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Rebel Victory, State Power, and the Durability of Rebel Regimes

A dissertation presented

by

Sean Ashley

to

The Department of Government

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
Political Science

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2023

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Dissertation Advisor: Professor Steven R. Levitsky Sean Ashley

Rebel Victory, State Power, and the Durability of Rebel Regimes

Abstract

After victorious rebel groups seize power, they face formidable postwar challenges. Rebel victors inherit states shattered by war, and often confront new postwar armed opponents seeking to exploit state weakness and seize power. Despite these common challenges, the consequences of rebel victory vary widely – some victors succumb to state weakness, renewed conflict and regime breakdown, yet others successfully establish powerful postwar states and durable regimes. Rebel victory is thus a sharp fork in the road, producing radically dissimilar postwar orders. I advance a novel theory to explain this variation. I argue that postwar regime durability and state strength are rooted in rebel victors' wartime governance institutions. Rebels create wartime institutions to regulate the behavior of their combatants, as well as govern civilian populations in their areas of operation. However, wartime institutions are costly to build. Some rebels forgo these costs to focus primarily on unleashing violence, while others shoulder these costs and create extensive wartime institutions. I demonstrate that rebel victors that built a wider range of wartime institutions enter the postwar era with greater military cohesion, civilian support and administrative skills. These wartime advantages help highly institutionalized victors construct stronger postwar states more capable of weathering challenges to regime

survival. Wartime investment in governance creates postwar dividends in the form of regime and state strength. I find support for this theory using a mixed methods research design. Constructing an original global dataset capturing information on the wartime institutions of all rebel victors from 1945—2014, I demonstrate empirically that victors with a denser portfolio of wartime institutions establish substantially more durable regimes. Leveraging field interviews, primary and secondary sources, I further illustrate the logic through case studies of three African rebel victors.

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Chapter 1 | Introduction

1.1 The Puzzle

What occurs after rebel groups successfully win wars and rebel victors attempt to consolidate political authority? I argue that for rebels, victory is bittersweet. Victorious rebels, having decisively expelled their government rivals from power, can potentially establish virtual political monopolies, typically in the form of single-party authoritarian regimes. However, rebel victors also frequently inherit states teetering on the brink of failure. With the coercive and administrative capacities of the state fractured by war, rebel victors are vulnerable to new bouts of contestation by armed actors. Disloyal ex-guerrilla commanders, former government forces, and hostile international actors can exploit state weakness to overthrow fledgling rebel regimes. The crowning irony of rebel victory is that to rule effectively and remain in power, rebel victors must reconstruct the very states they so assiduously destroyed.

How do rebel victors fare in the face of these daunting challenges? Unsurprisingly, many rebel victors, overstretched by the challenges of postwar reconstruction, plunge headlong into renewed conflict, state failure and regime collapse. Others however, phoenix-like, manage to raise effective states and durable regimes from the ashes of war. The puzzle of how rebel victories can produce such markedly divergent trajectories begs for exploration. However, relatively few scholars have taken up the

question of why some victorious rebel groups prove to be "state-consolidating" versus "state-subverting" insurgencies – a challenge that "no comparative analysis can ignore" (Clapham 1998, 8). Rebel victors vary sharply in their preparedness to assume, retain, and reconstruct state power: *Why do some rebel victors successfully construct durable regimes, underpinned by strong states, while others do not?*

1.2 The Argument in Brief

I argue that rebel victors' ability to construct both strong states and durable regimes rests on rebels' wartime institutions. Specifically, two kinds of wartime institutions determine postconflict rebel regime[1] durability – rebel combatant controls, and civilian governance institutions. Rebels with extensive combatant controls – which I define as the institutions rebels use to monitor, socialize, discipline and restrain their fighters and armed wings – construct stronger and more loyal postwar armies. Wartime combatant controls allow rebel victors to dampen the risks of centralizing and integrating diverse armed actors into new national armies. Wartime governance embeds rebel groups' political structures within civilian populations and territories (Arjona, Kasfir and Mampilly 2015) and thereby facilitates the development of administrative competencies (Zaks 2017), social control (Liu 2022) and the infrastructural reach vital to postwar reconstruction. Together, these wartime institutions mirror key constituent elements of state strength — coercive power and infrastructural power respectively. As such, rebels that adopt a wider range of wartime institutions gain a "flying start" on postwar statebuilding and reconstruction, ascending to power with institutions that can readily be converted to essential state

1. Throughout the manuscript, I refer to the successor regimes established by rebel victors as rebel regimes.

structures. Combatant controls become the institutional and normative nucleus of disciplined state coercive apparatuses. Rebels draw on the social ties and administrative expertise built through wartime governance to mobilize civilian manpower, economic resources, and intelligence against new armed threats. Rebels possessing extensive wartime institutions face a shorter, smoother path to regime and state formation. The organizational symmetries between wartime institution-building and postwar state-building reduces the costs of organizational change for rebels-turning-rulers. Wartime institutions thereby create the conditions for establishing durable rebel regimes, powerful postwar states and lasting political order.

By contrast, rebels lacking wartime institutions struggle to establish postconflict order. These rebel victors face an unenviable choice - either build postwar states essentially "from scratch", and/or attempt to resurrect *ancien régime* state institutions exhausted by war. Statebuilding from scratch requires that rebels develop the administrative competencies needed to govern civilians while often in the midst of complex emergencies i.e. the famine, pestilence and internal displacement that is part and parcel of the postwar environment. Such a task would be taxing for seasoned state administrators. For administrative neophytes, it is near-insuperable. Additionally, attempting to reorganize the armed forces into a politically docile entity after the fact, is potentially suicidal. Threatening military autonomy and introducing new political officers and structures into the armed forces, precipitate coups, confusion and counterinsurgency failure. The alternative strategy, "state resurrection" is little better. Rebels attempting to revive shattered prewar institutional structures gain little in the way of residual institutional strengths. Prewar institutions are fatigued by war, carry reputational stigmas, and are of suspect loyalty. Accordingly statebuilding "from scratch" and "state resurrection" constitute considerably more perilous and difficult approaches to state reconstruction, ultimately placing newborn rebel regimes

at greater hazard of collapse.[2]

1.3 Research Design and Methodological Approach

I draw on qualitative and quantitative evidence to substantiate my theoretical claims. I construct an original global dataset, the Victorious Insurgent Characteristics that Organize Regimes **(VICTOR)** dataset, capturing data on the wartime institutions of rebel victors in all civil wars from 1945-2014. Drawing on hundreds of primary and secondary sources, including rebel biographies, conflict histories, interview data and declassified intelligence, I collect data on 6 civilian governance and combatant control institutions. Among other variables, I capture information on rebel taxation, welfare provision, internal intelligence services and commissar structures. Conducting statistical analyses using this data reveals that where rebels constructed a more extensive battery of wartime institutions, the regimes and states succeeding victory proved to be more robust.

Quantitative analysis, while useful in establishing a statistical relationship between wartime institutions and postwar regime durability, cannot disclose the causal mechanisms connecting the two. For this, I turn to qualitative explorations of several cases of rebel victors and their successor regimes in Africa. Africa is a veritable laboratory of rebel rule, proffering massive variation in the durability of rebel regimes. I investigate the mechanisms tying wartime institutions to regime survival through case studies of rebel regimes in Uganda and Rwanda, drawing on field interviews with East African ex-rebel and state elites conducted in 2018 and 2019. In each case, I trace how wartime institutions persisted into the postwar era and were adapted and

2. See Zaks (2017) on the perils of building new political parties from scratch versus repurposing wartime organizational structures in the context of rebel-to-party transition.

augmented to address the challenges of postwar mobilization, administration, and military control. I find consistent patterns of wartime institutional carryover, and demonstrate how institutional path-dependencies explain rebel victors' varying abilities to withstand postwar shocks. I also document how rebels lacking in wartime institutions struggled to develop the skills and structures needed to administer society or control armies – frequently resulting in regime breakdown or near-inescapable conflict traps.

1.4 Significance and Contribution

This work makes several contributions to the scholarly literatures on conflict termination, rebel governance, and regime durability. First, I demonstrate that varied political outcomes follow from rebel victory. Most existing work on rebel victors compares rebel victories to other forms of civil war termination, or compares rebel to non-rebel regimes. At best, these approaches give a partial account of rebel victory framed as a largely uniform category of conflict outcomes. I present a fuller picture of rebel victory, as well as explain why rebel regimes exhibit widely divergent trajectories.

Second, in recognizing the varied nature of victory, I challenge a key position in the civil war termination literature – that by destroying rivals outright, rebel victory lays down strong foundations for postconflict regime durability and conflict nonrecurrence (Wagner 1993; Licklider 1995; Quinn, Mason and Gurses 2007). The decisive nature of rebel victory is thought to leave victors in a commanding position to suppress spoilers (Toft 2009; 2010) and secure civilian support (Daly 2019). I argue that this perspective optimistically characterizes the consequences of victory and the prospects for durable postwar order. Even though rebel victors are the "last

man standing", victors initially stand on dangerously weak states (Lachapelle et. al. 2022; Levitsky and Way 2022). Weak state foundations invite anarchy. Additionally, fallen governments are gone but not dead – despite losing office, recognition and key territory, former government splinters, remnants and rump factions can remobilize against the new regime. After rebel victories in Rwanda (1994), Uganda (1979, 1986) and Cambodia (1979) for example, bloody rematches with former government forces dominated the early years of rebel rule. To survive in power, rebel victors cannot simply destroy states; they must also recreate them.

Third, this article builds upon and extends a burgeoning literature on the postwar legacies of wartime institutions. Scholars have increasingly recognized that rebel institutional enclaves act as "laboratories of the future" (Woldemariam 2018, 55), extending into the postwar era and decisively shaping postwar outcomes. Rebel groups' wartime governance shapes, *inter alia*, postwar democratization (Huang 2016; Lyons 2016a), rebel successor party performance (Zaks 2017) and party strength (Lyons 2016b; 2016c), public goods provision (Thaler 2018), and strategies of consolidating power (Liu 2022). These works have succeeded in laying down a conceptual bridge between the wartime and postwar eras, identifying how wartime institutions persist, resurface, and structure politics long after wars end. This work embeds itself in this literature by developing a generalizable theory of how wartime institution-building informs state strength and regime durability after rebel victory. It devotes particular focus to detailing how wartime institutions equip victors to surmount the distinctive challenges of postwar state formation and survive post-victory conflicts. By bringing both cross-national evidence and qualitative process-tracing to bear, I make the case that wartime institutions hold considerable explanatory power for understanding when and how victorious rebels succeed in establishing durable postwar political orders.

1.5 Dissertation Overview

The remainder of the dissertation unfolds as follows. In Chapter 2, I more fully enumerate the theoretical logic, and address alternative arguments regarding state formation and regime durability following rebel victory. In Chapter 3, I use the aforementioned VICTOR dataset to statistically test the hypothesized relationships between wartime institution-building, postwar state strength and regime durability. To illuminate and test the theorized causal mechanisms, I rely on case evidence drawn from rebel regimes across Africa. In Chapter 4, I tackle the variation among rebel victors using structured focused comparisons of two regimes established following rebel victory in Uganda: the Milton Obote II regime (1980-1985)[3] following the victory of the Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA) in the 1979 Liberation War, and the Yoweri Museveni regime (1986-present) following the victory of the National Resistance Army (NRA) in the Ugandan Bush War (1980-1985). Both rebel groups were center-seeking post-colonial insurgencies that sought to depose ethnically exclusionary Ugandan regimes. However, despite common wartime aims and operating during similar periods in world-historical time, these rebel victors established highly dissimilar regimes. The UNLA victors struggled to reconstruct a viable state capable of suppressing armed challengers. In this case, rebel victory led to a short-lived and unstable regime, fatally cross-pressured by delinquent armed forces and feeble administrative structures. During Obote's rule, Uganda was "a broken-backed state" (Gertzel 1980, 461). By contrast, the NRA victors managed to successfully reconstruct the Ugandan state and establish a durable regime. Despite initially facing a "Pandora's Box" (Amaza 1998, 120) of insurgent challengers, the Museveni regime

3. Milton Obote ruled Uganda from 1962-1971 as well as 1980-1985, retaking power following rebel victory in 1979. As shorthand, I call this second period of rule the Obote II regime.

effectively repaired the coercive apparatus and civil administration in order to extinguish armed threats.

By selecting cases that hold contextual variables and potential confounders relatively constant, I am able to focus on how rebel victors' wartime institutions shaped the character of rebel rule. Primary source data collected during fieldwork in Uganda, including interviews with former rebels-turned-state officials, allow me to evaluate my proposed theoretical mechanisms through process tracing. I trace how the UNLA's failure to invest in either rebel governance or combatant control led to regime and state breakdown. Limited experience with rebel governance left the succeeding regime unprepared to administer national territory, allowing new insurgent groups to gain strength. Obote's attempt to resurrect prewar party institutions as instruments of postwar administration proved futile, as prewar organizations had been fatigued by war, and aroused old grudges regarding ethnopolitical exclusion. Additionally, without an extensive body of combatant controls, UNLA ex-guerrilla veterans became the backbone of an undisciplined and ineffective national army hostile to political oversight. As a result, the foundering Obote attempted to belatedly counterbalance and "coup-proof" the army, both grafting on entirely new political control mechanisms as well as resurrecting prewar counterweights and intelligence services. The resulting gyre of intra-military conflict lead to further military underperformance, counterinsurgency failure and regime breakdown.[4] By contrast, the NRA possessed extensive wartime institutions. After victory, NRA governance institutions were used to supply public goods, harvest intelligence about new insurgent forces and mobilize civilians into counterinsurgency. This "cooperative counterinsurgency" strategy, in addition to military discipline, allowed the NRA to weather and destroy insurgent threats, and

4. Talmadge (2015), Roessler (2016) and Greitens (2016) detail the various ways in which coup-proofing degrades military performance and undermines counterinsurgency.

consolidate its hold on power.

In Chapter 5 I present a single-case study exploring successful postwar reconstruction in Rwanda under the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Several scholars have characterized the RFP as engaging in minimal rebel governance (Prunier 1998; Mamdani 2001; Mampilly and Steward 2020). For most of the war, the RPF ruled over a sliver of Rwanda's territory and domestic population. Nevertheless, the RPF managed to successfully reconstruct the Rwandan state and establish durable single-party rule. Major scholarly accounts of post-victory Rwanda attribute statebuilding success to Rwanda's distinctive population geography, historical state strength or political culture (Reyntjens 2004; Straus 2006).

I provide an alternative history of RPF postwar reconstruction that challenges the prevailing consensus. Admittedly, the RPF – an exile group – revamped certain prewar administrative practices and institutions in a bid to gain domestic legitimacy. However, most accounts overstate the continuity between the RPF state and the state under the Rwandan *ancien régime*. Despite Rwanda's history of state strength, the RPF inherited a state in profound collapse (Jones 2014; Roessler and Verhoeven 2016) and a political culture it understood as intolerably genocidal (Reyntjens 2013, 82). The RPF statebuilding project reconciled both the need for autochthony with "high modernist" ambitions to sharply break with previous governance practices and remake the state in the RPF's image.

I argue that post-conflict statebuilding was largely an extension of the RPF's institutional repertoire. First, despite its limited territorial holdings, the RPF benefitted from a long legacy of governing exile populations, leading to a surprisingly diverse array of governance structures. The RPF invested heavily in extracting remittances, and administering a substantial portion of the Rwandan diaspora well before capturing Rwandan territory. Second, the RPF also benefitted from a robust system of

combatant controls, including a system of political indoctrination known as *ingando*. This system was generalized into a system of mass political reeducation, allowing for the RPF to "re-socialize" *génocidaires* into society, and incorporate former Rwandan government forces into the new national army without risking disciplinary collapse. The Rwandan case demonstrates how wartime governance structures can be both extended and repurposed as tools of postwar control.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I conclude by offering the academic and policymaking implications of my argument. I discuss how this manuscript advances the literatures on rebel governance and authoritarian regime durability, sketch out how future research agendas can build upon these findings, and identify the actionable insights that policymakers can draw from this work.

Chapter 2 | Theory

In this chapter I develop a theory of postwar statebuilding and rebel regime durability. The chapter proceeds as follows. I first characterize the immediate consequences of rebel victory for postwar political order. Scholars in the conflict termination and bellicist literatures largely conceptualize rebel victory as uniformly producing strong states, lasting order, and durable regimes. However, I proceed from the opposite premise — arguing that new rebels commonly inherit weak states and face renewed disorder, both of which threaten to break victors' tenuous grip on power. Having inherited failed and feeble states, newborn rebel regimes must nonetheless discover a path to state strength in order to survive. I go on to argue that ultimately, the basis of rebuilt state power resides in rebel groups' *wartime institutions*. Wartime institution-building constitutes an embryonic exercise in statebuilding, furnishing rebels with formative experience, infrastructure and skill in carrying out the vital postwar tasks of controlling violence and administering populations. I theorize the ways in which a broad array of wartime institutions helps rebels better overcome the distinct challenges of four postwar statebuilding tasks. I further detail how rebels lacking in wartime institutions, by contrast, must attempt alternative, dangerous statebuilding strategies, unlikely to result in strong states capable of guaranteeing regime survival. To conclude the chapter, I discuss alternative theoretical logics and rival explanations for rebel victors' postconflict trajectories.

