King Makers and Peace Breakers:
International Intervention and Post-War Violence

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Abstract

Foreign powers often intervene in civil conflicts to quell violent insurgencies or oust despotic rulers. Unfortunately, even victorious interventions often give rise to post-war increases in violence and abuse. Why do efforts intended to restore internal stability so often backfire? We argue that civilians, governments, and insurgents, are participants in a governance market. Civilians prosper when insurgents and incumbents compete over the provision of governance, but foreign intervention can, when improperly calibrated, disrupt this competition and restore monopoly conditions. Even when intervention falls short of decisively favoring one side, it may decouple belligerents from their constituents, thereby transforming the political competition into a purely martial one and creating a risk of anarchy. We support the theory with evidence from several recent civil conflicts and show that the framework offers a parsimonious platform for studying the relationship between conflict intervention, durable peace, and domestic accountability.

1   Introduction

In early 1977, several thousand FNLC[1] gendarmes flooded across the Angolan border into Zaire. Aided by sympathetic residents, the rebels swept through the southwestern region and claimed control of Shaba Province. Within weeks they constructed a proto-government, initiated social assistance and public service provision, and began distributing identification granting residents citizenship in the newly-formed Democratic Republic of the Congo. Unable to suppress the uprising directly, Zaire's president, Mobutu Sese Seko, instead turned to the international community for assistance. To help Mobutu re-consolidate his monopoly on territorial control, foreign powers offered him a combination of military supplies and economic support. Together, the coalition quickly achieved its goals: by the end of April, the FNLC was forced to retreat and Zaire's sovereign authority was restored.

In stark contrast to popular theories of state consolidation and foreign intervention, however, the reestablishment of Mobutu's control in Shaba failed to translate into peace or security for his citizens. Over the next twelve months, the Mobutu regime conducted its own 'pacification campaign' whereby troops displaced more than 200,000 residents and killed upwards of 3,000 citizens. Unfortunately, the experiences of civilians in Shaba are far from unique. In contests between incumbent governments and rebel opponents, both groups turn to outside actors for support. The international community, for example, assisted the Iraqi government in reclaiming Mosul from the Islamic State. Not long before that, international forces offered critical air support to rebels in Libya during the downfall of the Qaddafi regime. As in Shaba, however, the initial military victories failed to usher in new eras of peace and prosperity. Libyan rebels preyed mercilessly upon civilians after Qaddafi's fall, and the Iraqi government proved similarly ruthless in the aftermath of Mosul. Why do international interventions that successfully deliver victory—for either the government or the rebels—subsequently lead to post-conflict predation and human rights abuse?

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[1]   Front National pour la Libération du Congo.

We identify an answer embedded in the fundamental structure of civil governance. Recent models of distributive conflict depict the incumbent government and its insurgent challengers as rival producers in a domestic "governance market."[2] Citizens, in turn, function as influential consumers who may attempt to solicit governance from either provider in exchange for political support. Although insurgents may in practice never end up governing, fighting, or even actively mobilizing their latent threat of market entry imposes competitive pressure on the incumbent, forcing it to offer citizens an increasingly generous package of rights, liberties, and opportunities so they will back the established administration rather than its competitors. In this regard, citizens can leverage the existence of potential insurgents to extract economic and political concessions from recalcitrant leaders.

Foreign intervention—particularly as it is currently conceived and practiced—can easily disrupt the productive balance between an incumbent and its latent challengers. Policymakers and researchers often engage in international intervention with an eye toward restoring stability, suppressing unrest, and reestablishing a "monopoly of violence" within a territory. To this end, they may either aid an incumbent regime in its campaign to reassert control by crushing insurgent challengers, or, alternatively, assist a group of rebels in their quest to overthrow and replace the establishment. In either case, interveners hope to facilitate a new period of domestic stability and tranquility by consolidating the victors' authority and suppressing the opposition. This strategy conforms with a long-held belief among scholars that only a strong and consolidated state can protect its citizens from criminality, terrorism, and the horrors of anarchy.[3] Unfortunately, however, we demonstrate that state monopolies on violence are double-edged: absent competitive pressure created by domestic challengers, a government may itself engage in predatory behavior with impunity. International interventions that consolidate political control within a single regime are therefore apt to facilitate post-war tyranny and human rights abuse.

Our argument does not imply that decisive intervention is always harmful to citizens, nor do we insist that conflicts from which neither side emerges victorious are universally beneficial. At the

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[2] See Abrahams and Merrell 2019.

[3] Hobbes 1651; Weber 1919.

most immediate level, foreign intervention in an ongoing conflict may aid civilians by hastening the conclusion of a war or by reducing the intensity of violence to which residents are directly exposed. In a broader sense, however, the ultimate consequences of foreign intervention hinge on whether it facilitates or disrupts domestic competition in the long-term governance market.

First, intervention may prove harmful when it directly suppresses competition, either by entirely eliminating potential challengers or by substantially raising their cost of market entry. In this case, the victor of a conflict gains monopoly power over the provision of governance and dissatisfied citizens are left without recourse or alternative.

Second, intervention may backfire despite leaving an incumbent government and viable insurgent challenger intact if the method of intervention enables each side to operate independent from civilian support. If foreign backers provide significant funding, materiel, or logistical support to the belligerents, the civilians may no longer wield significant influence if fighting resumes. Under these circumstances, the competing parties lack incentives to provide optimal governance or curry favor with the civilian population.

Third, intervention may produce a chaotic and anarchic post-war environment in which no party emerges as the focal point for civilian support. To pose a meaningful threat to a consolidated government, insurgencies typically must undergo a maturation process in which they ultimately resolve their own internal feuds.[4] Foreign assistance may deliver victory to a group of insurgents 'too soon', without requiring them first to pass through the eye of such organizational maturation. Instead, insurgent infighting ensues in the context of a power vacuum, after the government's defeat. Likewise, if civilians lack sufficient information about the relative qualities of each combatant they may divide their allegiance in a manner that prevents any individual competitor from growing large enough to benefit from economies of scale in governance provision.

Given these complexities, foreign powers who seek to maximize the benefits of intervention should not necessarily pursue the quickest route to a peace settlement, nor should they always set a goal of wholly dismantling one of the belligerent parties. Blind faith that a regime will adopt more

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[4] See especially Krause (2017), Christia (2012).

generous governance strategies in the absence of opposition is theoretically naïve. Such reforms require motivation. As such, the goal of benevolent foreign intervention should be twofold. First, interveners should seek to erect or preserve political conditions in which opposing sides are held mutually accountable through latent competition and their reliance on civilian support. Second, intervention should attempt to resolve and prevent the types of market inefficiencies that allowed conflict to break out in the first place. Citizens' interests are best served when intervention succeeds in cultivating a durable political environment that nurtures viable competitors and addresses the incipient causes of conflict.

