.20</td>
<td>*p=.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force Ratio (Deployed)</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.09)</td>
<td>(.08)</td>
<td>(.12)</td>
<td>(.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.95</td>
<td>*p=.73</td>
<td>*p=.64</td>
<td>*p=.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>-1.85</td>
<td>-2.90</td>
<td>-2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.42)</td>
<td>(.46)</td>
<td>(.71)</td>
<td>(.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-R²</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-2</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Correctly Predicted</td>
<td>75.76</td>
<td>81.82</td>
<td>81.03</td>
<td>82.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Marginal Effects for Significant Variables (Table 3, Model 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Probability at zero</th>
<th>Probability at 1</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secessionism</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>-41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Targeting of Civilians</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>260%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Additional Protocols</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentation (25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; to 75&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; percentile)</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Secessionist Targets\textsuperscript{55}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleansing Only</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>(46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleansing and Co-Ethnic Collaborators</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTTE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Ethnic Collaborators Only</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmiri guerrillas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither/Other\textsuperscript{56}</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Sicilies (1820)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{55} Note: there is some missing data, due to insufficient information to code these variables for a handful of cases.

\textsuperscript{56} These are typically cases of indiscriminate targeting/rampaging on the part of rebels.
Table 7: Logistic Regressions on Civilian Targeting by Secessionist Rebels
(Standardized Coding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>(2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Balance (1)</td>
<td>-.51</td>
<td>-.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.30)</td>
<td>(.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.09</td>
<td>*p=.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Balance (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Targeting by Government</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(standardized)</td>
<td>(1.23)</td>
<td>(.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
<td>*p=.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
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<td>.47</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(.28)</td>
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<td>-.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.23)</td>
<td>(1.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*p=.61</td>
<td>*p=.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-R(^2)</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-2</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1: Percent of Secessionists using Major Violence
References


Bangerter, Olivier. 2011. Reasons why armed groups choose to respect international humanitarian law or not. *International Review of the Red Cross* 93 (882): 353-84.