2.1 War Unmakes the State: State Weakness and Insecurity after Rebel Victory

At face value, victorious rebels capture a rich bounty of political resources. Victors claim formal international status as states - able to enter into foreign treaties, defense alliances and trade networks. As the acknowledged gatekeepers of state borders, rebels-turned-rulers gain *de jure* power over "customs revenue and foreign aid; permits to do business in the territory; entry and exit visas; and permission to move currency in and out" (Cooper 2002, 157). Additionally, the decisive nature of victory ostensibly leaves rebel victors in a position to reconstruct ruling bodies and state institutions largely on their own terms. For newborn rebel regimes, the opportunity to establish lucrative, lasting, single-party political monopolies lies seemingly close at hand.

However, the crushing state weakness that accompanies rebel victory threatens rebel victors' grip on power. Rebel victors inherit states that are weak thrice over. First, rebel victors owe their very existence to state weakness. As observed by Fearon and Laitin (2003, 1), rebels are "better able to survive and prosper if the government and military they oppose is relatively weak – badly financed, organizationally inept, corrupt, and poorly informed about goings on at the local level". The prosperity of rebel victors is a testament of the poverty of their state opponents. Second, the very experience of civil war exacerbates initial state frailties. On the road to victory, rebel groups usurp, dislocate, and destroy the instruments of state power. Unlike wars terminating in military settlements, wars ending in rebel victories tend to be fights to the (state) death. The physical, economic, and human toll of such wars tend to be particularly high, resulting in widespread destruction of physical infrastructure and

human capital, disruption of welfare services, commerce and economic production[1], the collapse of state armies, and death, disease and dislocation for large swathes of the domestic population. Third, rebel victory itself — marked by the expulsion of colonial or mother state authorities after secessionist victories, and the seizure of the capital city for center-seeking groups — administers a final killing blow to state strength. For secessionists, the loss of colonial-era public servants and ruling authorities starves the state of administrative skill and institutional memory. Some defeated colonial powers add insult to injury. Seeking to leave newly independent states stillborn, these departing colonial powers sabotage critical state infrastructure on their way out. On the eve of rebel victory marking independence in Mozambique for example, departing Portuguese settlers "practiced economic sabotage in various forms — destruction of equipment, trucks and economic infrastructure; killing of cattle stock; large-scale dismissal of workers from productive enterprises; and complete production standstills — on a large scale all over the country" (Bowen 2000, 38). Center-seeking victors fare little better — fleeing members of the former regime, as well as their collaborators and coethnics, often ransack state resources prior to exile. Departing regime authorities pack golden parachutes for themselves, while incoming rebel rulers land on wobbly, weak state foundations.

Conscious of what state weakness implies, rebel victory is rarely accompanied by triumphalism. As George Pettee (1938, 96) accurately observed, victors in the immediate aftermath of seizing power act "not like men on horseback . . . but like fearful children, exploring an empty house, not sure that it is empty." These fears are well founded. The rupture in state strength that accompanies rebel victory invites a host of domestic security threats. The remnants of defeated enemy forces

1. See Collier (2003, 13-32) on civil war as "development in reverse".

haunt new rebel regimes, potentially serving as the nucleus of nascent insurgencies and counterrevolutions. Additionally, without a state capable of providing credible guarantees of security and welfare, civilian actors face low opportunity costs to joining rebellions (Daly 2016). Rebel victors find themselves on the opposite end of a familiar process — facing violent entrepreneurs exploiting infrastructurally and coercively weakened states to recruit civilians and incubate into mature insurgencies (Lewis 2020). The post-victory environment thereby constitutes a perfect storm of conditions for the creation of powerful domestic security threats.

Additionally, rebel victories crack what John Herz called the "hard shell of the state"(Herz 1959, 107–108). With prewar state armies drawn inwards by civil war and broken by defeat, rebel victors find themselves vulnerable to transnational non-state threats, and foreign aggression. Wars produce not only internal civilian displacement but also considerable refugee outflows. Refugees, dislocated from social and economic resources, are easy pickings for recruitment by transnational insurgents (Salehyan 2007). More dangerously, as observed by a number of scholars, rebel victories often lead to interstate war (Walt 1996; Carter et al. 2012; Levitsky and Way 2022). Rival states may opportunistically seize upon the window of opportunity provided by postwar state weakness to launch attacks, seize territory, and even attempt regime change (Walt 1992; Walt 2013 [1996]).

Finally, foreign and domestic threats may intersect, posing unusually grave dangers to newborn rebel regimes. As noted by various scholars (Bisley 2004; Jones 2013; Walt 1992), foreign sponsors can breathe new life into fallen or exiled regimes. Clarke (2022) finds that foreign sponsorship makes counterrevolutionary and revanchist movements nearly twice as likely. In Nicaragua for example, former members of the Nicaraguan national guard reconstituted themselves, with U.S. support, into the Contra insurgency. Alternatively, rather than seek out old rebel opponents, hostile

foreign powers can also coordinate with new ones - adopting or creating new domestic insurgencies to use as destabilizing foreign-policy instruments (Salehyan 2010; Lee 2020). Internationalized insurgencies gain strength through foreign training, logistical assistance, sanctuary and weapons technology. These deadly marriages can thoroughly destabilize rebel regimes. This is precisely what occurred after rebel victories in Angola (1974) and Mozambique (1974). South Africa's apartheid regime, seeking to arrest the march of black liberation movements throughout Southern Africa - midwifed powerful counterrevolutionary insurgencies that operated within and across Angolan and Mozambican borders.[2] For these counterrevolutionaries, the military benefits of external state support were profound. Angola's UNITA was initially a skeleton staff of guerrillas, armed with "bows and arrows, clubs and magic spells" (James 1992, 93). Under foreign tutelage however,[3] UNITA became a military juggernaut, boasting upwards of 50,000 troops (James 1992, 97) equipped with "sophisticated conventional weapons" (Solomon 1999), and dwarfing most African armies. The internationalized Angolan civil war, put the ruling Angolan rebel regime through "hell on earth" (Prendergast 1999), and "the worst war in the world" (Anstee 1996, xi).

The immediate aftermath of victory often sees winning rebels staring down the barrel of multiple, powerful armed threats (see Table 2.1 below).[4] State weakness, coinciding with the emergence or resurgence of violent opponents, existentially threatens rebel rule. As such, rebel victors face compelling incentives to construct new, powerful national state armies and civil administrations. However, despite these motives

2. South Africa's Angolan and Mozambican proxies were UNITA and RENAMO, respectively.

3. UNITA was also strengthened by a constellation of anticommunist regimes, including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Zaire.

4. Of the 46 rebel regimes emerging between 1945 and 2014, 32 — 69% — experienced renewed war within 5 years of seizing power.

for postwar state reconstruction, rebel victors exhibit dramatic variation in postwar statebuilding outcomes. Some rebel victors succeed in constructing loyal and effective armies alongside socially penetrative and professionally staffed bureaucracies. These strong states anchor rebel regime durability. For other victors the postconflict statebuilding process goes awry, giving rise to coercively and administratively defunct states. Indisciplined and weak national armies paired with feeble civil services portend regime breakdown. Approximately one-half of rebel regimes are strangled in the crib, being overthrown (largely by armed actors) within a scant ten years of taking power.[5]

The rapid collapse of many rebel regimes upends the expectations of influential scholarship in the *conflict-termination* and *bellicist* literatures.[6] For scholars of conflict termination, rebel victory has often been understood as the prequel to lasting peace (e.g., Wagner 1993; Licklider 1995; Walter 2004; Fortna 2004). In this reading, victory disrupts and destroys the organizational basis of renewed conflict (Wagner 1993). While settlements leave the machinery of militarization intact, and with it, a clear path to new war, victory is seen as resulting in "the compulsory disarming of the defeated side's armed forces and the destruction of their organization" (Quinn et al. 2007, 171). For bellicist scholars, surviving and winning wars supposedly generates state strength and regime durability (e.g. Levitsky and Way 2012; Carter, Bernhard, and Palmer 2012; Lemke and Carter 2016; Carter and Lemke 2022; Levitsky and Way 2022; Meng and Paine 2023). Triumphing in war demands that rebels construct organizations characterized by "military-style discipline" (Levitsky and Way 2012),

5. To be precise, 48% of rebel regimes collapse within ten years. Of these, the plurality (41%) were overthrown through war. The second largest category, military coups, represents 22% of overthrow events. Collectively, armed men destroy roughly two-thirds of rebel regimes. The origins of coups in rebel regimes will be addressed further in Chapter 2. See Chapter 3 for further discussion and descriptive statistics on rebel regime breakdown and mortality events.

6. Many scholars have a foot in both camps, e.g. Toft 2010.

Table 2.1: **Post-Victory Conflicts in Rebel Regimes, 1946-2014**

Rebel Regime	Post-Victory Conflict	Conflict Years	Fatalities
Afghanistan 92-96	Afghan Civil War	1992-1996	2,796
Afghanistan 96-01	Invasion of Afghanistan	2001	14,000-17,000
Algeria 62-92	Sand War	1963	500
Algeria 62-92	Kabyle Insurgencies	1963-1965	Unknown
Angola 75-NA	Angolan Civil War	1975-2002	500-800,000
Bangladesh 71-75	Communist Insurgency	1972-1975	30,000
Cambodia 75-79	Cambodian-Vietnamese War	1977-1979	8,000-25,000
Cambodia 79-NA	Khmer Insurgency	1979-1989	~50,000
Central African Republic 03-13	Central African Republic Bush War	2004-2007	~1,000
Central African Republic 03-13	Central African Republic Civil War (phase I)	2012-2013	~3,000
Central African Republic 13-14	Central African Republic Civil War (phase II)	2013-2014	~3,000
Chad 79-82	Habré Revolt	1980-1982	~2,500
Chad 82-91	GUNT Offensive	1983-1984	~2,500
Chad 82-91	Toyota War	1987	8,500
Chad 82-91	Third Chad War	1989-1990	3,800
Chad 91-NA	CNDSP Rebellion	1991-1994	Unknown
Chad 91-NA	FARF Rebellion	1994-1998	Unknown
China 49-NA	Korean War	1950-53	422,612
China 49-NA	First Taiwan Strait Crisis	1944-45	393
Republic of the Congo 97-NA	Second Republic of the Congo Civil War	1997-1999	14,000-25,000
Cuba 59-NA	Escambray Rebellion	1959-1965	1,000-7,000
Cuba 59-NA	Bay of Pigs Invasion	1961	~3,000
Democratic Republic of the Congo 97-NA	Second Congo War	1998-2003	~350,000
Democratic Republic of the Congo 97-NA	Ituri Conflict	1999-2003	~63,770
Eritrea 93-NA	Eritrean-Ethiopian War	1998-2000	98,217
Ethiopia 91-NA	Eritrean-Ethiopian War	1998-2000	98,217
Indonesia 49-66	Darul Islam Rebellion	1949-1962	~13,000
Indonesia 49-66	Permesta Rebellion	1957-1961	6,000
Indonesia 49-66	Sarawak Communist Insurgency	1962-1990	~2,000
Laos 75-NA	Third Laotian War	1976-1979	~7,000
Liberia 97-03	Second Liberian Civil War	1999-2003	50,000
Mozambique 75-NA	Mozambican Civil War	1977-1992	1,000,000
Nicaragua 79-90	Contra War	1982-1990	~30,000
Rwanda 94-NA	Third Rwanda War	1997-1998	3,300
Rwanda 94-NA	First Congo War	1996-1997	250,000
Sierra Leone 97-98	Second Sierra Leone War	1998-2000	Unknown
Somalia 91	Second Somalia War	1991-1997	Unknown
South Sudan 11-NA	South Sudanese Civil War	2013-2020	383,000
Uganda 80-85	Ugandan Bush War	1980-1986	100,000-500,000
Uganda 86-NA	Second Ugandan Civil War	1986-1994	~100,000
Vietnam 54-NA	Second Indochina War	1955-1975	1,000,000-3,000,000
Zimbabwe 80-NA	Gukurahundi/Matabeland War	1983-1987	8,000-300,000

enagage in successful coordination and powersharing (Meng and Paine 2023), and acquire overall robust organizational powers. Some scholars, arguing that the benign institutional returns to victory outweigh the costs of war, go so far as to suggest policymakers "give war a chance" (Luttwak 1999).

For bellicists, the collapse of rebel regimes is doubly puzzling. Winning rebels, in this reading, should benefit from both a history of violent struggle, and their violent post-victory denouements. Rebel victors, having run the gauntlet of conflict, should theoretically have developed formidable coercive and organizational powers in their own right. A commonplace of bellicist arguments is that "rebels need a high level of institutional capacity if they are to survive and win...This war-fighting capacity can provide the institutional basis for postwar governance and for protection from future threats to the state" (Toft 2010, 28-29).[7] Additionally, the violent sequences unleashed after victory should give additional motive force to rebel groups' state-building projects, redoubling investments in postwar state power (Lachapelle et al. 2020; Levitsky and Way 2022). War, in the bellicist formulation, should "make the state", leading rebels to pursue vast investments in coercive scale (Gurr 1988), and the construction of formidable infrastructural and administrative machinery to extract (Tilly 1992; Campbell 1993), organize (Ardant 1975), and mobilize resources from domestic populations (Skocpol 1988).

In their approach to rebel victory, the conflict termination and bellicist literatures collectively (1) underrate the enormous damage done to states on the road to victory, and the postwar dangers thereof (2) overrate the decisiveness with which

7. There is a disconnect between the bellicist literatures and the conflict onsent literatures. The latter proposes that rebellions most often occurs in coercively and administratively deficient states, yet the former implies that rebels victors, in the course of defeating these states, gain expansive coercive and administrative powers. While rebels certain need to outcompete state opponents to win power, it is unlikely that surmounting weak opponents will result in a quantum leap in postwar state strength under rebel rule.

victory wholly eliminates military opponents[8] and (3) regard intense war-fighting as compatible with, if not teleologically producing, state strength.

As discussed however, the experiences of many rebel victors belie predictions of victory as the midwife of strong states and lasting peace. Rebels victors inherit states in the teeth of failure, inviting renewed conflict. Regarding the second, post-victory civil wars are often old opponents in new clothing. As discussed above, former elites constitute lingering threats. Though shorn of their status as state actors, they retain considerable residual strengths. Militarily, they commonly possess years of coercive expertise. As former members in good standing of the state system, they can use upon foreign alliances and access to foreign bases to plot and launch violent returns from exile. The assumption that victory decisively ends the wartime condition of "multiple sovereignty" (Mason et al. 2011) does not correspond to the experiences of rebel victors in Rwanda (1994), Uganda (1980), Nicaragua (1979), or Cuba (1959) for example.

Finally, many rebel victors, as mentioned, despite going from war to war, do not develop commensurately robust state structures. Many rebel regimes are "born weak" (Levitsky and Way 2022). New post-victory wars, rather than "making" the state, "break it". These instances of state failure and regime breakdown constitute outliers to bellicist and conflict-termination theories, and yet they account for about 30 percent of rebel regime outcomes. Clapham's fifteen-year old challenge (1998), explaining the difference between "state consolidating" and "state subverting" insurgencies, remains largely unaddressed.[9]

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8. Some scholars within the conflict-termination literature have, admittedly, recognized that in many instances this 'ideal-type' characterization of victory does not bear out e.g. Hartzell (2009); Toft (2009). However, by and large the scholarship emphasizes this uniform and ideal-type characterization of victory as the decisive liquidation of armed opponents.

9. To my knowledge, only three contemporary scholars have thus far addressed this question: Lyons (2016a; 2016b; 2016b), Young (2020) and Woldemariam and Day (2022). All three use

Contrary to these literatures, this project takes *post-victory state weakness and instability* as the theoretical point of departure.[10] Rebel victors inherit weak states and labor to construct strong ones. To succeed in this task, I argue that rebel victors can neither rely on the pressures of renewed war to endogenously generate strong state institutions, nor can they rely on the husks of inherited states to combat new threats. Instead, this project locates the bases of powerful postwar state states, durable regimes, and political order in rebel victors' *wartime institutions*. A theory of what wartime institutions are, how they prepare the ground for postwar state formation, and how they ultimately underpin durable postwar regimes, follows below.