2 The Domestic Governance Market

Citizens and their governments often stand at odds. A representative citizen desires a costly set of defense and security guarantees, human rights protections, economic opportunities and assets, and other public goods that would improve her quality of life. These types of goods and concessions, however, are costly for states to provide. As such, those who control the state would, under their ideal conditions, provide only the minimum set of rights and protections that are necessary for optimal economic growth. Once such growth is achieved, the government would prefer to extract all further economic surpluses for itself. How, then, can citizens induce the state to extend opportunities or protections beyond those that facilitate growth?

As in all bargaining processes, citizens obtain leverage when they can credibly threaten to impose costs on their adversary. Although the state seeks to prioritize economic growth and the extraction of revenues that such growth creates, rulers also seeks to avoid costly conflict that could threaten their political control. Indeed, Acemoglu and Robinson (2005) argue that citizens can obtain a deal on their preferred terms by threatening revolution if the established regime withholds concessions. According to their theory, a government that believes this threat is genuine and that fears the consequences such a revolution might portend will therefore attempt to appease citizens by extending the franchise.

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Unfortunately for citizens—and in contrast to Acemoglu and Robinson's theory—such revolutions are unlikely to succeed. Far from a coherent collective able to issue credible threats, citizens are often weak and poorly organized. Individual citizens lack both the arms and enthusiasm to combat the state directly. On top of this, they face tremendous uncertainty about whether others will join them in a revolutionary effort, creating collective action problems that impede rebellion even under the most predatory conditions. The histories of nearly all human societies are rife with examples of enslavement, but slave revolts remain relatively uncommon and those that snowballed to involve more than a tiny group of participants are rarer still. Faced with the prospect of dying in a futile attempt at revolution or instead eking out an existence in the relative safety of their chains, most individuals opt for the latter, dire thought it may be.

Fortunately, however, coordinated and spontaneous revolution is not the citizens' only option. Embedded among the civilian population are "insurgents" who may, when backed by citizen support, challenge the incumbent more efficiently than could the citizens themselves. The existence of such insurgents poses a threat to the government. Indeed, because the act of supporting an insurgency exposes citizens to fewer costs than they face when engaging in revolution directly, they should be more eager to assist insurgents in a campaign against the state than they are to organize or participate themselves. As a result, insurgent threats are more credible and harbor a greater potential for disruptive violence than do threats of revolution.

Given these dynamics, insurgent movements should aid citizens in securing concessions in a broader range of situations than threats of civilian-led revolution. Whereas the government may rightly deem revolution unlikely, it can less afford to dismiss an insurgent movement that appears poised to obtain widespread backing from citizens. Instead, the government must react. It may, for example, take preventive action in an attempt to repress the insurgent group—or its potential supporters—before the group can rise to maturity. These types of behaviors occur when governments restrict press and media freedoms, curtain rights to free assembly or political speech, or take police and military actions to arrest or silence political dissenters and opponents. On the other hand, when such actions are highly costly, governments may instead attempt to head off insurgent

challenges by promising citizens a more generous package of political and economic rights than citizens could expect to obtain by assisting the insurgents. The government's promises of reform are, in turn, made credible by the possibility that citizens could shift their allegiance to the insurgent group if the government reneges.

In effect, the citizens' capacity to provide or withhold support for an insurgent group forces the government and the insurgency to compete for the citizens' affections, thus creating a "market for governance" in which citizens function as influential consumers who can choose between two providers. As citizens' support for the insurgency becomes more influential—in other words, when the ultimate outcome of a conflict between the government and the insurgents hinges on the degree to which the citizens support one side or the other—the government is increasingly forced to offer concessions so as to either avoid such a conflict or to guarantee citizen-supported victory for the state if fighting takes place. Likewise, citizens enjoy improved outcomes when the quality of the insurgent challenger—or, simply put, the degree to which the insurgents can credibly promise to provide generous political and economic governance if they obtain control—increases relative to the government, because such insurgents raise the quality of the offer against which the government must compete.

3   Reestablishing Monopoly

If civilian prosperity relies on sustained competition in the governance market, it should be no surprise that foreign efforts that suppress competition between the government and its challengers are counterproductive for citizens. Nevertheless, this is precisely the goal of many counterinsurgency and foreign intervention efforts. In this section, we detail several mechanisms through which intervention can erode competition and lead to the reconsolidation of monopoly power.

3.1 Eliminating the Opposition

The most direct method through which foreign intervention in civil conflict can disrupt market competition is the direct elimination of either of the belligerents. Unfortunately, the elimination—or at least the dismantlement—of a belligerent side is often the explicit goal of foreign intervention in civil conflict, as exemplified by the example of Shaba that we highlight in the introduction.

The successful, foreign-assisted 'liberation' of Mosul is perhaps the most recent and glaring illustration of the post-conflict hazards of eliminating competitors to governance. Mosul, a city in northern Iraq, was captured by the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS) in mid-2014 when ISIS fighters routed tens of thousands of Iraqi army regulars. For three years, ISIS administered the city and pursued a general policy whereby they favored Sunni Muslims and preyed mercilessly on residents of other religions or sects.[5] A coalition of Western powers assisted Kurdish and Iraqi regulars in a grueling campaign to retake the city over the course of 2016 and 2017. After much bloodshed and destruction, the campaign ultimately succeeded in July 2017.

The end of the battle, however, did not likewise bring about an end to violence against civilians. As Loveluck (2019) recounted, although the Iraqi government "regained control over areas once occupied by the militants… corruption and sectarian discrimination remain[ed] a problem." Though the international coalition publicly motivated its military intervention by excoriating ISIS' ruthlessness and savagery, the Iraqi government that replaced them seemed intent upon matching the depravity deed for deed. "We killed them all—[ISIS militants], men, women, and children," said one Iraqi Army officer. "We are doing the same thing as ISIS."[6]

Clearly, post-conflict violence committed by the Iraqi government in no way exonerates ISIS for its own atrocities. Nevertheless, in the eyes of civilians who must choose whether to throw support either behind an incumbent or an insurgent challenger, the comparison matters. ISIS widely

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[5] Callimachi (2018), Taub (2018).

[6] Quoted in Taub (2018). Even before the recapture of Mosul, observers raised concerns that the Iraqi Army's Shi'i paramilitary units *(Hashd)* would persecute Sunni residents. After the fall of Mosul, these fears were realized. As Taub (2018) again details, "All through northern and western Iraq, anti-ISIS forces kept lists of people they wanted to kill. They hung bodies from telephone poles, and encouraged civilians to desecrate the corpses of their former jihadi oppressors. The irony was not lost on the killers—they knew that they were mirroring the Islamic State's worst acts."

publicized its atrocities on social media for all to see, and the international community was rightly outraged. When then, in the group's infancy and even as it reached its demise, did ISIS enjoy considerable popularity among Sunni Iraqis? One solution to this puzzle lies with the *structural* violence committed by the Iraqi government, which citizens feared and to which the jihadist's more tangible, kinetic forms of violence provided a mirror image. As Taub (2018) explains, "ISIS has always derived much of its dangerous appeal from the corruption and cruelty of the Iraqi state." Even as Mosul teetered, civilians were still of two minds about their rulers, certain that after the ISIS was ousted Iraqi security forces would kill male civilians while raping the women. As one civilian summarized, "We trusted ISIS more than the Iraqi state."[7]

In summary, the foreign intervention to retake Mosul succeeded in its objective of eliminating an insurgent challenge to Iraqi governance over an important strategic city. But the resulting monopolization of violence allowed the Iraqi government and its paramilitaries to relentlessly prey upon civilians with impunity. If military intervention is to succeed in facilitating durable peace in the aftermath of war, foreign powers must either (1) continue to suppress predatory behavior by the victorious side, or (2) establish a competitive market in which viable challengers to state control continue to act as buffers that induce better government behavior and protect citizens from abuse.

3.2 Raising the Costs of Entry

The second means by which foreign intervention often disrupts market competition is by raising the price an adversary must pay to challenge state control. In effect, these acts raise an opponent's cost of entry into the political marketplace, allowing monopoly conditions to once again prevail. For example, United Nations peacekeepers are often explicitly charged with deterring overt acts of violence by opposing sides in a peace settlement. Although policymakers and researchers are well aware of the terrible consequences that may result when interveners fail to deter such violence—as occurred during the Srebenica massacre and the aftermath of the first Gulf War—they are less aware that alternative forms of violence may occur when deterrence is achieved *too well.*

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[7] Taub (2018).

Strong external peacekeepers may suppress violence, but in doing so they also undercut the capacity of citizens and insurgent groups to elicit governance concessions from the ruling regime. As we explain above, citizens rely on the credible threat of insurgent violence to secure generous governance outcomes. Peacekeepers inadvertently reduce the credibility of that insurgent threat by raising the costs insurgents face when conducting attacks. By enforcing a ceasefire, peacekeepers may provide cover under which the incumbent can erect new barriers against insurgent violence. Alternatively, the peacekeepers may simply promise to retaliate against those who carry out additional attacks. In either scenario, peacekeepers have the counterproductive effect of insulating the ruling regime from the need to buy off insurgent supporters by offering more favorable terms.

Consider, for instance, the behavior of Joseph Kabila's government in Kinshasa since the signing of the February 2013 "Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework." According to the terms of that deal, Kabila agreed to reform Congolese institutions while the U.N. acknowledged its existing peacekeeping efforts were insufficient and instead authorized the deployment of a new and more aggressive "Force Intervention Brigade" tasked with suppressing rebels in the east. Finally, the U.N. and U.S. increased pressure on Rwanda to end its support for the M23, the most violent Congolese rebel movement. By the last week of October, these measures succeeded, and the the U.N.-backed Congolese army forced the M23 to disband.

Although numerous hostile challengers remained, the expansion of U.N. peacekeeping efforts nevertheless raised the costs they faced for combating Kabila directly, thereby enabling Kabila to further consolidate his political control. In the absence of viable opposition, he began to delay institutional reforms and initiated crackdowns on political freedoms. In January 2015, he jailed hundreds of non-violent political protestors, expanded a campaign of political intimidation, imposed widespread media censorship, and announced plans to delay a promised round of presidential elections that were originally scheduled for 2016.[8] Only in the face of mounting international pressure and the reemergence of widespread internal violence did Kabila agree to step down from power and allow elections to take place in late 2018.

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[8] A Congo Research Group poll found that he would have earned only 7.8% of the vote if elections were held that year.

3.3 Territorial Deconsolidation

Competitive tension may also be defused through 'territorial deconsolidation' (Lee 2018). By this we mean that the incumbent government formally cedes — or informally ceases to contest — a part of its territory to the insurgent challenger. For example, during 'La Violencia' the Colombian government lost control of several southern provinces of the country to the FARC.[9] More generally, deconsolidation often takes on a 'core-periphery' pattern, where the central government retains control of major urban centers while ceding the rural hinterland to the rebels. Afghanistan, for example, has in recent years exhibited this pattern, with the American-backed government in Kabul choosing not to contest the Taliban's claim over peripheral regions (Coll 2019). Hostile neighboring states may also facilitate the deconsolidation of border provinces (Lee 2018).

Under our framework of competitive governance, we can predict that territorial deconsolidation has disastrous consequences for citizens by undermining accountability of governance. The incumbent and the challenger, instead of attempting to outperform each other to win the loyalty of citizens, simply 'segment' the governance market, recidivating into monopolists over their separate territorial domains. Without competitive pressure to govern well, the incumbent government and the newly formed rebel government are each free to prey upon citizens.

A particularly disappointing example of territorial bifurcation and monopolistic recidivism transpired in and around 2007 within the Occupied Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and Gaza, two separate territories belonging to the ancestral land of Palestine. During the Six Day War of 1967 both areas were captured by the Israeli military, which from 1967 to 1987 directly administered control. During 1987-1991, however, the territories' Palestinian inhabitants staged a popular uprising (The First Intifada) that "shattered the myth that Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza could continue indefinitely at little cost" (Kurtzer et al. 2012). The weight of Israeli public opinion shifted in favor of ceding administrative control of the territories to the Palestinians, in what would become known as the 'two-state solution'. In September 1993, the Oslo Accords were signed, seemingly paving the way for Palestinian self-rule (Abrahams 2019).

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[9] The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

At the time, Palestinians were led by multiple political-militant groups operating both inside and outside of the territories. Among the 'outsiders', the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) constituted an umbrella organization for various political-militant groups, of which Fatah had become the undisputed hegemon over the course of the 1970s and 1980s (Krause 2017). Within the territories, however, a nascent Islamic political-militant movement, Hamas, had grown rapidly since the late 1980s on the strength of decades of local community organizing and social welfare provision, especially within the refugee camps of Gaza. The PLO, having negotiated the Oslo Accords with Israel in secret, took charge of forming a proto-governmental apparatus (the Palestinian Authority, or PA) in Ramallah and Gaza City. By default, Fatah became the de facto incumbent ruling party. Hamas, having been excluded from the negotiations, quickly staked out its market position as chief challenger and skeptic of the peace process. Over the course of the 1990s, as Palestinian public opinion on the Oslo peace process shifted from tentatively optimistic to increasingly disillusioned, Fatah's popularity eroded while Hamas' popularity grew (Abrahams 2019).