2.2 Wartime Institutions as Embryonic States

I argue that rebels' ability to effectively carry out the tasks of postwar state-building ultimately rests on their wartime institutions — the structures that rebel leaders use to impose order upon their armed wings and civilian constituencies. As conceptual shorthand, I refer to these institutions as *combatant controls* and *civilian governance* institutions. Despite a commonplace characterization of civil wars as anarchic episodes involving the widespread collapse of the state, and by extension political order, rebel authorities sometimes step in to fill the void left by weakened or contested state authority, developing their own institutionalized orders (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2014). Some rebel groups go so far as to construct elaborate institutionalized orders — engaging in extensive civilian governance and social service provision, as well as subjecting fighters to intensive combatant control regimens.

largely case-based qualitative methods as theoretical plausibility probes.

10. Levitsky and Way 2022, and Liu 2022, are two recent works that similarly argue (contrary to the broader literature) that initially, rebel regimes are born "weak" and face considerable challenges of consolidating postwar control.

During the Eritrean War for independence, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) provided medical care to almost 1.6 million Eritreans (Stewart 2018, 205), enrolled thousands in literary programs, and mandated daily political education for its fighters. These institutional infrastructures can rival those of states themselves. Accordingly, various scholars have characterized highly institutionalized rebels as "quasi-states" (Müller 2012), "proto-states" (Ahmad 2017), "counterstate sovereigns" (Mampilly 2012), "states-within-states" (Kingston and Spears 2004), "de facto states" (Pegg 1998; Florea 2017), and "states-in-waiting" (Reno 2011).

In this manuscript, I demonstrate that these characterizations are no mere figures of speech. Rebel victors' wartime institutions carry profound implications for post-war state-building. Wartime institutions reproduce and simulate essential dimensions of stateness - namely, coercive and infrastructural power (Mann 2008; Mann 2012 [1993]). When victory vaults highly-institutionalized rebel groups to office, they are "born powerful" (Dorman 2007), already possessing formative experience, infrastructure and skill in carrying out the tasks of controlling violence and administering populations. Wartime institutions thereby smooth the process of postwar reconstruction, augmenting the speed of postwar state formation and the robustness of the resulting states. In turn, these rebuilt states can more effectively resolve the economic crises and security threats that almost invariably confront newborn rebel regimes. In sum, the greater the investment in wartime institutionalization, the greater the returns to postwar state strength and regime durability. In the following sections, I provide a more granular definition of combatant controls and civilian governance. Then, I turn to an explanation of why wartime institutional infrastructures vary. While some rebels decide to create comprehensive statelike entities in their liberated zones, others opt for decidedly minimalist institution building. Finally, I turn to the downstream effects of wartime institution-building, more fully characterizing the process by which

powerful states are formed after war, the barriers to postwar state formation, and how wartime institutions assist rebels in scaling these barriers.

2.2.1 Combatant Controls

Combatant controls comprise both the specialized roles (Parkinsons and Zaks 2018) and organizational structures that the central leaders of rebel groups use to socialize, monitor, restrain and discipline their guerrilla field commanders and rank and file.[11] Combatant controls serve both *horizontal* and *vertical* functions. Various scholars have remarked upon the social and organizational cleavages common to armed groups. Rebel groups are often strange-bedfellow coalitions (Cabral 1966). Despite being organized around egalitarian narratives, shared identities and common ideals, rebel groups frequently possess a cross-class and cross-ethnic character. The leadership of rebel groups is disproportionately populated by older, better-educated urbanites (Abrahms 2018, 105-108). In colonial and post-colonial states, these leaders are often mixed-race mestizos, or ethnic assimilados – members of ethnic groups granted broader citizenship rights, having been deemed more culturally and intellectually proximate to the colonial power (Horowitz 1985; Stewart 2022). By contrast, the military forces of rebel movements tend to be young men drawn from poorer, and more rural sectors of society. In other words, social divisions and organizational roles tend to overlap.

Combatant controls help bridge the social and organizational gulfs that marks most armed groups. Through organization-wide political education regimens for example, they build cross-cleavage solidarity while "fusing" rebel groups' political

11. For an analogous argument see Levitsky and Way (2012; 2022) on "party-military fusion", in which the political and military dimensions of armed groups are intertwined, and military and political roles, blurred. Also see Nordlinger (1977) on the "penetration model" of civil-military relations.

elites at the “top" with mid-level military commanders and rank-and-file soldiery (Nordlinger 1977; Levitksy and Way 2022). Socialization instruments may be further reinforced by disciplinary and surveillance structures, that administer courts-martial and punishments to errant fighters. In the Eritrean EPLF, the fearsome internal security apparatus *Halewa Sawra* (“defense of the revolution”), imposed internal violence as means of enforcing the party line. Specialized personnel, such as “political commissars" and political cadres may take on full-spectrum roles e.g. tasked with implementing codes of conduct, performing education programs, and overseeing combatant trials.

The “penetration" of the military elements of rebellion with these instruments of loyalty and control helps ensure that political leaders exercise a tight group over the armed group writ large. Combatant controls thereby rein in military autonomy. In highly successful instances, combatant controls erase the distinction between the military and the political. In the CCP for example “the army *was* the party" (Levitsky and Way 2020, 94). Combatant controls instill in combatants the notion of armed struggle as part and parcel of a larger political project, as enumerated by rebel groups' top political leaders.

2.2.2 Civilian Governance

Civilian governance, on the other hand, represents the institutions, structures and practices rebels develop to capture, organize and engage civilian populations. Much like states, rebels can provide a range of public services including schools and healthcare (Stewart 2018), justice and dispute-resolution (Lewidge 2017; Provost 2021), and even the building of sophisticated postal services and electrical systems. Rebels can also reproduce state-like forms of extraction, organizing taxes within liberated zones,

or even “tithing" diaspora communities for remittance revenues. Further, rebel governors sometimes seek not merely to reign over civilians, but to govern alongside them. The convening of “popular" structures, such as grassroots committees, village councils and even elected bodies, produce collaborative authority structures (Mampilly and Stewart 2021). These wartime institutions serve both instrumental and signaling functions, equipping rebels with social supports and imparting to both domestic and international communities rebels degree of “stateness". As noted by Reno (2010) and Stewart (2018), governance often serves to credibly signals rebels' preparedness for rule.

2.2.3 Variation in Wartime Institution-Building

Wartime institutions serve a variety of functions both during, and, I argue, after conflict. They perform seemingly vital tasks vis-à-vis sewing shut potential organizational rifts, gathering up civilian support, and regulating intra-rebel and rebel-civilian relationships. And yet, not all rebels build them. Indeed, as I show in Chapter 3, most rebel victors show profound *disinterest* in engaging in wartime institution-building. While this dissertation does not seek to advance a fully-fledged theory of wartime institution building, it will map out some of the organizational disincentives for governance, and why some rebels nevertheless adopt governance, below.

First, wartime institution-building is costly. Wartime governance redirects scarce rebel resources away from the battlefield, costing rebels military strength (Stewart 2020). Combatant controls and governance structures are time-consuming to build, and require continued maintenance - risking prolonged conflict (Hoover-Green 2018). For many rebels, fighting in weak states, such institutions are not only burdensome, but superfluous. As discussed earlier, weak states make limited organizational de-

mands of rebels. In weak states, the spoils of the capital lay near at hand. With time horizons shrunken by the imminent prospect of victory, some rebels disregard extensive institution-building in favor of simply unleashing violence and focusing single-mindedly upon seizing sovereign power. During the First Congo War for example, the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL) "sprinted" towards Kinshasa, devoting minimal resources towards governing civilians or controlling combatants (Roessler and Verhoeven 2017, 181-230).

On the other hand, the strength of state opponents can serve as a *disincentive* for institution-building and organizational strengthening. This stands the basic bellicist insight right on its head. Facing particular strong states, rebels' time-horizons buckle in the opposite direction. Given the costliness of governance, rebels may opt to jettison these institutional commitments and redirect all its efforts to military survival. Powerful state military offensives create severe difficulties for aspiring rebel governors. By denying or retaking rebel-held territory, they force rebels to transition to mobile warfare, straining rebels' capacity to engage in stable long-term reciprocal relationships with civilians. Converted to "roving banditry" (Olson 1993), rebels not only face difficulty governing, but also have incentives to loosen their combatant controls. In such scenarios, rebels do not anticipate recurrent interaction with civilians. Indeed, given the end-game scenario in which militarily pressured rebels may find themselves, they might not have the luxury of surviving long enough to bear the costs of civilian abuse. Perversely, weakness may also inspire rebels to attack soft target to signal that they retain military viability (Hultman 2009). Accordingly, various scholars have found that rebels' military weakness and battlefield reversals results in increased use of civilian targeting (Wood 2010; Wood 2014), terrorism (Stanton 2013), land-mine use (Fazal and Konaev 2019), forced recruitment (Eck 2014) and indiscriminate violence (Hultman 2009).

While strategic considerations evidently shape rebel governance decisionmaking, rational choice arguments of this kind leave something to be desired. In many cases, rebels continue to provide violence under stunning duress. In others, rebels resist the temptations of state weakness, and engage in the building up of governance infrastructure in the countryside rather than making a mad dash to the capital. Additionally, rebels often, in the course of war, subscribe to ideological beliefs and organizational templates that delineate rebels' governance priorities. As discussed persuasively by Stewart (2021), rebel groups seeking social transformation have often deliberately emulated the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) organizational model, undertaking burdensome wartime governance whilst fighting.

Heuristic judgements (Abrahms 2018), ideology, and organizational mimicry, constitute powerful determinants of rebel organizational decisionmaking. Such models tend to be "sticky". Rebels can often be slow to update these models, given the inherent uncertainty of experimentation. Additionally, rebels often emulate influential "success cases" (Abrahms 2018), under the conviction that these models provide a sure formula for wartime success. Rebels may thereby fail to update these judgements, adhering to particular organizational models out of consideration for their prior success. On the other hand, rebels may learn from failed proximate models, and consciously error-correct. In Eritrea for example, the collapse of the Eritrean Liberation Front was widely attributed to its decentralized "zonal" model of organization, which led to ethno-territorial silos and organizational fragmentation. A newer Eritrean organization, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), conducted an organizational autopsy of ELF collapse, and thereby decided to implement a highly centralized organizational structure.

Rebel groups nevertheless have a number of organizational models from which to choose. For example, the model of "protracted popular warfare" pioneered by the

CCP, involving robust institution-building to mobilize the rural peasantry, became a default organizational model for many groups across the post-colonial world. The model "grew legs" as a result of both the CCP victory and the influential texts (e.g. On Guerrilla Warfare), that accompanied it. Alternatively, "focoist" model of rebellion, propounded by Che Guevara suggested "spectacular acts" of violence would obviate the need for extensive institution-building. Carlos Marighela's revolutionary praxis argued for urban guerrilla terror to strike directly at the political center.[12] Often, for rebels, the "choice" of organizational model is often simply a matter of prior exposure and proximity. Imitation is as powerful a driver of rebel organization as strategic calculation.

Often, these organizational models differ across a clear binary — whether to engage in the time-consuming process of building extensive wartime governance institutions, or not. Rebels often confront models that propose a clear and maximalist commitment to either long-term political institution-building, or quick military strikes for power. This distinction has surfaced in the debates of multiple rebel groups. In the Guinea-Bissauan PAIGC for example, political education focused on the dangers of "militarism", with Amilcar Cabral exhorting his organization to remember "we are [politically aware] militants, not militarists!" In the Ugandan NRA, as will be discussed further below, Yoweri Museveni condemned "coupist" and "putschist" strategies that sought to seize power in rapid military strikes. This binary has also been picked up in scholarship, with scholars organizing the study of rebel governance around binary 'ideal-types'. Huntington (1968, 266-274) differentiates between Eastern Revolution — wherein rebels "withdraw from central, urban areas of the country, establish a base area of control in a remote section and struggle to win the support of

12. See Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, 421 for a summary of the varied technologies of rebellion.

the peasants" prior to seizing the capital — and Western revolution, in which revolutionaries seize power quickly to the capital and then expand their postwar authority nationwide.[13]

As such, I largely approaches institution-building decisions as a function of both groups' *organizational philosophy* and immediate strategic situation. As best as possible, in the case studies, I lay out the priors, organizational models and ideological beliefs that influence rebels' institution-building. I further show that governance, is best implemented when rebels find themselves in positions of military stalemate, or when rebels and state are relatively balance in strength. This "Goldilocks zone" provides both the necessary insecurity to induce *demand* for governance, and leaves rebels with the relative *capacity* to enact governance. As will be shown in the Ugandan cases, shifts in the military balance towards either end of the spectrum, often imposes strain on rebels' institution-building projects.

This dissertation is however agnostic as to the "best" organizational strategy for seizing power. Rebels with very few, or zero, wartime institutions frequently seize state power through rapid strikes at the capital — as was the case in Bolivia (1952), Chad (1982), Congo-Brazzaville (1990), Somalia (1990) and Uganda (1979). However, this dissertation argues firmly that to *retain* state power, a dense portfolio of wartime institutions is vital. Technologies of "protracted popular warfare", guerrilla struggle and "Eastern revolution" make burdensome wartime demands of rebels. However, the institutions built during wartime thoroughly smooth and facilitate the postwar statebuilding process. I turn to detailing this process below.

13. Somewhat similarly, Arjona (2016) differentiates between "rebelocracy" and "aliocracy", representing maximal and minimal governance commitments respectively.

2.3 (Re)Building States After Rebel Victory: How Wartime Institutions Facilitate Postwar State Formation

I conceptualize postwar state-building as primarily involving four processes: (1) military centralization, (2) military integration, (3) establishing administrative control over society and (4) developing administrative competencies. On the military side of things, centralizing guerilla forces into national armies and integrating new combatants - often former armed rivals - can raise the risks of military coups and civilian abuse. On the other hand, building postwar civil services requires rebels develop administrative skills and agencies, such as educational services and healthcare, in order to create stable ties to civilian populations. This requires that rebels branch out beyond their core "specialization in violence" (Bates et al. 2002; Chai 1993), into potentially unfamiliar administrative domains (Zaks 2017). The risks of reorganizing rebels into new structures and domains can bar the way to effective postwar state formation.

Wartime institutions dampen these risks in two ways. First wartime combatant controls create a strong core of loyal veterans, dampening the risks of centralizing and integrating diverse armed actors into new national armies. Second, wartime governance provides rebels with an initial battery of civilian support and administrative skill. These reduce the postwar costs of building socially penetrative and professionally-run national bureaucracies. By contrast, weakly institutionalized rebel victors confront dangerously autonomous combatants, limited civilian support and are deficient in administrative faculties. Failure to invest in combatant controls and wartime civilian governance means rebels must attempt to control armies and develop

bureaucracies *post-hoc*, a profoundly risky and time-consuming process. In this way, a lack of wartime institutions thwarts downstream efforts at building effective postwar states.

The four statebuilding processes, their attendant risks, and the advantages provided by wartime institutions are mapped out below.

2.3.1 Military Centralization

As a point of departure, I propose that that re-militarization, not demilitarization (cf. De Waal 2002; Lyons 2005; Lyons 2013), is central to fortifying post-conflict states. In order to survive recrudescent armed challenges, new rebel rulers must refashion their dispersed guerrilla fighters into effective, centrally organized state armies. Effective state armies tend to possess clearly and formally defined command structures, making it easier to monitor and coordinate units. Additionally, new national armies are typically initially concentrated in the capital. In the postwar-era, victorious armed groups' central political leaders assume executive state office and rely on centrally located forces to protect the seat of government power (Herbst 2014).

However, military centralization, perversely, also places rebel rulers at risk. Guerrilla fighters that are physically concentrated in the capital are well-positioned to stage a military coup. Coups most frequently succeed when symbolic infrastructure, critical civilian officials, and media facilities within the capital are seized by the armed forces (Singh 2014). Centralization places armed forces tantalizingly close to sovereign power, allowing for armies to coordinate efficient marches on the national palace, arrests of heads of state and seizure of state radio.

Furthermore, the process of military centralization can introduce fresh grievances among ex-guerrilla field commanders. Conflict potentially allows guerrilla comman-

ders to operate with considerable autonomy. Commanders can exploit this latitude to accumulate extravagant spoils, abuse civilians, or cultivate loyal factional networks. When guerrilla commanders are called upon to detach from local wartime networks and be absorbed into centralized armies, they face the loss of these prerogatives (Martin 2021, 92-93). Formerly autonomous guerrilla commanders may deeply resent being more firmly placed under central oversight.

Finally, centralizing forces in the capital city also exposes civilian audiences to men with guns. During war, rebels often operate in spartan conditions. The difference in material circumstance between the *maquis* versus the capital, is stark. Capital cities, by and large, constitute the seat of government and state power — the historical concentration of state power in cities allows for the accumulation of capital and property within.[14] Rebel victors, newly situated in the playgrounds of the capital, face temptations to (ab)use their coercive powers to secure spoils, loot and leisure.[15] Accordingly newly centralized armies may harass and abuse citizens, sparking backlash. Turmoil in the capital is often highly visible, causing international audiences to turn a critical eye upon the new regime. Additionally, abused civilians may flee the capital, or even potentially join new rebel forces. At best, the loss of civilian support robs the new regime of a potential resource base. At worst, it threatens to exacerbate security challengers. In the initial, precarious years of rebel rule, neither is a welcome outcome.