Consistent with our model of competitive governance, Fatah worried about its erosion of popularity and the concomitant rise of Hamas as a credible challenger. Increasingly, Fatah seemed to be bloated, corrupt, and tied to a doomed peace process. Hamas, by contrast, appeared young, lean, hungry, and willing to take the fight to Israel. As the Second Intifada erupted in the Fall of 2001, Fatah dragged the PA into the fray, determined not to let Hamas wrest from them the mantle of resistance. Arafat called for the formation of Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which carried out suicide operations alongside Hamas and Islamic Jihad against Israeli civilian and military targets. Israel in turn retaliated against PA infrastructure and personnel, and reasserted direct military control over Palestinian towns and villages (Abrahams 2019). By the uprising's end, Hamas' popularity rivaled Fatah's own, to the point where PA president Mahmoud Abbas argued with American advisors against holding national legislative elections in January 2006.[10] In the event, Hamas won a stunning victory, taking a majority of legislative seats and the right to name a prime minister.

Had Hamas and Fatah been competing in an autarkic vacuum, it is quite plausible that Fa-

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[10] Milton-Edwards and Farrell (2010), Kurtzer et al. (2012).

tah would have relinquished power peacefully, reformed itself, and competed again for Palestinian hearts and minds in the next election cycle. Indeed, at the time, battered as they were in the wake of the Second Intifada, neither political-militant group could have overwhelmed the other by force.[11] But embedded as they were within the international arena, foreign powers took a keen interest in the trajectory of Palestinian politics. In the view of Israel, the United States, and the European Union, Hamas' victory was intolerable, and these external actors moved swiftly to intervene to help Fatah upend the democratic process and retake control of the PA by force.

The Israeli army proceeded to arrest 68 of the 74 newly elected Hamas legislators. The US and EU imposed sweeping international sanctions and initiated the freezing of funds to the PA. Israel, which is obligated under the Paris Protocol to collect taxes from Palestinian laborers in Israel and transfer these so-called 'clearance revenues' to the PA on a monthly basis, refused to hand over $60 million owed. Quietly, the US began to fund the arming and training of Fatah security forces to prepare them to overthrow the Hamas PA. Indeed, Secretary of State Rice and Deputy National Security Advisor Elliot Abrams requested $86 million from Congress to train and equip Fatah security forces in the Gaza Strip. When Fatah and Hamas appeared to heal the rift between them by forming a Saudi-brokered unity government in February 2007, Secretary Rice was "apoplectic."[12] The Bush administration continued to pressure Fatah to confront Hamas militarily. In March 2007, a document detailing US capacity-building efforts was leaked to the Jordanian newspaper Al-Majd. The document, entitled "Plan B," also "called for Abbas to 'collapse the government' if Hamas refused to alter its attitude toward Israel."[13] Preempting any such maneuvers, Hamas moved forcibly to take control of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, routing Fatah security forces.

When the dust settled, Palestinian governance had territorially bifurcated into two separate domains: the West Bank, controlled by Fatah; and the Gaza Strip, controlled by Hamas. Although these political-militant groups — particularly Hamas — are widely portrayed to operate according

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[11] Frisch (2010).
[12] Rose (2008).
[13] Rose (2008).

to an unwavering ideology, their ensuing behavior since June 2007 belies such a claim.[14] On the contrary, the way these two groups have behaved as territorial monopolists of violence since 2007 illuminates their essentially opportunistic natures, which respond rationally to the governance market structure in which they find themselves.

Fatah, freed from the latent threat of Hamas, proceeded to dispense with the pretense of democracy and clamp down on dissent. Presidential and national legislative elections have been suspended in the West Bank since June 2007. Mahmoud Abbas, elected president of the PA with an overwhelming majority in January 2005, recently celebrated the 15th anniversary of his unchallenged tenure. The suspension of elections has been accompanied by a tightening grip on other channels of dissent. Indeed, a 2017 PCPSR poll of Palestinians in the Territories registered widespread alarm over a new internet censorship law passed by the PA, forbidding dissent against the PA on social media. In recent research, Dana El Kurd has used micro-level, spatially disaggregated data on Palestinian mobilizations to demonstrate that PA repression of Palestinian protests is so effective and comprehensive that Palestinians have actually shifted their protest activities to areas under direct Israeli control, such as East Jerusalem or 'Area C' of the West Bank (El Kurd 2019). Finally, PA security cooperation with Israel persists despite public opposition. As noted by Alaa Tartir, even while Abbas declared in 2014 that cooperation with Israel was "sacred" or "sacrosanct," a poll from the same year suggested a majority of Palestinians favor dissolving it (Tartir 2017). Indeed, by Fall of 2015, a PCPSR poll found that more than half of Palestinians favored dissolving the PA itself (Shikaki 2015). Two years later, the PCPSR found 46% of West Bank Palestinians view the PA as a "burden," 60% wish Abbas would resign, and an "overwhelming majority" fear for the future of civil liberties under the PA (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research 2017).

Hamas, meanwhile, freed from having to compete with Fatah for the hearts and minds of its constituents, has turned to increasingly corrupt and exclusionary rule over the Gaza Strip. Like Fatah, Hamas has refused to hold national elections, and treated competitors like Palestinian Islamic Jihad or other Salafist political-militant groups with growing intransigence (Roy 2013). And

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[14] See also Roy (2013).

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whereas in years gone by Hamas castigated Fatah for corruption, over the last decade its leadership has turned an enormous profit by taxing the smuggling tunnels along the Rafah border between Egypt and Gaza (Kamrava 2016). Finally, though it is less widely known, Hamas has quietly pursued security cooperation with Israel. In ongoing research, Abrahams et al. 2019 find that the majority of Gazan rocket and mortar attacks against Israel over the last decade have been initiated not by Hamas, but by other political-militant groups operating in the Strip. Far from encouraging these attacks, Hamas actually does its best to prevent and deter these attacks.[15]

In sum, then, for a brief period during the late 1990s to mid-2000s, Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza enjoyed some substantial leverage over their leaders by being able to shift their support between Fatah and its credible political-militant challenger, Hamas. Foreign intervention during 2006-2007, however, provoked civil strife and territorial deconsolidation, leaving Palestinians of both territories at the mercy of monopolists of violence. The result has been the erosion of accountable governance. In general, territorial deconsolidation defuses positive competitive tension and jeopardizes citizens' influence over their leadership.