Accordingly, military centralization potentially raises the risk of postconflict military disobedience. Among victors, these risks are both common and acute. Philip

14. Unsurprisingly, many historical wartime victories have concluded with 'sacks' of capital cities, as means of paying troops e.g. Rome (410 AD, 455 AD), Constantinople (1204 AD), Magdeburg (1631 AD).

15. See Bates (2001) on the uneasy relationship between prosperity and violence, especially in cities.

Martin (2021) finds that in his data, 54% of rebel victors faced some form of military defection – in the form of coups, mutinies or the creation of antiregime splinter groups. The VICTOR data, described more thoroughly in Chapter 3, finds that 1 in 3 rebel regimes experience coup attempts. Rebel rulers are thus potentially confronted with a vexing dilemma. On the one hand, centralized postwar armies are vital to suppressing domestic and international armed challengers. On the other, centralized postwar armies are a potential enemy within the gates that can themselves threaten rulers' hold on office.

I argue that victorious rebels with an extensive body of wartime combatant controls manage to solve this dilemma. Rebel victors with a dense body of combatant controls break their armed forces of autonomy early on. Their fighting forces tend to be more rulebound (Abrahms 2018), owing to this history of political control. Combatant controls ensure field commanders have accumulated fewer personal resources during conflict. The presence of political education and internal intelligence structures reduces the incentives and possibility of coordinating a coup. Finally, as a result of exposure to political education, fighters' loyalty is less suspect. In the postwar era, rebel rulers with extensive combatant controls do not have to choose between military loyalty and effectiveness. Rather, given the firmer loyalties of guerrilla veterans in such groups, the armed forces can be centralized with relatively minimal risk.

However, rebel rulers whose armed forces lack for combatant controls face a tough choice. By centralizing their armies, these rulers expose themselves to internal military threats. Attempting to mitigate these threats comes at a steep cost. Rebel rulers can attempt to lavish patronage on the armed forces, effectively bribing their way out of a coup. However, these swollen military budgets gobble up resources that could potentially be redirected towards other statebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Alternatively, rulers can opt to disorganize, fragment and disperse their armed forces,

thereby "coup-proofing" the regime. However, this course of action leaves leaders vulnerable to foreign and insurgent challengers. These rebel rulers thus find themselves caught in what Phil Roessler (2016) describes as a "coup-civil war trap". Typically, these leaders focus on the near enemy – given the high success rate of coups, they tend to coup-proof, compromising military effectiveness despite the dangers.

This logic helps explain what are, at face value, suicidally dangerous wartime behaviors on the part of several rebel rulers. In Cambodia for example, Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot opted to engage in intense coup-proofing despite facing an aggressive Vietnamese-backed insurgent threat. This was largely due to the Khmer Rouge's inadequate combatant controls. Khmer Rouge field commanders were "quintessential warlords" who "never spoke about theory and ideology" (Short 2005, 407). Military units did not answer to central authority but primarily to their own divisional field commanders. Attempts to restructure the army after victory, proved "too little too late" (Short 2005, 409).

Unsurprisingly, shortly after taking power, the Khmer Rouge faced several insurrections and a suspected coup attempt led by army deputy Chief of Staff Chan Chakrey (Lonardo, Sun and Tyson 2020, 1256-1257). As theorized, Pol Pot responded by purging, reshuffling and dispersing military units. Though this succeeded in averting further coup attempts, it left the Khmer Rouge regime vulnerable to the external armed challengers that eventually destroyed them. A lack of wartime combatant controls ultimately forces rebel leaders to choose between a centralized and mutinous postwar military, or a coup-proofed and ineffective one.

2.3.2 Military Integration

While victorious guerrilla fighters constitute the backbone of new national armies, they are often insufficient to meet the new security challenges of the post-victory era. After victory, rebel victors have little in the way of a honeymoon period, often being quickly thrust into interstate wars (e.g. Eritrea, Ethiopia), intrastate wars (e.g. Nicaragua, Angola) and extraterritorial wars (e.g. Rwanda, Cambodia). Rebel rulers must reckon with these new threats even as their own winning guerrilla forces have been depleted by the previous conflict. Accordingly, the looming shadow of these new threats incentivizes dramatic investments in coercive scale.

Military integration kills two birds with one stone. First, by providing former armed opponents with a minority share in state power, military integration raises the opportunity costs of rebellion. Integration drains the pool of potential insurgents while making up military manpower deficits. Second, integration allows states to bring their former rivals' military and intelligence endowments to bear on outstanding insurgent threats (Thaler 2021). Integrated ex-rivals' knowledge of enemy social and human terrain constitutes a valuable intelligence bonus for state armies. Military integration can thus recycle former insurgents into effective counterinsurgents, "setting a thief to catch a thief" as it were." In Angola for example, this strategy paid massive dividends, as a UNITA defector, General Nunda provided vital intelligence leading to the decapitation of UNITA and the death of its chief, Jonas Savimbi. In this fashion, one of the longest and bloodiest conflicts in the world, came to an abrupt close.

On the other hand, military integration potentially jeopardizes military obedience. First, integrating rivals can antagonize veteran guerrilla loyalists in the winning group. Economically, awarding former rivals sensitive and often lucrative positions in the security apparatus, reduces loyalists' relative share of postwar spoils. Psychologically,

winning group veterans may bristle at having to share state power with hated former rivals. In ethnically-charged contexts, integrating ethnic rivals threatens to divide armies across ethnic lines, degrading performance and risking dissent. Accordingly, Atlas and Licklider (1999), White (2020) and De Bruin (2022) find that postwar military integration, especially of non-coethnics, raises the risk of military coups. Aggrieved veterans may mobilize violently in defense of their corporate and ethnic interests.

Military effectiveness can also be a casualty of integration. Not only does integration involve dramatic, rapid investments in coercive scale, but it also involves incorporating armed actors with an altogether different set of habits and norms that regulate the use of violence. These recombined armies may struggle to reconcile these groups, leading to parallel hierarchies and competing institutional norms (Helmke and Levitsky 2004) that confound military effectiveness. If newly integrated recruits are particularly indisciplined, they risk creating a wider collapse in military cohesion and effectiveness.

Wartime combatant controls help mitigate the dangers posed by military integration. First, combatant controls help deepen the loyalty and limit the autonomy of guerrilla veterans, reducing the likelihood that they will act on potential grievances or defy central directives. Second, combatant controls facilitate institutional continuity through informal socialization, political indoctrination and enforcement structures. This loyalty-promoting core of personnel, institutions and norms reduces the potentially destabilizing impact of integration. Acculturated veterans and wartime combatant control institutions thereby enable rivals to be effectively absorbed without compromising military obedience or effectiveness. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the Rwandan RPF has successfully incorporated roughly 40,000 former members of the genocidal *Forces Armées Rwandaises*. The Rwandan civil war, a war prosecuted

heavily along ethnic lines, is a "least likely" case of successful military integration.[16] The RPF however, assisted by its wartime combatant control infrastructure, has nevertheless managed integrate bitter former rivals with no apparent loss in military effectiveness, loyalty or *esprit de corps*.

Weakly-institutionalized rebels lack this institutional buffer. In this context, new recruits tend to divide integrated armies along normative, organizational and ethnic axes, leading to the aforementioned dangers of coups, defection, indiscipline and ineffectiveness. The Democratic Republic of the Congo offers an extreme example. The *brassage*and *mixage* military integration processes — attempts to end the various Conglese insurgencies raging since the AFDL victory in 1997 — backfired badly. Integrated insurgents have largely able to keep their organizational structures intact, thereby introducing parallel and competing hierarchies into the Congolese Armed Forces. Old rivalries and animosities similarly persisted, making intra-military cooperation between newly-integrated insurgents and regular army veterans fraught. Accordingly, rather than staunch insurgency, military integration has merely allowed insurgents to plunder the state army for resources and weaponry, which have then been used to launch new insurgencies with redoubled powers. The Congolese army has been effectively converted into the quartermaster of its own insurgent rivals. Verweijen (2014), attributes this in part to inattention to the social or ideological aspects of creating a new, republican army. Prior to victory, the AFDL insurgent forces had been devoid of any tangible political and doctrinal project, disciplinary mechanisms or political education. This institutional flimsiness has persisted into the postwar army, with the result that newly integrated soldiers, "step into a doctrinal and ideological void" (Verweijen 2014, 151). Integration has been but a nominal process in Congo,

16. Samii 2013 makes an identical claim for postwar integration in Burundi, a state frequently as Rwanda's "mirror image".

resulting in what seems to be a permanently rotating door of military integration, defection and insurgency reborn.

2.3.3 Establishing Administrative Control over Society

While a robust coercive apparatus is a necessary element of regime durability, it is by no means sufficient. Ruling through repression alone is costly and risky – habitually repressive regimes risk deepening civilian grievances and losing control over the armed forces (Svolik 2012). Rather, effective regimes also use socially-embedded administrative infrastructure to exercise political control (Liu 2022). Regimes use administrative state structures to disburse patronage and welfare, to indoctrinate and socialize citizens and finally, to gain intelligence about their societies (Hassan, Mattingly and Nugent 2022). The effective use of patronage and socialization reduces the need for coercion to control citizens. Additionally, the intelligence harvested through socially embedded administrative structures enables states to use more discriminate and effective violence (Grietens 2016, Lewis 2020).

Rebel victors in possession of extensive wartime governance institutions have a "running start" on administrative statebuilding. Rebel governance serves as a pilot program for post-victory administration.[17] Rather than needing to build governance structures *de novo*, these rebels draw upon their wartime governance infrastructure. In Cuba (Judson 2021) and Ethiopia (Barnabas and Zwi 1997) for example, rebel hospitals and schools became the backbone of state welfare and education systems, exhibiting continuity in facilities, practices and personnel.

Wartime governance allows rebels to gain formative experience in specific domains of administration, as well as generally capture civilian audiences. Civilians socialized

17. Thaler (2018) identifies continuities betweeen victorious rebels' wartime provision of public goods and their postwar social service provision.

within wartime governance structures can be more cheaply mobilized behind postwar statebuilding goals. Indoctrinated civilian volunteers that carry out statebuilding at low cost free up scarce postwar resources that can be redeployed elsewhere.[18] Finally, wartime governance — especially public goods provision — identifies rebel rulers as legitimate authorities upon whom civilian publics depend. Through signaling legitimacy, fostering dependency and indoctrinating civilians, wartime governance forges an enduring bond between civilian audiences and rebel authorities.

Rebel victors lacking in wartime governance institutions face several logistical and resource costs that complicate postwar statebuilding. Creating new administrative structures may lead to civilian resistance or evasion (Hirschman 1970). These rebel victors thus face a daunting trial-and-error period, in which they must experiment with new governance practices and update in the face of civilian responses (Zaks 2017, 48). Rebel victors without wartime governance structures are often resigned to a lengthy period during which administrative structures are unstable, and civilian loyalties uncertain. Prolonged periods of state weakness risk regime collapse.

2.3.4 Developing Administrative Competencies

State bureaucracies require professional administrative staff (Anderson 1987) — a point particularly true of postwar states, having hemorrhaged skilled administrative personnel throughout the conflict. Rebel victors inherit administrative challenges second to none. War is often accompanied by pestilence and famine, in addition to producing large displaced populations. Managing the complex emergencies that characterizes the postwar era requires administrators experienced in social service provi-

18. See Liu 2022 on how wartime social ties permit rebel victors to to reduce the costs of postwar reconstruction and more efficiently direct scarce postwar fiscal resources towards developmental and security goals.

sion under difficult circumstances. Rebel wartime governance operates as a finishing school for postwar administrators. Groups with experience in wartime governance have already identified skilled individuals capable of taking on administrative tasks. These individuals typically go on to occupy state office. In Zimbabwe (Liu 2022) and Uganda (Bouckaert 1999), individuals in charge of rebel health and education directorates went on to occupy these very same ministerial portfolios. Rebels can draw upon skilled administrative staff to export wartime statebuilding practices across national territory. While rebel-held zones exhibit wartime statebuilding 'from below', administrative proconsuls can be deployed into new territories to engage in postwar statebuilding 'from above' (Liu 2022, 44). In Angola for example, rebel bureaucratic elites have been deployed into rural territories to implement the developmental vision of the rebel ruling party (Soares de Oliviera and Taponier 2013).

Victors without extensive wartime governance experience lack administrative competencies. Following the victory of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) in Nicaragua, the newly named rebel minister of social welfare, upon learning of her new role asked, "but what is social welfare?" (Thaler 2018, 90). These victors must learn, 'on the job' while simultaneously contending with challenges to regime authority. With limited experience administering territory and society, these victors struggle to harness civilians' intelligence and resource endowments needed to stamp out domestic threats. The time it takes for rebels to develop these competencies *post-hoc* leaves the state suspended in a state of prolonged weakness, endangering regime survival.

2.4 State Resurrection: An Alternative Path?

Evidently, rebel groups lacking wartime institutions face considerable difficulties in constructing state institutions *de novo*. Accordingly, rebel victors with relatively few wartime institutions may be tempted to revive prewar or *ancien régime* institutions. At face value, prewar political parties, intelligence services and security apparatuses offer rebel victors ready-made infrastructural and coercive powers. Colonial powers often trained native administrators and *comprador* elites to serves as the local appendages of colonial authorities. Even after wars conclude, a good contingent of these bureaucrats remain. Victors triumphing over independent governments similarly capture or inherit portions of the (admittedly damaged) prewar administrative and coercive apparatus, who at minimum have some sense of the workings of state and government. Rebel victors lacking in wartime institutional structures, calculating the hefty costs of building postwar states anew, often opt to cultivate a parasitic relationship with inherited prewar state institutions, capturing and reinstating them — a practice I term *state resurrection*.

However, I argue that rebel victors who attempt to resurrect prewar state institutions are nonetheless likely to fare poorly. First, prewar state structures are *endogenously* likely to fail. These structures were too dysfunctional to prevent the initial outbreak and success of rebel challengers. Indeed, where these structures proved to be exclusionary, corrupt or ineffective, they were often cited as grounds for the rebellion itself. Civilians and guerrilla veterans are likely to revolt against attempts to revive weak and unpopular prewar institutions. State resurrection risks reprising the cycle of violence that ultimately led to regime overthrow. Second, having been further degraded by conflict, *ancien régime* institutions are even more ineffective than they were at the outset. Resurrected institutions are likely to underperform their (already

unimpressive) prewar iterations.

Third, formative association with the former regimes leaves these institutions poisoned by residual loyalties, prewar organizational routines and normative commitments. Accordingly, prewar institutions and personnel can potentially operate as staging grounds for regime subversion and counterrevolution (Levitsky and Way 2022; Clarke 2022; Thaler 2014). While such dangers are most evident in recycling large portions of prewar armies and security institutions, resurrected elements of the civil service can similarly undermine regimes. In Guinea-Bissau for example, the PAIGC's fateful decision to retain "a large percentage of top and middle-level public servants" from the colonial era, proved counterproductive — these bureaucrats, who "were neither members of, nor enamoured with, the PAGIC", revived cronyistic colonial-era practices "dispensing resources and jobs to family and friends". The PAIGC thereby suffered budgetary and reputational damage, as this defecting, autonomous portion of the state apparatus drained resources away from the PAIGC statebuilding project and revived colonial-era grievances among the native population. The PAIGC experience exposes another danger of resurrection. Rebel victors, newcomers to governing, may struggle to monitor and contain the activities of seasoned state administrators. These prewar administrative fiefdoms can play a spoiler role, undermining newborn rebel regimes

Finally, resurrected institutions, unreconstructed by rebels, often exhibit behavioral continuity. These institutions may do damage to rebel regimes even when they "work". In liberated Mozambique for example, the new FRELIMO regime resurrected the colonial-trained police. The regime was not confident that its wartime administrative structures were adequate to keep political order. As FRELIMO president Samora Machel (1982, 23) admitted, "we wished to avoid a vacuum. We did not have the courage to accept a temporary vacuum, while creating a police force that was

ours, with our methods, with our content. We preferred to use colonial capitalism's police, trained to repress and despise the people". This "enemy within" unleashed violence against Mozambican civilians, inflaming the very political disorder the regime sought to avoid.

Accordingly, rebel victors often (rightly) regard prewar institutions with disdain and distrust. Attempting to superimpose rebel regimes upon wholly unreconstructed prewar institutions is dangerous.[19] Accordingly, some rebels simply jettison these prewar structures completely, despite the towering administrative demands accompanying victory. This was precisely the case in Vietnam. The rebel victor — the Workers Party of Vietnam (VWP) — inherited a population that was 80% illiterate, sorely lacking in the human capital required for effective state administration. They also inherited a cadre of colonial-era "rice and meat" bureaucrats[20], who, unlike the mass population, were largely the beneficiary of French university education. Nevertheless, these bureaucrats were so loathed for their colonial collusion that the VWP ultimately opted to purge, rather than resurrect them (Walker 2022, 88-89).