4   Decoupling Problems

Even when it does not lead to the formal restoration of monopoly conditions, intervention may nevertheless cause unproductive disruptions in the domestic political marketplace. First, heavy-handed intervention—especially when coupled with significant foreign aid and assistance—may break or prevent the development of political linkages between civilians and either incumbents or insurgents. Second, intervention may provoke anarchic conditions when it undercuts insurgents' natural maturation and selection process, leaving citizens without a clear horse to back in the competition for authority. In the sections to follow, we examine each of these mechanisms and discuss noteworthy cases in which unproductive outcomes emerged.

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[15] Nanes (2019).

4.1 Suppressing Citizen Influence

Aggressive foreign intervention can "decouple" political organizations from the citizens they ostensibly serve. In this case, although foreign activities do not entirely eliminate either of the belligerent sides, they nevertheless produce domestic conditions in which civilians lack political power. Foreign actors may, for example, provide significant funding or logistical support for one of the two belligerents, thereby insulating that side from the normal costs of domestic political antagonism. Moreover, citizens may no longer be able to significantly influence which of the two competing sides would emerge victorious if conflict escalated or resumed. Under these circumstances, citizens are politically impotent, and belligerent groups no longer have an incentive to compete for their affections.

Consider, for example, the United States' continued support for Nouri al-Maliki in the aftermath of its 2003 invasion of Iraq.[16] At the time, the U.S. harbored two primary goals: the first was the cultivation of a stable Iraqi state empowered to suppress insurgent violence; the second was a democratic government that adequately represented the needs and desires of all citizens.[17] Unfortunately, American policymakers erred in concept as well as execution. Conceptually, U.S. policymakers should not have assumed that the consolidation of state power was necessary to avoid insurgent violence. Rather, they should have recognized that states can also undercut insurgent challengers by outcompeting those insurgents for the loyalty of civilians.[18] As opposed to viewing the reduction of domestic violence and the establishment of representative and accountable governance as separate-but-equal goals, American officials should have recognized these outcomes as two sides of the same coin: accountable regimes that are highly responsive to the needs of their citizens should face less observable opposition from violent insurgent groups. Setting aside their conceptual confusion, U.S. policymakers also failed to execute a strategy that would achieve their

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[16] This section borrows heavily from Chapter 9 of Berman and Lake 2019.

[17] U.S. ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte described the U.S. objective as "to help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq, at peace with its neighbors, with a constitutional, representative government that respects human rights and possesses security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order, and deny Iraq as a safe haven for terrorists."

[18] Indeed, the United States' most significant gains in provoking declines in overall violence came after it shifted to a "hearts-and-minds" strategy of providing support for Sunni citizens.

desired goals. Instead, they selected al-Maliki, nourished the consolidation of his government, and continually insulated him from domestic political backlash. It is unsurprising, then, that al-Maliki failed to provide generous governance to a broad-based coalition of domestic constituents.

Although following the initial invasion American officials announced their intention to integrate competing Iraqi factions and to smooth domestic tensions by establishing democracy, in practice U.S. forces did little to provide equal security to the distinct ethnic and religious groups that populated the country. Instead, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer quickly disbanded the Iraqi army and purged Ba'ath Party officials, thereby alienating Sunnis and leaving many former elites vulnerable. In 2006, the United States further entrenched these domestic divisions by selecting and installing Nouri al-Maliki as the Iraqi prime minister. Rather than establish a broad coalition of political supporters, Maliki instead turned to family members, close associates, and militant Shi'a constituents who used their power to dominate and prey upon Sunni civilians. This behavior, coupled with Maliki's refusal to extend inclusive political guarantees to those outside his own coalition, motivated Sunnis to support and participate in violent insurgent groups with increasing frequency. As Lake 2019 summarizes, "Maliki's election did not quell the violence, as the United States had hoped, but appeared to stimulate further fighting and greater casualties."

Rather than use its influence to apply political pressure on Maliki or leave him vulnerable to existing domestic opposition, the Bush administration instead sought to increase the military capacity of the Iraqi regime. Administration officials assumed that by providing Maliki's forces with billions of dollars in aid and training, the Iraqi government would soon be able to impose stability over the territory it governed. These inflows of aid and assistance, intended to boost Maliki's governing capacity, instead yielded the unintentional effect of insulating him from political pressure and enabling him to double-down on a narrow Shi'a constituency. To the extent that Maliki occasionally opposed Shia militants in specific regions, he did so out of specific concern for his own domestic political interests rather than due to pressure from the United States. In the end, Maliki's partisan and sectarian style so thoroughly alienated Sunni citizens that it created an opening for the emergence of ISIS in the years ahead.

4.2 Shortcutting Insurgent Maturation or Consolidation

Intervention can also backfire when it cuts short the natural maturation and selection process among competing insurgent groups. Just as the field of political contenders in a democratic election is whittled down within party primaries, so too do insurgents often pass through a process of elimination and competition among themselves. Peter Krause, in his illuminating volume on rebel nationalist movements (2017), builds a convincing theory of 'movement structure' that we draw upon here. Supported by evidence from the Irish, Algerian, Zionist, and Palestinian insurgencies, Krause argues that insurgent movements are typically embroiled in two conflicts: an 'external' conflict with the incumbent government, and an 'internal' conflict between the different political-militant factions of the insurgency itself. Given the absence of institutional channels by which to mediate factional disputes, internal conflict typically turns violent.

In an immediate sense, such internecine violence is clearly counter-productive for the insurgency's external conflict, since the factions weaken each other. For example, during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, Zionist insurgents faced a formidable challenge from an alliance of Arab armies. Despite the existence of a mutual adversary, ongoing factional disputes between the Haganah and Irgun led the former to sink an inbound vessel containing arms and ammunition belonging to the latter. Although the materiel would have been immediately useful to fending off the Arab armies, the Haganah prioritized subduing the Irgun and consolidating the insurgent movement under one banner (Krause 2017). Though the Zionists were ultimately victorious in the 1948 war, insurgent movements have often been set back by similar internecine disputes. The Palestinian 'Arab revolt' of the late 1930s, for example, was partly undermined by infighting between the Nusseibeh and Nashashibi families (Pearlman 2011). Fotini Christia (2012) likewise shows how Afghani militant groups regularly undermine and betray each other to prevent rivals from achieving primacy within the movement.

So long as infighting does not destroy the insurgent movement altogether, however, it ultimately leads to maturation and consolidation. Weaker factions are defeated or absorbed into stronger factions, and institutional mechanisms are developed to mediate differences. For exam-

ple, plagued by infighting during the 1960s and 70s, Palestinian political-militant groups in exile ultimately submitted themselves to legislative processes within the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) umbrella.[19] By the 1980s, they began to operate with greater unity, and Krause argues that this was instrumental to winning concessions from Israel at the negotiating table in the early 1990s (Krause 2017). Thus, insurgent movements tend to engage in infighting that is destructive in the short-term, but which can ultimately give rise to movement consolidation and maturation.