All told, resurrected prewar institutions are bedeviled by their original sins. If and when they resurface in the postwar era, they continue to exhibit the initial institutional pathologies that rendered them incapable of averting *ancien régime* overthrow. Further, their major institutional powers have been badly sapped by war, while whatever residual strengths they possess are tainted by their prewar identities. The resurrection of prewar institutional structures leaves rebel victors in possession of pathologized, pulverized state apparatuses — an unlikely basis of postwar regime durability.

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19. While individual prewar state elites can be incorporated into postwar regimes *á la carte*, they must often be subjected to extensive retraining and resocialization programs (itself a costly process)

20. As noted by Walker, the epithet "implied they served to serve themselves and [they] were reviled for their graft" (88)

2.5 Can Rebel Regimes Survive Without Strong States?

The theory as formulated thus far assumes that durable regimes are necessarily embedded in strong states. The relationship between state power and regime survival is well-established (Bellin 2004; Levitsky and Way 2006; Slater 2010; Slater and Fenner 2011). States supply the machinery of regime survival, empowering regime elites to exercise effective force, extract resources, render societies "legible" (Scott 1998), and implement policy across territory. Unsurprisingly, many of the longest-lived rebel regimes operate powerful states. Eritrea (1991-present) has been described as a "garrison state", (Tronvoll and Mekonnen 2014) enforcing effective top-down control over its domestic population. The Rwandan state under the RPF (1994-present) is, per Acemoglu and Robinson (2016, 28) a "Real Leviathan", using state power to both provide public goods and crush social dissent. The CCP in China (1949-present) has successfully cultivated "totalitarian state structures that reach into every part of society" (Levitsky and Way 2022, 100). States give regimes strong, long arms, and are, in Weber's (1946, 228) formulation, "a power instrument of the first order—for the one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus".

Regimes commanding weak states, by contrast find themselves lacking in coercive power and organizational wherewithal. The tenuous control these regimes have over army and society leaves such regimes vulnerable to coups, insurgency, and electoral and nonviolent mobilization. Empirically, the fates of several rebel regimes with weak states — the stillborn Somalian regime (1991), or short-lived rebel regimes in Liberia (1997-2003) and Chad (1979-82, 1982-90) — attest to the importance of state power for regime survival.

Nevertheless, some rebel regimes seem to defy the notion that durable regimes require strong states. Specifically, despite presiding over weak, Lilliputian states, the

rebel regimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1997-2019), Chad (1991-present) and South Sudan (2011-present) have outlived expectations. While a small minority of rebel regimes, these 'off-the-line' cases nevertheless bear discussion. Deviant and outlier cases offer opportunities for theoretical refinement, discovery of potentially omitted variables, or the discovery of unexamined or altogether new theoretical avenues (George and Bennett 2005). How do these regimes survive, if not through state power?

Briefly, these regimes seem to rely on overlapping survival strategies of: (1) using patronage as a means of purchasing political support, and (2) subcontracting statebuilding and regime survival to foreign entities.

Regarding the former, patronage in place of strong institutions to facilitate power-sharing, co-opt alternative elites, and defuse political opposition. State incumbents, regardless of the *de facto* limits of of their territorial reach nevertheless possess access to diplomats, trade and aid revenues. Foreign friends and state revenues can be used to keep regimes aloft. Nevertheless, relying on patronage is a risky proposition. Patronage based states (Bates 2015), and parties (Levitsky and Way 2012), are extraordinarily vulnerable to revenue shocks. The collapse of parties and states across Africa in the late 80s and early 90s exposed the bankruptcy of patronage based strategies. When party and military loyalties organized simply around patronage, they tend to expire when the money runs out. Leaders relying on patronage are inherently vulnerable to economic shocks.

Dependency on foreign entities, such as states and NGOs, can also backfire. Foreign support, especially Western support can often come with political "strings", requiring regimes to enact costly political reforms as a cost of receiving aid. Humanitarian organizations, while they may assist states in dealing with postwar crises such as refugee displacement may also inadvertently give aid to armed groups seeking to

use refugee camps as recruiting-grounds. Finally, foreign allies can be fickle friends. Incumbents dependent on foreign forces may find themselves inadvertently or unexpected undermined by them. Indeed the fates of the incumbent predecessors of the current rebel regime in Chad attests to this risk. In Chad, rebel leader Goukouni Oueddi relied heavily on Libyan support to take power. However, this cost Oueddi domestic legitimacy. The regime's willingness to entertain Libya's designs on Chadian territory sparked rebellion, and regime overthrow. Leaders that fail to cultivate state power risk becoming hostage to the foreign policy priorities of their international backers. It is a dangerous matter for incumbents if regime survival in Ndjamena is determined by the Quai d'Orsay.

Indeed, the survival of the Chadian and Congolese regimes overstates their durability. Durability is properly conceptualized as the vector of both longevity and stability. Ideally, durability requires a "stress test" to evaluate - survival in and of itself does not disclose the underlying differences in strength between two surviving regimes.[21] A closer look at instances where the Congolese and Chadian regimes faced serious stressors provides clearer insight into their fragility. Last minute Angolan intervention in the DRC saved the regime for near-certain overthrow at the hands of a Rwandan invasion (Roessler and Verhoeven 2016, 375). Chad has been saved from several rebellions on Ndjamena's doorstep only by the timely intervention of French forces. Regime survival in both cases has been a series of "near-misses".

21. Put otherwise, long-lived fragile regimes and long-lived durable regimes are observationally equivalent in the absence of a "stress test".

2.6 Theoretical Overview and Observable Implications

To briefly review, my theory begins with the premise that rebel victors inherit a precarious post-victory security situation. Rebel victors must often reckon with fearsome challengers – embittered ex-government forces, new violent entrepreneurs, and hostile international audiences. State weakness in the face of armed threat endangers regime survival. These insecurities are urgent grounds for postwar reconstruction. Counterintuitively, despite being highly motivated, some rebel victors fail to construct new and effective states, and face regime breakdown.

My theory makes sense of this by observing that postwar state-building is itself a risky and costly exercise. State armies newly fashioned out of rebel veterans, former rivals and new recruits, can jeopardize rulers' hold on power. Rebels may lack the social constituencies and administrative expertise to construct effective bureaucracies. Cultivating social constituencies and administrative skill after victory requires time and resources in an environment where both are often scarce.

I argue that wartime institutions reduce the risks and costs of postwar state-building. An extensive battery of combatant controls enables victors to construct larger, centrally organized armies whilst ensuring robust military loyalty and discipline. Second, extensive wartime governance institutions give rebels a flying start into postconflict administration. In the course of wartime governance, rebels exercise social control over civilian audiences. Wartime social ties endure into the postwar era, furnishing rebel rulers with cooperative and dependent civilian publics. Finally, postwar administrators cut their teeth in wartime governance. In the postwar era, skilled wartime administrators can be deployed to extend state authority across national

territory.

Accordingly, upon victory, rebel groups with an extensive wartime institutional portfolio are "born strong", possessing the underpinnings of state infrastructure. Wartime institutions operate as embryonic states, streamlining the postwar statebuilding process by providing rebels with an initial institutional infrastructure that can be readily converted to strong state armies and bureaucracies. The organizational symmetries between wartime institutions and states reduce and dampen the challenges of organizational change — giving rebels a "flying start" into postwar statebuilding. Rebuilt, robust state structures in turn underwrite regime durability. By contrast, rebel victors that failed to invest heavily in wartime institutions are saddled with unreliable armies, illegible domestic publics and administrative novices in the postwar era. Poorly institutionalized rebel victors find themselves between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, their internal institutions — the putative bases of the postwar states — bear considerable birth defects. On the other, they inherit badly fatigued state structures. Alternative statebuilding strategies, typically those involving the development of new administrative structures and coercive restraints *post-hoc*, or resurrecting moribund prewar state structures, carry substantially larger risks and are considerably less likely to result in durable regimes. Figure 2.1 provides a visual summary of how wartime institutions facilitate regime survival.

From my theoretical framework I derive the following hypothesis:

H1: Rebel victors with a more extensive portfolio of wartime institutions establish more durable postwar regimes.

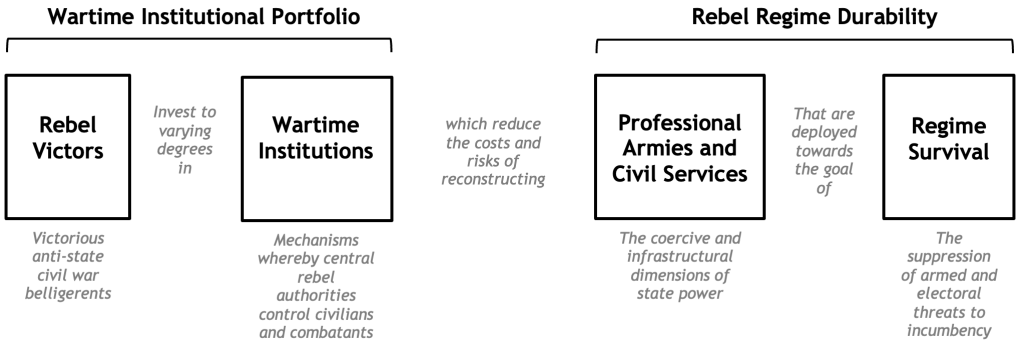

Figure 2.1: **The Influence of Wartime Institutions on Rebel Regime Durability**

2.7 Alternative Hypotheses

Prior work on rebellion, civil war outcomes, revolution and regime durability suggests four alternative variables that potentially explain the postwar trajectories of rebel regimes: (1) conflict intensity, (2) secessionist goals (3) Cold War conflict and (4) social revolutionary character. Addressing alternative hypotheses kills two birds with one stone. First, many of the variables suggested constitute underlying factors that not only potentially explain postwar order and regime durability, but also wartime-institution building. Controlling for these potential confounders bolsters the inferential value of the statistical analysis.[22] Second, a discussion of the alternative hypotheses permits initial comparative hypothesis-testing. In the qualitative case studies[23], I evaluate the relative strength of the evidence for these alternative explanations. For now, I identify and summarize the alternative hypotheses regarding rebel regime durability, as well as briefly sketch out what I consider to be their inferential limitations.

22. See Chapter 3.

23. See Chapters 4-5.

2.7.1 Conflict Intensity

As mentioned, bellicist approaches credit violent founding struggles with constructing robust political order. Yet (as detailed above), all postwar orders are not created equal. The more recent generation of bellicist scholars may be characterized as "bellicists with adjectives" — seeking to identify the particular kinds or properties of conflict that yield lasting postwar order. In particular, several scholars have emphasized the intensity of conflict (usually implicitly or explicitly understood as battle-deaths) as critical.[24] Here "more war" leads to "more state". Institutional returns are proportionate to the intensity of conflict. As such, rebel groups emerging from more intense struggles have been theorized to developed more robust ruling parties (Huntington 1968; Levitsky and Way 2012), higher elite cohesion (Levitsky and Way 2012; Martin 2021) and stronger security apparatuses (Lachapelle et al. 2020; Levitsky and Way 2022). The loyalties and institutions developed through particularly intense struggles reduce the commitment problems that can plague rebel regimes after victory. Conversely, rebel groups that win low-intensity wars fail to develop comparably deep wartime solidarity and end up with regimes undermined by post-victory intra-rebel conflict and weak institutional structures.

2.7.2 Secessionist Goals

Wars of independence may make unique demands of rebel groups. With the path to statehood often requiring the cooperation or assent of powerful international actors (Coggins 2011), rebel leaders in these conflicts may be obliged to develop nationally

24. Other scholars have used alternative conceptualizations of conflict intensity. Lyons 2016a for example, argues that protracted wars fought with little external assistance produce stronger postwar regimes. Alternative operationalizations of the conflict intensity hypotheses will be discussed in Chapter 3.

unifying political programs (Reno 2011), provide social services as a public good (Stewart 2016; Stewart 2018), adopt democratic and participatory wartime governance structures (Caspersen 2012) and thereby demonstrate to foreign and domestic audiences the rebel group's preparedness for rule (Fazal 2018). Similarly, secessionist and independence-seeking rebels are also more likely than center-seeking rebels to abide by the laws of war (Fazal 2018). Secessionists are more likely to refrain from targeting civilians (Fazal 2013; Jo 2015), using terrorism (Fortna 2015), land mines (Fazal and Konaev 2019), or any other acts causing widespread civilian suffering. Such restraint demands combatant controls be imposed. By this same reasoning, independence-seeking rebels are likelier to invest in educating and restraining fighters (Reno 2011). In order to achieve the goal of self-governance, secessionist rebels must, aptly, govern themselves.

Not only may secession lead to wartime institutionalization, secessionist victory may also birth strong states and durable regimes. Most often, rebellion emerges in the postcolonial world. Postcolonial boundaries (especially in Africa) are often characterized as "irrational". Unlike precolonial states or many states in the developed world, the boundaries of postcolonial states often do not correspond to ethnic or topographical cleavages. Rather, the territorial division of colonized states largely relied on "arbitrary lines based on latitude and longitude"(Herbst 2000, 75).[25] As a result, multiple ethnic and social groups often found themselves unceremoniously thrown together into new and unfamiliar state confines. The postcolonial world is largely characterized, in Stepan et al.'s (2011) formulation, by "state-nations" rather than nation-states. Many scholars (Horowitz 1985; Posen 1993; Walter 2005; Bormann et al. 2017; Roessler and Ohls 2018) have argued that the social cleavages

25. Herbst (2000, 75) further notes that "about 44 percent of African boundaries are straight lines that either correspond to an astrological measurement or are parallel to some other set of lines".

and ethnic fractionalization of these states have rendered them incubators of conflict, state failure and often, regime collapse. Nevertheless, most postcolonial regimes have nevertheless opted to conserve colonial-era borders, a decision driven by fear of secessionist precedent-setting (Walter 2009), political expediency, and the sheer speed of the decolonization process.[26]

Victorious secession potentially eliminates the problems of incoherent societies and "irrational" state boundaries. Victorious secessionists, often organized around ethnic lines produce new states in which state boundaries are finally brought into alignment with ethno-political cleavages. The resulting states thereby mitigates postcolonial problems of state reach, ethnic exclusion and social cleavage. As such, some scholars have even proposed that partition constitutes "a solution to civil war" (Horowitz 1985; Kaufmann 1998. For a critical rejoinder see Sambanis 2000). Relative to other states, states born of violent secession have been argued to enjoy greater ethnic coherence and domestic legitimacy (Englebert 2006). Domestic populations in these countries enthusiastically welcome self governance — postwar referenda in Eritrea and South Sudan saw 99% of the population vote for secession. Other scholars find violent secession produce states with greater institutional stability and central state authority (Carter and Lemke 2022). Correspondingly, states born through violent secession are found to be better war-fighters (Lemke and Carter 2016), with their incumbents possessing greater capacity to win both interstate and civil wars. As such, one finds in the literature reason to believe that secessionist goals constitute a potential confounder that may jointly explain wartime institution-building and postwar durability.

26. On the latter two factors, see Herbst 1996.

2.7.3 Cold War Conflict

The Cold War is understood as providing important contextual value for explaining the institutional robustness of insurgents and postwar regime durability. The Cold War witnessed the ascendancy of "robust insurgency" (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010). Rebels seeking to emulate the Soviet and Chinese Communist regimes drew resources and organizational inspiration from both (Stewart 2020). The dissemination of influential texts from Mao, Guevara, Debray and Cabral led to a widespread organizational insurgent template stressing the control of violence, the cultivation of civilians, and the construction of politico-military "organizational weapons" (Selznick 1952) capable of both liberating and governing territory. Material support from Communist regimes worldwide gave rebels the capacity to realize this vision. The Cold War, in this reading, was the heyday of wartime governance and combatant controls.

Throughout the postcolonial world, rulers and rebels alike were able to parlay Cold War conflict into Great Power support. Clientelistic relationships equipped postcolonial rulers with borrowed strengths. In Mozambique for example, Cuban troops fortified the newly independent state, helping to fend-off South African-backed threats. The Mozambican state was also strengthened through Soviet patronage, which supplied military equipment, supplied party-building assistance, and implemented coup-prevention strategies (Casey 2020, 81-84). Mozambique was but a microcosm of a broader Cold War phenomenon — the considerable transfer of Great Power military might and administrative wherewithal towards the developing world, inflating state power within.

The end of the Cold War however snapped the ideological and material umbilicus between Great Powers, rulers and rebels. As a result, the post-Cold war period witness the emergence of rebels and states that were both less well-resourced and

institutionalized (Reno 2011, Huang and Sullivan 2020, Kalyvas and Balcells 2010). Some scholars argued that the post-Cold War period observed rebels turning to "New Wars", in which material appeals and terroristic violence displaced ideological appeals and politically-astute tactics in the rebel toolkit.[27] Regimes similarly suffered, with many either breaking down in the wake of Soviet dissolution (Levitsky and Way 2010), being forced to enact democratic reforms (Gunitsky 2017), or experiencing wholesale state failure (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, 421-422).[28] The Cold War is widely considered a powerful a critical juncture bookending the rise and fall of both rebel and state power. It therefore demands inclusion as a potential confounding variable.

2.7.4 Social Revolution

A substantial literature identifies a joint relationship between social revolution, wartime institution-building and state strength. As such, it must be reckoned with as a potential confounding variable. With respect to the former, rebels with social revolutionary ambitions frequently establish expansive governance infrastructures (Stewart 2021). Rebels that "aim to not only create fundamentally new political institutions but to bend societies in new directions" (Skocpol 1979, 4–5), frequently implement these revolutionary agendas prior to seizing power (Huntington 1968; Dix 1983; Stewart 2021), enacting local governance practices as a prototype of their broader governance ambitions. Additionally, revolutionary rebels often seek to evangelize broad political audiences. As such, revolutionary rebel groups often launch efforts to "con-

27. See Kaldor 1999; Kaplan 2002. For a critique of the 'new war' thesis see Kalyvas 2001; Newman 2004.

28. Rebel regimes emerging with the post-Cold War environment have been thought to exhibit reduced elite cohesion (Levitsky and Way 2022) and state strength (Reno 2003; 2009; 2016).

scientize" (Hoover-Green 2016) civilian audiences and combatants, adopting political education programs, literacy drives and creating popular local governments.

Additionally, a considerable body of scholarship also credit revolutions with establishing extraordinarily strong states. Skocpol (1979) argues that revolutions eliminate landed elites' constraints (and landed elites themselves) on state power, empowering post-revolutionary states that vault up the ranks of great powers seemingly overnight. In addition to destroying sclerotic constraints imposed on the state by pre-revolutionary elites, new revolutionary autocrats mobilize popular audiences behind mass organizations - constructing new mass parties, surveillance apparatuses and million-man armies. Influential work by Levitsky and Way (2012; 2016; 2019; 2022) asserts that social revolutionary struggles give rise to extraordinarily durable regimes. Social revolutionaries' radical postwar attempts to transform national and geopolitical order stimulates powerful counterrevolutionary sequences. Echoing Gurr (1988), Levitsky and Way argue that these sequences motivate elites in social-revolutionary regimes to close ranks, politicize the armed forces, and destroy independent social institutions that could potentially challenge the regime. Levitsky and Way (2012; 2016; 2019; 2022) thereby stand Debray's (1967) classic formulation on its head — the *counterrevolution* revolutionizes the revolution. The elite cohesion, partisan armies and cowed civil societies built through countering counterrevolution, make for durable regimes. Revolutions "renovate and strengthen [state] power" (De Jouvenel 1945, 218).

Social revolutionary victors may potentially constitute a distinct class of actor, whereby state strength is powered primarily by ideology or reaction, rather than institutions. I therefore address the possibility that social revolution acts as a statistical confounder in Chapter 3.

2.8 Conclusion

The theory developed in this chapter locates the origins of rebel regime durability squarely within rebel groups' wartime institutions. Victorious rebel groups step into an institutional abyss. Not only does broken-down state infrastructure inviting armed threats, but *rebuilding* the state is in itself a costly and risky task. Creating new recombined postwar armies introduces the possibility of military dissent, defections and coups. Rebuilding the civil service demands that rebel victors develop administrative skills and social ties to a nation-wide domestic constituency. Rebel victors often, shortly after taking power, gear up for a taxing joint process of warmaking and statemaking. I find however, that rebel groups that enter power with a diverse portfolio of wartime institutions find these processes easier. Having built up statelike institutions during conflict, they can redeploy these institutions as the bases of postwar states. The organizational symmetries between wartime institutions and postwar coercive and infrastructural power give highly institutionalized rebels a "flying start" into postwar statebuilding. Wartime institutions can be essentially scaled up into postwar states, giving rebels a strong template onto which new soldiers can be integrated and new civilian audiences administered. The qualitative continuity in these structures reduces that hazards posed by demographic or territorial expansion. The theory further argues that rebels lacking in wartime institutions have poor fallback options. One, statebuilding *de novo* asks these rebel victors to incorporate new combatants and build national civil services in an anarchic post-victory environment. Badly-institutionalized victors usually lack the discipline and wherewithal to do either well, resulting in military and administrative dysfunction. The other option, state resurrection, sees rebel victors call up prewar institutions into service. However, prewar institutions collapsed for a reason — their initial institu-

tional pathologies, further depleted by war, threaten to destroy rebel regimes. Rebel victor' wartime institutional portfolio is of decisive importance in explaining their postconflict trajectories.

Chapter 3 | Quantitative Analysis

To maximize inferential leverage over the puzzle of rebel regime durability, I adopt a mixed methods research design. In this chapter, I conduct statistical analysis on an original cross-national dataset—the Victorious Insurgent Characteristics that Organize Regimes **(VICTOR)** dataset—that captures data on the wartime organizational characteristics and postconflict trajectories of all rebel victors and their successor regimes from 1945–2014. First, I introduce, contextualize, and describe the coding procedures uses to structure the VICTOR dataset. Then, I lay out the operationalization of key variables and covariates used in the model. Third, I draw on VICTOR to provide some basic descriptive statistics about both the institutional endowments of rebel victors and the postwar trajectories of rebel regimes. Finally, I present and analyze the results of the statistical analyses. I find strong support for my proposed hypothesis connecting wartime institutions to regime durability, as well as support for the underlying logic — that wartime institutions contribute to postwar state strength.

Large-N analysis operates as an initial test of the theory's 'legs' in identifying empirical regularities across space and time. However, in Chapters 4 through 6, to observe how the proposed theoretical mechanisms connect directly to outcomes, I employ qualitative data drawn from cases of rebel victory across Africa. When taken in tandem, the two approaches constitute a richly sourced account of how wartime institutional endowments inform the durability of rebel regimes. I now turn to a

discuss of the cross-national VICTOR dataset, contextualizing it withing existing data-collection efforts, and describing the universe of rebel victors and wartime institutions.

3.1 Introducing VICTOR

3.1.1 Evaluating Existing Datasets

Recent scholarship on rebel groups has recognized that rebel groups, in addition to their "specialization in violence" (Bates et al. 2002; Chai 1993), often undertake a broad universe of administrative tasks. The rebel governance literature departs from the idea that where rebels operate, anarchy reigns. Instead, it embraces the concept of rebels as potential order-providers, in contrast to their widespread prior characterization as order-subverters. As such, recent scholarship has focused on, and collected data on, a range of governance initiatives including taxation, diplomacy, social service provision e.g. Huang's (2016) Rebel Governance Dataset; Zaks' (2017) Insurgent Structures and Outcomes Dataset; Stewart's (2018) Insurgent Social Services Dataset. In this respect, the VICTOR dataset is of a piece with prior data collection efforts.

However, these efforts, consistent with the shift towards the study of "rebelocracy", almost unanimously focus on wartime governance institutions that approximate the soft "left hand of the state" (Bourdieu 1989; 1998; 2012).[1] The recognition that rebels can (somewhat) civilly organize a variety of administrative services and provide public goods, despite their fearsome status as armed men, is a welcome one. However, a casualty of this shift is that, surprisingly, the "right hand" of state power, corre-

1. My thanks to Lee Seymour for this observation.

sponding to the regulation of security, control of combatants and exercise of force, has not received recent comparable recognition.[2] As discussed, rebels vary widely in the organizational instruments they use to control violence, yet organizational-level data capturing such institutions is rare. VICTOR is a first step in this direction, identifying such institutions among a select population of armed groups.

Jointly, by pairing information on armed group combatant controls and civilian governance, VICTOR hopes to give a fuller and more holistic picture of armed groups. Armed groups vary widely in the breadth of wartime institution-building, the character of these institutions, and the relative balance assigned to governing civilians versus controlling soldiers. Having explained the overall purpose and value-added of VICTOR, I now turn to the nitty-gritty of constructing the data.

3.1.2 Inclusion Criteria: Identifying the Universe of Rebel Victors

The Victorious Insurgent Characteristics that Organize Regimes (VICTOR) dataset, captures data on the wartime institutions and postwar regimes established by rebel victors in all civil wars from 1945-2014. I apply the following definitional selection criteria in order to establish the population of rebel victors.

First, rebels are are armed groups that challenge the sovereignty of incumbent government actors through premeditated organized violence. Through their armed violent character and technology of contention rebels distinguish themselves from other contentious political actors. Violence is the *sine qua non* of rebellion. Nonviolent

2. Work by Hoover-Green (2016; 2018) constitutes a notable outlier, discussing the various methods insurgent groups use to tame and regulate the use of violence. However despite extensive theoretical discussion, Hoover-Green (2016; 2018) does not collect global data on insurgent combatant control.

movements, despite opposing incumbents through a wide repertoire of tactics including strikes, marches, protests, boycotts and sit-ins, do not kill. Rebels do. Accordingly, this study considers organizationally and tactically bifurcated anti-government groups i.e. those that have both violent armed wings and nonviolent political wings, such as the South African ANC, to be rebels. However, it excludes wholly nonviolent groups such as the victorious Khomeinists in the Iranian Revolution. Despite the post-victory bellicosity of the Khomeini regime, the seizure tactics of the revolutionaries themselves are widely understood to have been nonviolent (Abrahamian 1982; Ritter 2010; Ritter 2011; Nepstad 2011; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

The technology of rebellion is also clearly differentiated from military coups (Thyne 2017; McLauchlin 2023). Coups are (largely) rapid, bloodless seizures of power whereby part of the state apparatus — usually a faction of the armed forces — dispossesses incumbents from control of the remainder. Coups rely on the military's distinctive organizational advantages viz. the ability to mobilize intramilitary loyalty norms, hierarchies and trust networks to coordinate and organize military movements that displace incumbents' sovereign power through the rapid seizure of critical infrastructure and personnel. Coup-makers differ from rebels not in aims, but in means. Rebels largely build independent organizations outside the state itself, mobilizing primarily civilian populations into violent military confrontations with state actors. Coups, by contrast, organize primarily military actors to seize force while (aspirationally) *averting* violence. Coup plotters attempt to coordinate seizures of power so rapid that victory seems *fait accompli*, and resistance, futile.[3]

As a result, scholars have increasingly recognized coups and rebellions as belonging to discrete conceptual categories.[4] Nevertheless, some armed actors seem to straddle

3. On the distinctive tactical logic of coups see Singh (2014).

4. Some older data in political violence conflate the two e.g. Toft 2010. This is objectionable

the line. As observed by McLauchlin (2023), army-splinter rebellions (ASRs), in which the rebel group is, at its origins, composed of defecting government military personnel represent roughly 10% of rebel groups. Nevertheless, Mclauchlin (2023, 5) differentiates ASRs from coups on similar grounds to those stated above, stating "What does distinguish ASRs from violent coups, though, is the method of rebellion. Coups are thought of as sudden events. They are at least intended to be...[ASRs] prepare for war, much as other rebellions do, rather than trying to organize a sudden seizure of power within the military apparatus." Accordingly, this dataset does not recognize successful coups as rebel victory.[5]

Second, rebel victory requires the seizure of sovereign state power. For center-seeking rebels, victory is primarily marked by militarily defeating an incumbent government and capturing the national capital city outright. The "capital-city rule" norm is widely applied by international organizations and Great Powers to adjudicate conflicting claims to sovereignty. Historically, in the eyes of the international community, she who rules the city, rules the country.[6] Additionally, I qualify as victors those groups who, following negotiated settlement, capture control of central state institutions through winning postwar elections. As observed by Daly (2022), postconflict elections often closely correspond to the *de facto* balance of military power. Ballots substitute for bullets as a fairly accurate gauge of postconflict power. As such, many existing data collection efforts attempting to define the universe of rebel vic-

on both theoretical and empirical grounds. First, as discussed above, this is a category error. Second, due to the distinctive advantages of coups (speed, proximity, low barriers to coordination), conflating coups with rebellion leads to artificially high estimates of rebel victory. Roughly 50% of coups succeed (Powell and Thyne 2011); less than 10% of insurgencies do.

5. I draw on draw on Powell and Thyne's (2011) coup dataset to define and exclude successful coups. However, in instances where *failed* coups lead to would-be coup-makers turning instead to tactics of war e.g. Chad 1990 (Roessler 2011, 238), I recognize these as rebel groups.

6. On the international norm of conferring sovereign recognition to the actors in control of the capital city, see Landau-Wells 2018; Reno (2011) 15-24; Roessler (2016) xvi, 17; Herbst (2000).

tors (Thaler 2018; Martin 2021; Meng and Paine 2022), incorporate electoral victors. Finally, as further basis for inclusion, electoral victors face many of the statebuilding challenges described in chapter 2, inheriting weakened states, converting their military personnel into state armies and undertaking postwar administration.[7]

For secessionist or independence-seeking rebels, victory corresponds to international legal sovereignty i.e. *de jure* international recognition of rebels' claims to govern sovereign state territory. For the purposes of this study, international legal sovereignty refers to recognition from a simple majority of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) permanent members plus recognition from a simple majority of UN members.[8] Sovereign power is, in large part, regulated by international gatekeepers. This therefore excludes as victors rebels that lack international recognition, notwithstanding independence claims and/or *de facto* autonomous territorial control, such as Biafra, Katanga, or Somaliland. Independence-seeking rebels enter the data as victors upon the date they pass the recognition threshold I specify above.

Also included are rebel groups that seize power following internationalized civil wars. Indeed, the majority of civil wars bear some international dimension. X% of rebel victors in the sample possess some form of state support. While materially aided by international actors, these rebel groups nonetheless possess private armed forces and inherit sovereign power following victory. Accordingly, victors like the Congolese

7. Arguably however, the challenges of such tasks are potentially attenuated for electoral victors. Rebel victors such as the South African ANC, or Zimbabwe's ZANU, inherited states with much of their coercive and administrative faculties intact. Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 2, resurrecting and recycling prewar state institutions carries inherent, non-negligible risks. These victors are apt to do in peacetime what they could not accomplish in wartime - purge, remove and otherwise degrade the prewar state apparatus in order to more securely establish hegemony over state institutions. Nevertheless, recognizing that electoral victors sit towards the margins of the scope conditions of the theory, I conduct statistical robustness tests evaluating the effects of wartime institutions on postwar regimes while excluding electoral victors. Results of statistical analysis are robust to the exclusion of electoral victors — see Section 3.6.

8. This approach is consistent with Florea's (2017) measure of when *de facto* states achieve statehood.

AFDL, backed by Rwandan government forces, are included in the sample.

To populate the sample, I cross-reference multiple existing datasets including the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset, Monica Toft's Civil War Termination Dataset, The Nonstate Actors in Armed Conflict (NSA) Dataset and the Correlates of War (COW) Project – selecting cases that met the stated inclusion criteria. In total, VICTOR identifies 46 rebel groups as victors.

3.1.3 Selecting Wartime Institutions

Having specified the universe of rebel victors, I collected information on the wartime institutions built by each rebel victor. The dataset cumulatively captures 8 wartime institutions devoted to controlling combatants and/or governing civilians.[9] I record the presence of (1) commissar structures (2) disciplinary enforcement institutions, such as courts-martial, internal security and intelligence wings, and internal prisons, (3) political education, (4) social service provision i.e., hospitals and education, (5) participatory institutions, in which rebels convene civilian committees and local councils to jointly administer areas of rebel operation and (6) extractive institutions i.e., taxation and remittance collection. Given the difficulties in collecting fine-grained data on wartime institutions over time, I adopt a binary time-invariant operationalization of wartime institutions. I code a wartime institution as 1 if the wartime institution existed at any point during the conflict.[10] When no evidence of institutional presence was discovered, I code that particular wartime institution as

9. While the functions of wartime institutions may be conceptually distinct, they are, in practice, intertwined. Rebel political education programs for example, commonly diffuse rebel organizations' values across both combatants and civilians, jointly producing combatant restraint and civilian compliance.

10. This is standard coding practice. On the challenges of collecting accurate longitudinal data on wartime institutions, see Huang 2012, 78-79.

0. Consistent with previous scholarly work, I aggregate these variables into a single composite index of wartime institutions, with the variable capturing the number of wartime institutions possessed by a particular rebel victor.[11] As there are no theoretical grounds to assume that any one institution has disproportionate impact on postwar stability, the index is additive and unweighted.