By providing outside support for insurgents in opposition to the state, foreign intervention can short-circuit this maturation process. By allowing the insurgents to oust the incumbent regime 'too soon,' before a well-defined replacement has materialized, foreign interventions leave the reins of power to be contested by multiple militant factions. This outcome was recently evident in Libya, following the United States' decision to intervene on behalf of rebel groups who sought to displace the Qaddafi regime. As with many of the other instances of foreign intervention we reference in this paper, the Obama administration justified its decision to intervene by claiming it would save lives and improve the welfare of civilians suffering under a brutal dictatorship. "We know that if we waited one more day, Benghazi… could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world."[20] With international approval in the form of UN Resolution 1973, NATO countries established a no-fly zone, initiated aerial bombardments, and over the next eight months aided rebel forces in the successful overthrow of Qaddafi. Immediate responses to the campaign were triumphant. As Kuperman (2015, p. 67) recalled, "the United States seemed to have scored a hat trick: nurturing the Arab Spring, averting a Rwanda-like genocide, and eliminating Libya as a potential source of terrorism."

Perceptions of success, however, were fleeting. Democracy failed to emerge, violence and human rights abuses escalated, and the territory dissolved into a breeding ground for groups allied with al Qaeda and ISIS. Why did a campaign that observers initially hailed as "a model intervention" spoil so quickly?[21]

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[19] Pearlman (2011), Krause (2017).

[20] Obama, March 28, 2011.

[21] Quoted in Daalder and Stavridis (2012).

The answer lies in the rapid ouster of the Qaddafi regime and its premature elevation of his rebel opponents. Foreign intervention enabled the rebel groups to short-cut their maturation and selection process. Rather than establish a clear choice for citizens between the incumbent government and a consolidated challenger—thereby encouraging both sides to compete with one another for citizen support, the intervention instead left a cacophonous political quagmire in which no group or leader emerged as a focal point.[22] In less than eight years since Qaddafi's fall, the country has suffered the installment of nine successive prime ministers, several competing governments that each claim legitimacy, and dozens of militias who continue to jockey for territorial control. Kuperman (2015) summarized succinctly that "Libya today is riddled with vicious militias… and thus serves as a cautionary tale of how humanitarian intervention can backfire for both the intervener and those it is intended to help."

Ironically, Libya might have transitioned to a competitive governance framework had intervention been avoided. In the years preceding his overthrow, Qaddafi began to prepare for a political transition in which his son Saif would claim control. Saif, however, appeared committed to reform. In 2008 he earned a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics with a dissertation on "The role of civil society in the democratization of global governance institutions." In subsequent years, he pushed for the release of his father's political prisoners, advocated the cultivation of free and private media organizations, and declared that "Everyone [in Libya] should have access to public office. We should not have a monopoly on power."[23] Unfortunately, as Saif later lamented, just as he was in the process of "making broad reforms… the revolt happened, and both sides made mistakes that are now allowing extreme Islamist groups like Da?ish [ISIS] to pick up the pieces and turn Libya into an extreme fundamentalist entity."[24] Whether Saif will maintain his earlier commitment to reform if he emerges as a front-runner in the upcoming 2019 Libyan elections remains to be seen.

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[22] See Arrow (1983) on the impossibility of achieving stable group preferences when voters confront more than two choices.

[23] See, for example, Landon Thomas Jr., "Unknotting Father's Reins in Hope of 'Reinventing' Libya." The New York Times, Feb. 28, 2010.

[24] Quoted in Kuperman (2015).

5 Why do interveners disrupt the market?

At the heart of our argument in this paper is the view that political competition has good consequences for citizens and that foreign interventions should aim to preserve or enhance domestic political competition without defusing it. Given that competition is widely advocated in the context of market economies, it may puzzle the reader why our argument does not already enjoy wide acceptance among scholars and policymakers in the context of statebuilding. Why is competitive tension between civil society and government not already a standard metric by which we evaluate the political health of a statebuilding project? Why do scholars who research statebuilding not already advocate for building up robust and militated civil societies? And why do policymakers, who regularly enforce anti-trust legislation to break up industrial monopolies, appear so committed to consolidating monopolies of force in foreign lands?

In this section we explore two broad possible explanations. The first explanation is ideational. For various reasons, scholars and policymakers simply do not see the analogy, and do not import all of their fears about industrial monopolies to monopolies of violence. Indeed, we discuss several ways in which taxonomy, data collection, and departmentalization of scholarship, may have conspired to create blindspots around this issue.

The second, and less charitable, explanation is that foreign interveners have private agendas, and seek to subcontract tasks to client governments in the context of principal-agent relationships.[25] In this case, even though the foreign intervener may understand perfectly well that a competitive governance market is welfare-enhancing for citizens, it may nevertheless prefer to help its agent consolidate power so that the agent can undertake tasks on behalf of the foreign principal without having to negotiate or compromise with an organized domestic opposition.

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[25] Lake (2016), Berman and Lake (2019).

5.1   Ideational explanations

Why do scholars and policymakers who otherwise extol the virtues of marketplace competition, and legislate against the dangers of industrial monopolies, nevertheless insist that states must monopolize force within their territorial domains? Probably the strongest and simplest explanation for this tendency is that around the world, the states most widely perceived as successful are all territorial monopolists of violence, while those that are considered unsuccessful or 'failed' tend to exhibit active insurgencies. Indeed, while we cannot easily identify any prominent insurgent oppositions in the United States, Canada, Britain, or any of the Western European states, failed or fragile states like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, or Libya, are rife with insurgent competitors to government control. At first blush, then, insurgency seems to rear its head in conjunction with state fragility or collapse. On closer inspection, we find that insurgents engage in internecine violence against other insurgents, violence against the government, and even violence against civilians. Battles between insurgents and governments lead to civilian casualties, property destruction, and refugee flows. Taken together, it seems natural that scholars and policymakers should view insurgency as a problem that needs to be solved.