In order to collect the data on wartime institutions, I conducted an exhaustive search of available documentation for each rebel victor. I scoured hundreds of sources, including rebel biographies, declassified intelligence reports, rebel group publications and pamphlets, conflict histories and analyses, NGO reports, international newspaper articles, interview data and archival materials. Archives consulted include the Digital National Security Archive (USA), the Central Intelligence Agency's Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room (USA), the Library of Congress Archives (DC, USA), the Institute for Ethiopian Studies (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), the Center for Basic Research (Kampala, Uganda) and the Makerere University Library Archives (Kampala, Uganda). To mitigate possible bias, especially given that internal rebel documentation may be contaminated by propaganda, I impose a stringent inclusion criterion for data entry – requiring that evidence of any wartime institution in question be corroborated by multiple sources. Finally, as a form of inter-coder reliability testing, I cross-reference the VICTOR dataset with other scholars' data collection efforts, such as Huang's (2016) Rebel Governance Dataset and Stewart's (2018) Social Service Provision Dataset. These datasets collect information on rebel taxation, medical services and education provision. I find that my coding of these variables largely corresponds to existing data collection efforts.

The motives for selecting these particular wartime institutions as targets for data-

11. See Huang 2012; Zaks 2017; Florea 2014; Florea 2017.

collection are theoretically grounded. First, I capture institutions that require costly investments in regulating armed and civilian audiences. Acts such as rebel military parades or the circulation of rebel postage stamps in rebel-held territory, while symbolically "performing statehood" (Mampilly 2011; Coggins 2014), do comparatively little to tangibly control domestic populations. Second, I choose institutions that require that rebels develop competencies beyond specializing in violence. Rebel policing or border control institutions demand little of armed groups beyond their inherent capacity to use force. Third, rebel taxation, welfare, and participatory institutions closely map on to the classic dimensions of state infrastructural power – namely, the power to extract revenues, provide services and register citizens (Slater and Fenner 2011). Finally, my chosen body of combatant controls is closely aligned with successful techniques of controlling state armies and preventing military dissent practiced in long-lived authoritarian regimes (Nordlinger 1977, 15-19; Colton 1979). In short, I choose to capture that significant fraction of wartime institutions which can be more readily converted to the essential state structures that underwrite regime durability. Below, I give further details as to the precise operationalization of the respective wartime institutions.

3.2 Defining and Operationalizing Key Concepts

In the section below I define the six wartime institutions discussed above, the outcome variables of interest, additional covariates, and lay out their respective associated coding procedures. The operationalization procedures and descriptive statistics for all covariates are summarized in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below.

3.2.1 Wartime Institutions

Commissars

Commissars are political officers largely deployed to insure and instill loyalty amidst the armed wings of rebel groups (Nordlinger 1977; Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2018; Casey 2020. These officers are embedded within combatants and approximate what Nordlinger (1977) terms, the "penetration model" of military control. They are tasked with monitoring, detecting and reporting dissent, socializing soldiers, and generally operating as the eyes and ears of rebel leaders. While a number of scholars view conflict as endogenously building intra-rebel cohesion, potentially 'fusing' rebel group elites to their rank-and-file, I argue that such fusion is in fact a conscious undertaking. Commissar structures are often consciously built as means of politically penetrating the armed wing of rebel movements. I code commissars as 1 if I discover evidence of political officers performing the aforementioned functions within the armed group.

Discipline and Enforcement

Like military Matryoshka dolls, some armed groups develop internal disciplinary and enforcement structures that "guard the guardians". The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) for example, imposed order through its internal security apparatus, *Halewa Sewra* ("defense of the revolution"), an organization "answerable only to the men at the top" (Gebru 2009, 67. Also see Weldemichael 2009, 1240). In South Africa's ANC, the feared Internal Security Directorate *Mbokodo* cooperated closely with ANC commissars, working "in harness as the Praetorian guard of orthodoxy and ideological correctness in the movement" (Ellis 1994, 290). Accordingly, I code this variable as 1 if I find evidence of any of the following: internal intelligence and

security organizations, internal prisons, and courts-martial.

Political Education

I follow Hoover-Green's (2016, 9) definition of political education as "formal instruction that explains specific social or political purposes of a particular conflict, and connects conflict purposes to specific behavioral norms." I code political education as 1 if I discover evidence of structured meetings, congresses, and mandatory instruction that seeks to convey the meaning, purpose, and appropriate actions taken on behalf of the rebellion.

Social Services

I code rebels as providing social services if rebel groups provide schooling or healthcare services. As best as possible, I emulate Stewart (2018) in attempting to uncouple rebel political education programs from schooling. Rebels provide schooling when curricula or instruction does not explicitly involve cultivating military skills. Lessons in literacy, history and science for example, would be classified as education.[12] Regarding healthcare, I recognize all medical treatments provided by insurgents to civilians e.g. preventative care, surgery, acupuncture, vaccination. Where I discover evidence of either healthcare or schooling as described above, I code this variable as 1.

Participatory Institutions

While some rebels rule over civilian populations through fiat, others construct participatory institutions, in which civilians are incorporated into representative and decisionmaking bodies (Stewart and Mampilly 2015). I code participatory institu-

12. Nevertheless, rebels virtually always take the opportunity to use education as a vehicle for their respective ideological agendas. EXAMPLE.

tions as 1 if I find evidence of civilian participation in decisionmaking bodies under rebel control, such as congresses, councils, elections, rebel political wings and village committees.

Extractive Institutions

I code this variable as 1 if rebels extract revenues through institutionalized taxation and/or remittances drawn from foreign diasporas[13], international investments and businesses. I set a relatively high bar for coding extractive institutions' presence. Looting or "roadblock taxation", an *ad hoc* rent-seeking scheme wherein rebels shake down passers-by at roadblocks, are not included. I require evidence of *centralized and systematic* procedures to code extractive institutions as present.

3.2.2 Regime Breakdown

I broadly follow the Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2018) coding criteria for regime breakdown.[14] For rebel regimes that are autocracies (the vast majority of rebel regimes), breakdown is coded 1 under the following circumstances: (1) when the regime democratizes (2) the incumbent loses or does not contest postwar elections, effectively transferring power, (3) when the incumbent regime loses sovereign control to anti-regime actors e.g. through coups, rebellions, nonviolent uprisings or foreign invasion, (4) experiences state death. For democracies, only criteria (2), (3) and (4) apply.

13. The RPF in Rwanda, the EPLF in Eritrea and FRELIMO in Mozambique, extracted substantial resources from their respective diasporas.

14. For cases that fall outside of the temporal scope of GWF 2018 (1945-2010) I use the expanded Geddes Wright and Frantz data found in Derpanopoulus et al. 2016, capturing regime information between 2011 to December 31, 2015.

3.2.3 State Strength

I operationalize state strength using data from Hansen and Sigman's (2021) State Capacity Dataset. State strength, or state capacitym is a multidimensional concept. As such Hansen and Sigman construct a multidimensional latent variable measure of state capacity, that "that arises from the conjunction of [the state's] extractive, coercive, and administrative capabilities". I use the 'Capacity' variable in the Hansen and Sigman (2021) dataset, to measure state strength.

3.2.4 Alternative Explanatory Variables and Covariates

Following from the discussion in Chapter 2, I incorporate a range of covariates to both address alternative hypotheses and control for potential confounders. These variables are described below.

Conflict Intensity

I draw on the UCDP Dyadic Dataset, which captures data on yearly battle-related deaths during armed conflicts. Following Martin (2021), I adopt a binary operationalization of this data. I code "High-Intensity" conflicts as 1 if the conflict involving the ultimate rebel victor incurred in excess of 1,000 battle deaths in a year. Conflicts falling beneath this threshold I code as zero.

Secessionist Goals

I follow Stewart (2018), in drawing from the 'Conflict Type' variable in the Non-State Actor (NSA) Dataset. The Dataset records 21 conflict types, representing the purpose of insurgent grup struggle. Insurgencies listed by the NSA as secessionist are coded as 1, while all other conflicts are coded 0.

World-Historical Time

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Cold War is often cited as a critical juncture in the trajectories of rebellions and states in the developing world. As such I adopt a binary coding, dividing world historical time into pre-Cold War and post-Cold War phases. I code this variable as 1 (Post-Cold War), for rebellions beginning after 1990.[15] As an alternative coding scheme, I use decade fixed-effects in some statistical models. Including decade dummy variables effectively periodizes world-historical time by decades (see Reno 2011), thereby addressing the possibility that more granular temporal divides (e.g. the post-colonial era through the 1950s and 1960s, or Africa's "lost decade" in the 1980s[16]), correspond to shifts in regime durability.

Social Revolution

To operationalize this variable, I draw on the Lachapelle et. al (2020) binary coding of Social Revolutionary Regimes. Lachapelle et. al (2020) define a Social Revolutionary regime as a regime emerging from a successful (1) violent irregular seizure of power by (2) a mass based movement that emerged outside the state, that, following seizure (3) creates new security apparatuses from the corps of revolutionary veterans and (4) embarks upon projects of radical social and geopolitical transformation. Nearly-all revolutionaries are rebel victors[17], but not all rebels are revolutionaries. Lachapelle et al. code regimes that fit the stated criterion as 1.

15. In robustness tests, I use an alternative coding that simply captures whether the regime-year was after 1990. I also experiment with shifting the end-date of the Cold War to 1991 and 1992. None of these respecifications affect the main findings.

16. See Bates (2001).

17. Lachapelle et al. (2020) includes Iran, which I classify as a regime arising from nonviolent revolution — see Section 3.1.2.

Additional Covariates

I incorporate a number of additional covariates that either ought to affect regime durability, or act as potential confounders. Many of these covariates are standard fare in studies of regime durability (e.g. Kadivar 2018; Lachapelle et al. 2020; Meng and Paine 2022). I incorporate measures of GDP per capita and population size (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003). Both are structural variables broadly found to affect conflict onset and regime durability. I additionally incorporate regional fixed-effects, to control for the potential pecularities of regional state systems.[18]

18. On the distinctive features of the African state system for example, see Zartman 1967; Herbst 1990; Herbst 2000.

Table 3.1: **Summary of Covariates**

Variables	Original Variable	Operationalization
Wartime Institutions	NA	Index (0-6) 0 = No Institutions 6 = Maximum Institutions
Regime Breakdown	Regime Breakdown (Derpanopoulos et al. 2016; Geddes Wright and Frantz 2014)	Binary 1 = Regime Breakdown 0 = Regime Survival
High Intensity Conflict	Yearly Battle-Related Deaths (UCDP Dyadic Dataset)	Binary 1 = 1000+ Battle Deaths per year 0 = <1000 Battle Deaths per year
Social Revolutionary Regime	Social Revolutionary Regime (Lachapelle et al. 2020)	Binary 1 = Social Revolutionary Regime 0 = All Others
Secessionist	21 Unique Conflict Types (NSA Dataset, 2009)	Binary 1 = Secessionist 0 = All Others
Territorial Control	"Yes" or "No" (NSA Dataset, 2009)	Binary 1 = Territorial Control 0 = No Territorial Control
Income	GDP Per capita (Maddison Project Database 2020)	Continuous Log of GDP per capita
Population	Population (Maddison Project Database 2020)	Continuous Log of Population
Oil & Gas Revenues	Oil and Gas Production Value (Ross-Mahdavi Oil and Gas Dataset, 2015)	Continuous Log of Oil and Gas Production Value
Post-Cold War	NA	Binary 1 = 1991 and later 0 = Pre-1991
State Capacity	State Capacity (State Capacity Dataset, Hanson and Sigman 2021)	Continuous Latent Variable measure of State Capacity

Table 3.2: **Summary Statistics**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Wartime Institutions	840	4.305	2.189	0	6
High Intensity Conflict	840	.783	.412	0	1
Social Revolution	840	.448	.498	0	1
Secessionist	840	.058	.233	0	1
Territorial Control	840	.475	.5	0	1
Ethnic War	840	.035	.183	0	1
Income	826	7.758	.789	6	9.662
Population	830	9.651	1.524	6.462	14.122
Oil & Gas Revenues	791	1.615	2.246	0	8.314
Post-Cold War	840	.093	.291	0	1
State Capacity	763	-.181	.661	-2.029	1.499
Census Frequency	763	.744	.318	.141	2

3.3 VICTOR — A Descriptive Overview

Descriptive data drawn from VICTOR allow us to glimpse into the wartime institutional endowments of rebel victors and the trajectories of their successor regimes. A brief exploration of VICTOR provides initial 'eye-test' corroboration of some of the theoretical premises identified in Chapter 2. First, consistent with the idea that wartime institutions are costly to build, the majority of rebel victors do not build *any*. As shown by Figure 3.1 below, the modal number of wartime institutions built by victors is zero. Rebel victors in Chad, Somalia and the Central African Republic, among others, opted to put all their eggs into the military basket, focusing entirely on seizing sovereign power and forswearing the comparatively difficult tasks of wartime governance.

Additionally, the distribution of rebel institutions is rather bimodal. Rebel groups tend to be maximalist or minimalist. This seems to demonstrate the utility of the ideal-type characterizations advanced by Arjona (2016) and Huntington (1968). Many rebel "aliocracies" and "Western Revolutions" are extremely institutionally threadbare. On the other hand, for rebels pursuing "Eastern revolutions" i.e. constructing governance architectures in the countryside before forging towards the capital, if they are in for an institutional penny, they are in for an institutional pound. More often than not, these rebels construct true "rebelocracies". Nevertheless, intermediate values of institution building are not missing. Roughly 21% of rebels make moderate investments in wartime institutionalization, building 1-4 institutions.

Figure 3.2 visualizes the varied lifespans of rebel regimes. Consistent with the theory, many rebel regimes do not survive past their infancy. A large proportion collapse

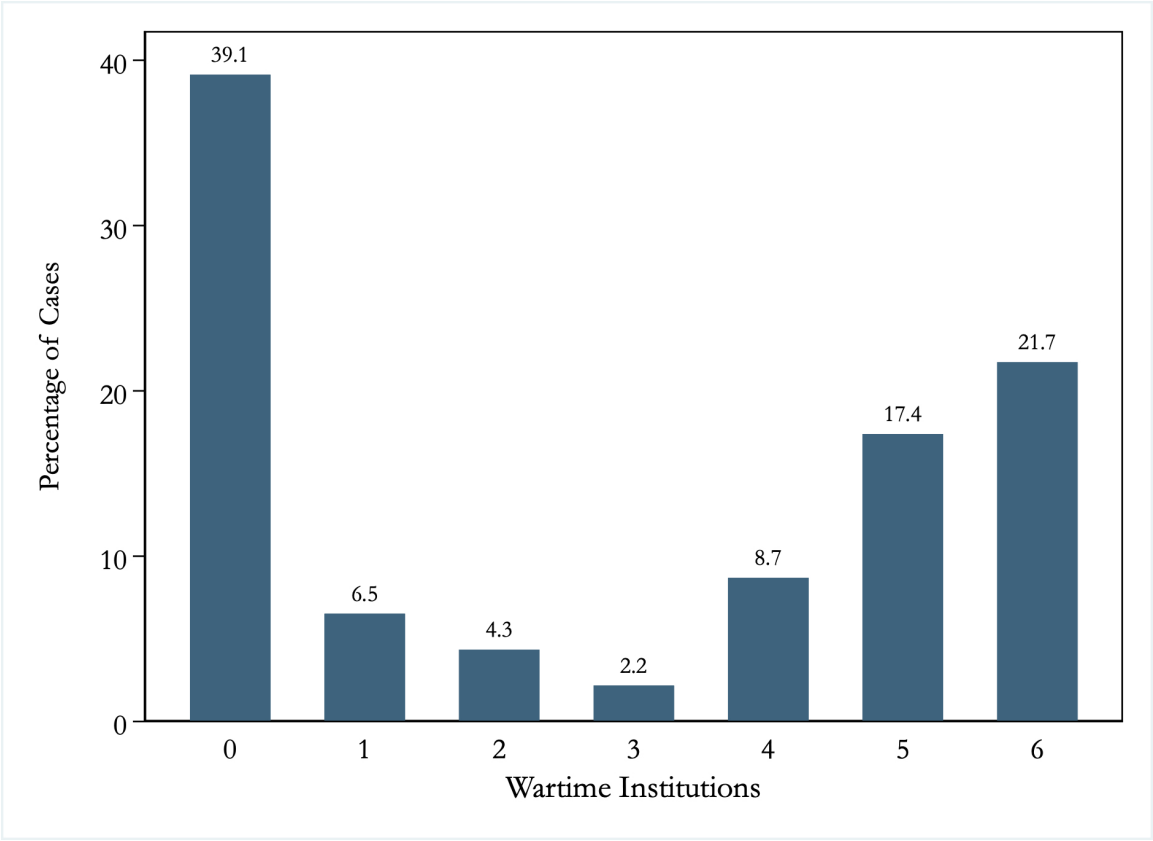

Figure 3.1: **The Wartime Institutional Profiles of Rebel Victors, 1946—2014**

within a scant 5 years of seizing power.[19] State weakness, post-victory conflict, and the challenges of postwar statebuilding are likely lethal to newborn rebel regimes, a position reinforced by Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 vindicates the theoretical focus on armed threats to regime durability. Wars and coups are the lions' share of rebel regime mortality events. Indeed, Figure 3.5 understates the impact of war. Coups and electoral defeats often occur in the shadow of war, as beleaguered armies and civil societies cast a vote of no confidence

19. Indeed, if we omit the 21 cases cases of rebel regimes that survive as of 2014, 55.6% of rebel regime mortality events occur within the first 5 years of seizing power. After 15 years, this number collapses to 18.5%. Rebel regimes are disproportionately cut down in their youth. See Figure B.1 in Appendix B.