This line of reasoning, however, rests on a serious mistake that observers often make in matters of security, namely, failure to credit coercive actors with *non-events*. Consider, for example, US President John F. Kennedy's address to the CIA[26] in 1961, in which he famously remarked that "your successes are unheralded, your failures are trumpeted."[27] This remark, which is often bitterly repeated by the clandestine service, hits upon a basic data censoring problem to do with 'preventive' or 'deterrent' activities. When the CIA successfully attempts to prevent or deter some activity, the event does not happen, and the public observes nothing. When the CIA fails to prevent or deter the event, however, then the event does happen, and the public observes it. Thus, the CIA's successes are unobservable, while its failures are observable. In recent years, as American police have come under increased scrutiny for mistreatment of citizens, they have expressed similar resentment: seemingly

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[26] Central Intelligence Agency of the United States

[27] https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol6no1/html/v06i1a07p_0001.htm

only their misbehavior is deemed newsworthy, creating a warped impression in the public eye.

Insurgencies are multi-fold victims of this censoring problem. As our model of competitive governance illuminates, insurgents are very productive for citizens insofar as they remain a latent threat that extorts good behavior from the government. When the government oversteps, however, it provokes insurgent entry, leading to outcomes that are harmful to citizens, such as civil strife, divided governance, or territorial bifurcation. Thus, insurgents are a boon for citizens in their latency, but a bane to citizens when active. Unfortunately for insurgents, they are easiest to observe precisely when they are at their worst: violent, destructive, and actively contesting the government.

In their latency, insurgents are particularly hard to identify and credit — perhaps even more so than police or clandestine intelligence services. Firstly, while governments may enact political reforms to head off violent confrontation with the insurgency, they rarely cite the threat of violence or insurrection as the motivating factor, since that would be tantamount to admitting to being extorted. As a result, careful scholarly investigation is often required to confirm the causality ex post. For example, only in recent years has it been properly understood that governments have conceded the franchise to various constituents under threat of uprising (Acemoglu and Robinson 2005). Thus, the concessions that citizens extort from governments via latent insurgencies are not easily identifiable as such.

Secondly, latent insurgents may barely be recognizable as insurgents. Thomas Jefferson famously exhorted Americans to 'maintain the spirit of resistance' and 'take arms' from time to time so as to deter creeping authoritarian recidivism (Jefferson 1787). Although we prefer to say 'latent threat', Jefferson's choice of the word 'spirit' appropriately conveys the sense of something real but intangible, which can suddenly materialize into a coercive force if provoked. But what does this 'spirit of resistance,' or latent threat of insurgency look like before it has materialized? The difficulty in identifying or quantifying an insurgent threat prior to its materialization into a fighting force inhibits scholars from properly crediting it with provoking political reforms and staving off government predation. Consider that many violent insurgencies have humble and innocuous origins as local social welfare providers (Cammett 2014), community organizers (Roy 2013), and reli-

gious clubs (Berman 2011). To take one famous example, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement, was founded only after two decades of local social welfare provision and charity undertaken by Islamic community organizers in the refugee camps of Gaza and the West Bank.[28] Given the violence they later unleashed against Israel in the 1990s-2000s, it is no small point of irony that Israeli leaders actually *encouraged* the growing influence of these Islamic community organizations in the 1960s-80s, seeing their nonviolent, religious, associational activities as an innocuous foil to the more militant PLO.[29] Only in retrospect does local Islamic community organizing in the West Bank and Gaza seem like the hotbed of militancy that it ultimately proved to be. More generally, insurgencies can be very hard to detect until they militate and metastasize.

Once bitten in this way, however, governments tend to be twice shy about giving too much freedom to civil society. After the Fatah-Hamas schism in 2007, the Palestinian Authority (PA) under Fatah eviscerated Hamas' charity network in the West Bank, even going so far as to shutter schools and orphanages.[30] These actions, however cynical, reflect an accurate understanding that political entrepreneurs curry favor with citizens through local organizing and charity, building a trunk of legitimacy from which political and militant branches can later sprout. Government-led violence, intimidation, or cooptation of investigative journalists or academic researchers, can be seen through the same lens of heading off political-militant challengers. Journalists and researchers, whatever their motivations may be, sometimes threaten to expose government corruption. Such news, however, is liable to stoke citizen outrage toward the government, lend support to political-militant challengers, and put unpleasant pressure on the government to reform itself. Indeed, if local charities, community organizations, and religious clubs, are the de facto administrative backbone of a latent insurgency, then we should think of investigative journalists and certain academics as a kind of intelligence apparatus, gathering actionable information about the incumbent government. Again, none of these civil society actors necessarily see themselves as part of a deliberate or coordinated challenge to government rule. But functionally, and taken together, that is exactly what they

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[28] Milton-Edwards and Farrell (2010), Roy (2013).
[29] Palestine Liberation Organisation
[30] Abrahams (2019).

are, and particularly in contexts where governments are wary of political-militant challenges, all of these civil society actors are scrutinized and sometimes targeted with repressive intent.

While we have sketched for the reader the contours of a latent insurgency, it should be evident that it is harder to identify or quantify an insurgency in its latency. Latent insurgencies constitute a nebulous 'spirit of resistance' or associational fabric for rebellion that can be hard to put a face to or measure before they metastasize into full-blown militant uprisings. Instead of crediting insurgents for coercing political reform during times of peace, scholars develop a parallel taxonomy by which to praise 'civil society' (insurgency) for 'pressuring' (coercing) government to reform. Instead of seeing civil society and insurgency as the same phenomenon, one viewed under the sunlight of peace, the other under the shadow of civil strife, scholars have taxonomized insurgency and civil society as separate phenomena, producing two separate literatures studied by two separate groups of scholars publishing in two separate constellations of journals. Plausibly, these structural choices have rendered it harder for scholars to see the virtues of insurgencies alongside their vices. Accordingly, scholars have tended to agree that states prosper when they enjoy territorial monopolies on violence, and establishing or restoring a monopoly on violence is a *sin qua non* for statebuilding.

5.2   Principal-Agent Relationships

In the paragraphs above, we speculated that the tendency of scholars and policymakers to favor territorial monopolies on violence is the result of an accidental empirical failure to associate insurgencies with positive political reforms during periods of peace. Though the explanation we offer is plausible, there are reasons to doubt that monopolies on violence are preferred 'by accident.' Firstly, American scholars and policymakers are in a particularly poor position to claim ignorance of the virtues of insurgency, given that they often reify the 'Founding Fathers' of their own democracy. George Washington, the first president of the United States, was an insurgent who committed bloodshed against his sovereign (British) government in the course of the Revolutionary War. His comrades, Jefferson and Madison, wrote eloquently of the need to maintain a robust and militated civil society to keep watch over the fledgling American government, and to be ready whenever necessary to

'water' the 'tree of liberty' with 'the blood of patriots & tyrants' (Jefferson 1787). This 'spirit of resistance' has endured, and indeed American sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset argued prominently that American democracy has remained afloat in no small part thanks to the rebellious spirit of the American people (Lipset 1959). American irreverence for authority is also evident in contemporary American artistic and literary outlets, where rebels regularly enjoy sympathetic depiction.[31] In view of these facts, it seems hard to argue that American policymakers, if not other Western leaders, favor monopolies on violence and domestic stability, purely because they remain intellectually ignorant of the value of rebelliousness. Some other explanation, beyond ignorance, is required.

A plausible alternative is that territorial monopolies of violence, and the domestic stability they engender, often suit the material interests of the international community. Foreign actors like the U.S. or the E.U. may understand the governance market perfectly well but nevertheless prioritize monopolization of force and domestic stability in client countries for the sake of ulterior motives. In the Middle East, for example, the United States and Europe have various regional interests that motivate their foreign policy decisions. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Western powers have sought to subdue and extinguish transnational terrorist threats emanating from Middle East. The U.S. has also sought to contain the regional influence and ambitions of Iran. Western powers are partially dependent on oil exports from the Persian Gulf, and therefore have a keen interest in preventing any disruption to that flow. In the wake of various destabilizations in Syria, Iraq, and North Africa, the European Union has sought to stem the tide of refugees seeking asylum and assimilation in Europe. Finally, both Europe and the United States have ongoing multibillion-dollar arms deals with Middle Eastern governments that stand to profit Western companies and create jobs back home for Western workers. Together, then, Western powers have a number of business interests and geopolitical objectives in the Middle East.

To achieve these objectives and safeguard these interests, Western powers regularly rely on Middle Eastern governments as 'proxies', 'agents', or 'clients.'[32] For example, Europe leans heavily on

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[31] See, for example, the TV show 'Man in the High Castle', or the movie series 'Star Wars.' Marvel and DC Comics superheroes present another quintessentially American conceit of vigilante justice, self-determination, and agency.

[32] Jamal (2012), Yom (2015), Berman and Lake (2019).

Turkey and Jordan, among other Middle Eastern nations, to absorb the lion's share of refugee flows from Iraq and Syria. To neutralize transnational terrorist threats, Western powers partner with the governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, among others. To contain Iran, the United States has in recent years drawn closer to Saudi Arabia, while continuing to project deterrent force by docking its Fifth Naval Fleet in Bahrain's deepwater harbor at Manama.

The reliance of Western principals on Middle Eastern client governments creates two tendencies that work against accountable governance in the Middle East. Firstly, Western principals seek to centralize power in Middle Eastern societies because societies with centralized power structures are easier to clientilize. As one former Middle Eastern leader explained to the authors, "the Americans want to be able to take their demands to one address."[33] Thus, the U.S. government would prefer a political environment in which it can contact a Middle Eastern head of state, issue a direct command, and promptly observe the implementation of that order. Foreign principals do not want to be told that their requests are duly acknowledged but must now be presented before legislative councils that will deliberate over the merits, consult with various social power-brokers, and propose a compromise as to what degree each aspect should be implemented. As we have argued in this article, client governments facing robust and militated domestic oppositions are constrained to enact policies that will not provoke ire from their public. Client governments that enjoy a consolidated monopoly on violence, however, are free to do the bidding of a foreign principal without fear of substantive domestic reprisal. Foreign powers understand that they are in a tug-of-war with domestic constituents over the policy choices of client governments (Lake 2016). As a result, when the opportunity presents itself, they rationally prefer to influence the power structure within client states to be more centralized, so as to ensure chain of command.

Secondly, all of these principal-agent relationships rest on a *quid pro quo* logic. If a Middle Eastern client government helps a Western principal power to accomplish one of its geopolitical objectives, the principal must reward the client or risk shirking in the future. As a consequence, Western powers regularly sell arms to Middle Eastern authoritarians, tone down their criticism of

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[33] The person prefers to remain anonymous, for obvious reasons.

those governments for abusing human rights and repressing dissent, and perpetuate the narrative that those governments are merely trying to protect themselves and their citizens from the predations of violent jihadists and criminals.[34] These actions and inactions by Western powers fulfill and facilitate principal-agent contracts with Middle Eastern autocrats, at the expense of accountable governance.

6   Conclusion

This paper presented a series of answers to the puzzle of why foreign interventions that appear to succeed in establishing stability and consolidating political control nevertheless ultimately breed violence and abuse. Throughout our answer, we emphasize the importance of viewing a country's domestic political environment as a governance market in which citizens obtain productive outcomes when regimes compete for civilian support. Within this framework, policymakers' insistence on prioritizing stability and the consolidation of power within a state monopoly appear misguided or underhanded.

Although states often attempt intervention with a goal of reducing visible and kinetic violence against civilians, we offered theoretic explanations for why such efforts often backfire by disrupting optimal competition in the market for governance. We supported our explanations with brief examples from analogous historical and contemporary situations. First and foremost, we showed that interventions that dismantle or suppress viable political-militant challengers often facilitate predatory behavior by the victorious regime, as citizens learned to their dismay in Shaba, Mosul, and Joseph Kabila's DRC. Likewise, the deconsolidation of a contested region can prove counterproductive when it separate two political competitors and installs each as an uncontested monopolist in its own territory—as occurred in Gaza and the West Bank.

Even when monopoly conditions are not formally restored, citizens may suffer when foreign intervention renders them politically impotent and unable to exert significant influence over com-

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[34] Brownlee (2012), Jamal (2012), Yom (2015), Kirkpatrick (2018).

peting factions. When the United States installed Maliki's regime in Iraq, they shielded him from domestic backlash and enabled him to dismiss the human rights appeals of Sunni opponents who increasingly turned to extremism. Likewise, intervention may disrupt the natural maturation process through which political challengers traditionally arise, leaving in place a chaotic environment wherein citizens are unsure which faction to support. By delivering premature victory to the rebels, NATO's intervention in Libya produced just such an outcome. The intervention disrupted a regime that might have been willing to implement reforms if placed under appropriate pressure and left in its place a quagmire of violence and political anarchy.

Finally, this paper poses tentative answers to the question of why statebuilders and policymakers pursue disruptive strategies that, when viewed through a lens that prioritizes domestic competition, appear bound to fail. In some cases, policymakers may suffer from errors of inference, attributing state "successes" to the monopolization of force and the emergence of violence to the lack thereof, rather than acknowledging the censoring problems inherent to such observations. Elsewhere, however, states may deliberately cultivate relationships with "proxy" regimes. Client governments that enjoy uncontested political authority within their territory can deliver policies their principals desire. As such, powerful states may overlook abuses against citizens and deliberately avoid cultivating domestic competition against agent regimes. We hope this paper will help researchers, policymakers, and citizens better understand the implications of these foreign policy decisions and therefore craft appropriate responses.

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