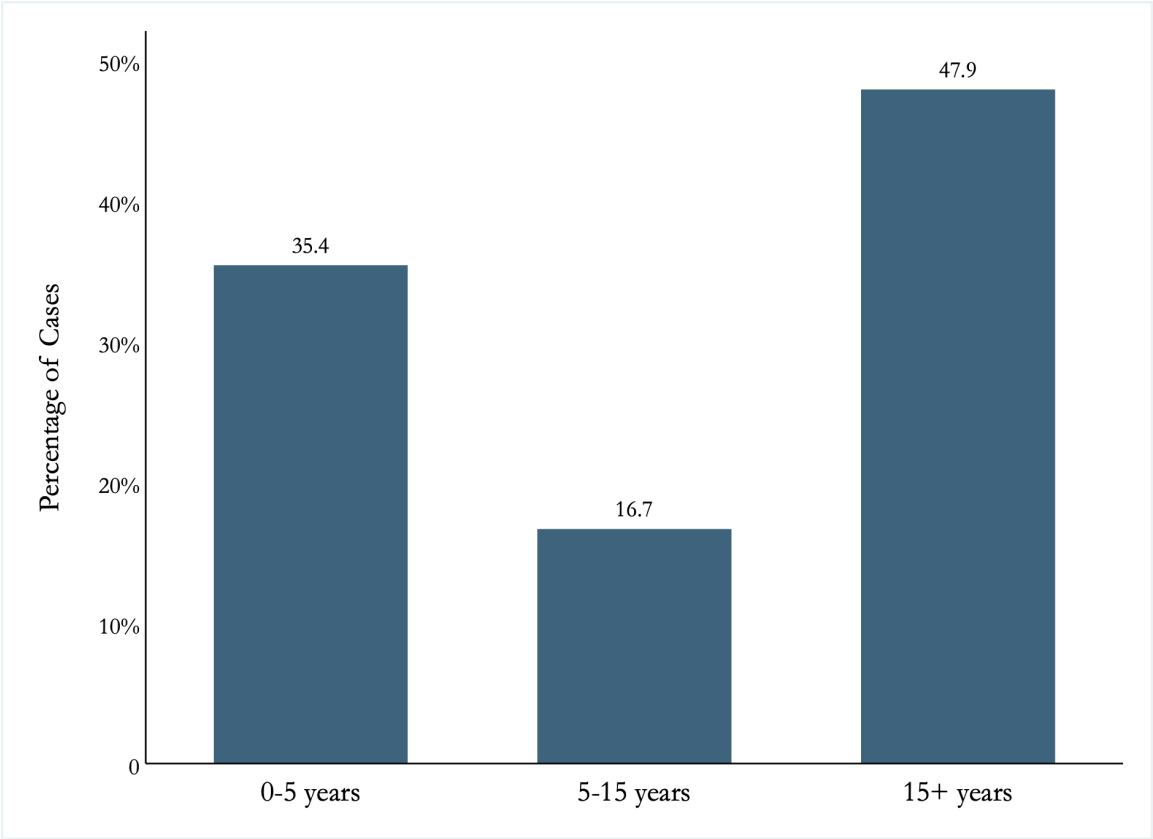

Figure 3.2: **The Lifespans of Rebel Regimes, 1946—2014**

in the regime.[20] The other categories of breakdown are comparatively underrepresented. State death, as in Yugoslavia (1990) and South Yemen (1990), is a rare phenomenon. Additionally, most rebels regimes are impervious to nonviolent revolution. Counterrevolutionaries are, per Huntington (1968, 269), almost "invariably armed men".

20. As occurred in Uganda (1986) and Nicaragua (1990), respectively.

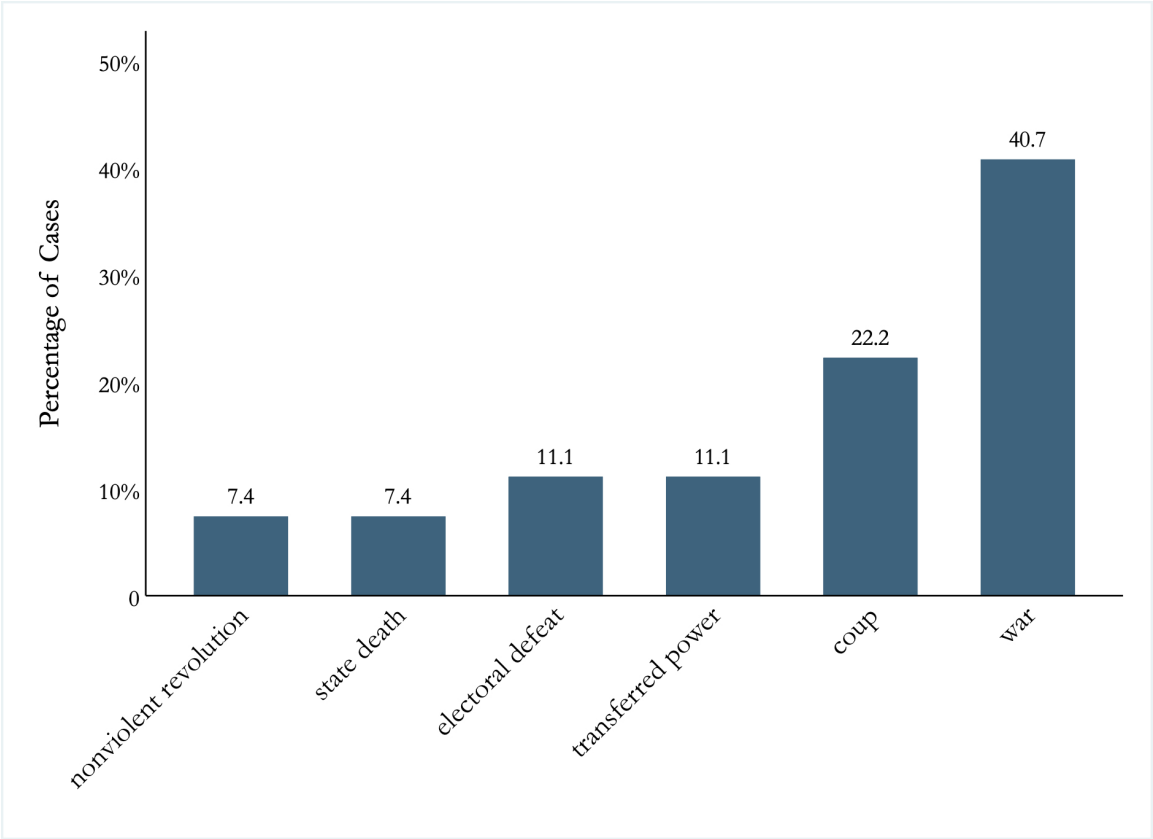

Figure 3.3: **How Rebel Regimes Die, 1946—2014**

3.4 Cross National Analysis

3.4.1 Model Specification

The statistical analyses below draw upon the VICTOR dataset to evaluate the proposed theory. I use logistical regression analysis to assess the effect of wartime institution-building on regime breakdown. The unit of observation is the regime-year, beginning with a victor's military seizure of the capital or electoral victory and ending with either regime breakdown or censoring at the end of the study period in 2014. As a number of countries in the model have experienced multiple rebel victories, I report robust standard errors clustered by country.

3.4.2 Empirical Results and Discussion

Table 3.3 presents the results of the statistical analysis evaluating the relationship between wartime institutions and regime durability. It includes four models. Models 1 represents the base model, including the wartime institution variable and excluding all other covariates. Models 2 imposes the full slate of covariates, without controlling for decade or regional fixed-effects. Model 3 incorporates all covariates, controlling for decade-fixed effects but not regional fixed effects. Finally, Model 4 presents the full model, controlling for both regional and decade fixed-effects.[21]

21. To avoid redundancy I drop the Post-Cold War dummmy from Models 3 and 4.

Table 3.3: **Wartime Institutions and Rebel Regime Breakdown**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.020***	-0.020***	-0.021***	-0.019***
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
High-Intensity Conflict		-0.001	-0.002	-0.011
		(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.026)
Social Revolution		0.020	0.022	0.018
		(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.018)
Secessionist Goals		-0.001	-0.001	-0.023
		(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.025)
Post-Cold War		0.016		
		(0.034)		
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		-0.006	-0.006	-0.018
		(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Population$_{(log)}$		-0.004	-0.004	-0.005
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	840	830	830	830
R^2	0.064	0.068	0.070	0.079

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Significant negative coefficients for "Wartime Institutions" in Models 1 through 4 support the hypothesis.

The results show that wartime institution-building is robust and consistently associated with a strong reduction in likelihood of regime breakdown in a given year. Across all models the coefficient on wartime institutions is negative and significant at the 99% level. As rebels climb the ladder of wartime institutionalization, they gain returns in postwar stability. Figure 3.4 below provides visual demonstration of the declining probability of regime breakdown across levels of wartime institutionalization. Models 2 through 4 demonstrate that the relationship between wartime institutions and postwar durability is robust to the inclusion of potential confounding variables: high-intensity conflict, social revolutionary ideology, secessionist goals, and the post-Cold War era. None of the latter 4 variables touch significance, calling into question the extent to which they can account for variation among rebel regimes.

The coefficient on social revolution, is surprisingly, positive and insignificant across all four models. Though insignificant, the positive directionality of the coefficient points towards an *increase* in the likelihood of regime breakdown as a consequence of social revolution. I attribute this finding to the risk-acceptant and belligerent behavior of social revolutionary regimes. Social revolutionary rebels-turned-regimes act upon ideologically radical agendas, thereby provoking powerful counterrevolutionary reactions. The measures taken by social revolutionary elites to survive such reactions result in stronger states and regimes. However, Levitsky and Way (2022, 13) also observe most social revolutionary regimes are “born weak", lacking the military strength and administrative experience “necessary to maintain order across national territory". The combination of revolutionary radicalism and institutional weakness leaves revolutionary regimes vulnerable to counterrevolutionary destruction. I argue that to explain which social revolutionary regimes successfully weather counterrevolutionary reactions, we must look to wartime institutions. Revolutionaries coming to power in possession of an extensive body of wartime institutions are “born strong".

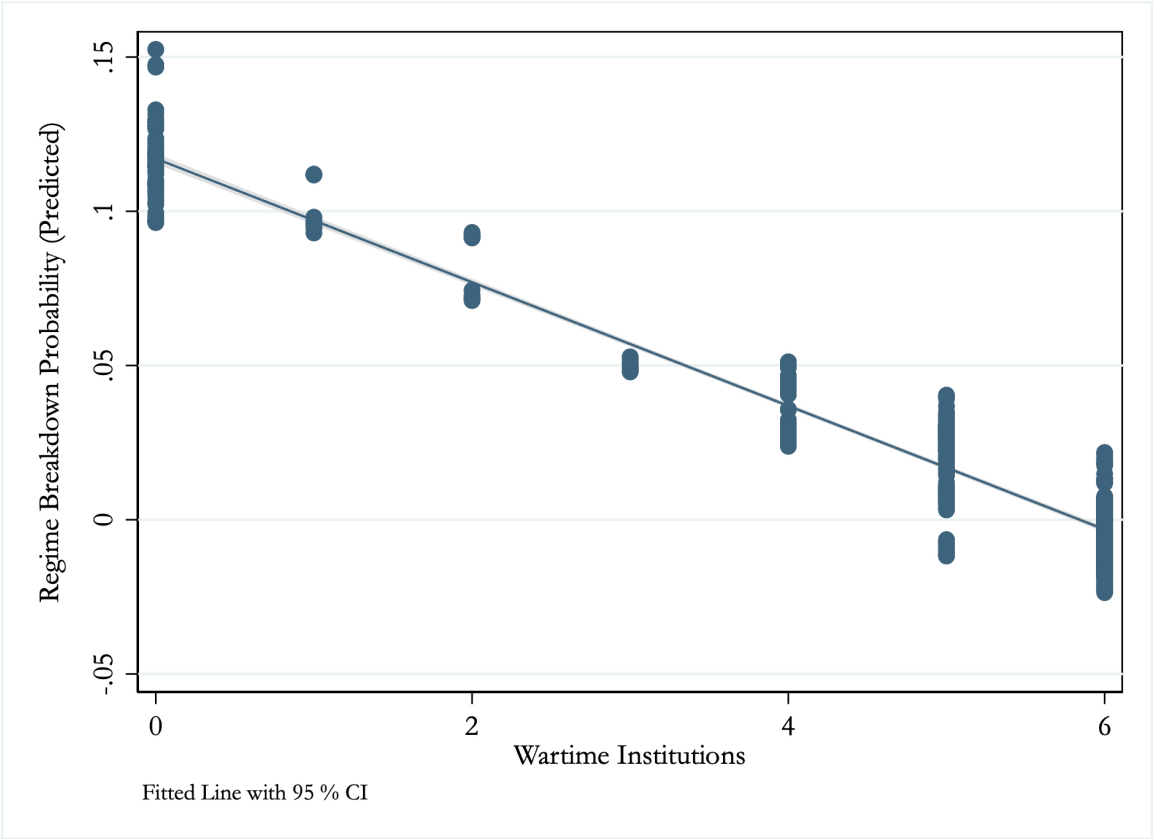

Figure 3.4: **Wartime Institutions and Probability of Regime Breakdown in a Given Year, 1945—2014**

These rebels have the institutional muscle to withstand counterrevolutionary reactions. However, social revolutionary regimes with comparatively anaemic wartime institutional portfolios face substantially greater risk of collapse when faced with reactive sequences — as was the case in Cambodia (1979) and Afghanistan (2001).[22]

As a supplementary test of the theory, I also use linear regression to estimate the effects of wartime institutions on state capacity. Table 3.4 below presents the results.

22. See Levitsky and Way 2022, 250-277 on "Radical Failures". Levitsky and Way tentatively propose that the early deaths of revolutionary regimes is attributable to particularly intense radicalism and lack of state size. Comparatively small revolutionary provocateurs, like Afghanistan and Cambodia, lacked the territorial scale to survive foreign interventions by militarily superior powers able to penetrate swathes of territory. Nevertheless, as they observe, the survival of the Cuban and Eritrean revolutionary regimes calls into question the explanatory value of state size. Robustness tests incorporating state size do not alter the main findings — see Appendix B.

Models 1 through 4 follow the same specifications as in Table 3.3.

Table 3.4: **Wartime Institutions and Postwar State Strength**

	Dependent Variable: Postwar State Strength			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	0.158***	0.075**	0.107***	0.110***
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.023)
High-Intensity Conflict		0.186	0.209	-0.244
		(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.026)
Social Revolution		-0.244	-0.139	0.189
		(0.148)	(0.176)	(0.185)
Secessionist Goals		0.447**	0.580*	0.690*
		(0.208)	(0.315)	(0.372)
Post-Cold War		-0.499***		
		(0.190)		
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		0.499***	0.485***	0.486***
		(0.059)	(0.082)	(0.105)
Population$_{(log)}$		0.060***	0.056***	0.092***
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	774	767	767	767
R^2	0.23	0.61	0.59	0.61

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Significant negative coefficients for "Wartime Institutions" in Models 1 through 4 support the hypothesis.

3.5 Robustness Tests

I conduct an extensive battery of robustness checks to stress-test my findings. In Appendix B I test whether the findings are robust to the inclusion of other organizational-level control variables capturing rebel group territorial control, rebel military support, and rebel group size. Having including these variables, wartime institutions remain a robust predictor of regime survival.

As an additional robustness test, I revisit the coding procedures for the conflict intensity and social revolution variables. Regarding conflict intensity, I swap out the binary variable for a continuous measure of battle deaths drawn from Lacina et al.'s (2005) Battle Deaths Dataset (which is largely compatible with the UCDP dataset), to observe whether a more granular operationalization of this variable affects the findings. Recognizing the the majority of social-revolutionary regimes are Marxist-Leninist in ideological orientation, and that Marxist-Leninist rebels are apt to emulate the "Chinese model" of wartime institution-building, I substitute a variable capturing Marxist Leninist ideology for social revolution.[23] Results remain robust to these variable respecifications, with neither conflict intensity nor Marxist Leninist ideology registering as statistically significant.

I take a second crack at the social revolution alternative hypothesis, identifying the spirit of the theory rather than the letter. Rather than look simply at those regimes designated as social revolutionary, I use a binary variable to capture all "reactive sequences" faced by rebel victors. Drawing on hand-coded data (see Table 2.1), I code a binary variable capturing "reactive sequences". I code this variable as 1 for regime-years during which a rebel regime faced post-victory war, provided the war

23. As expected, the correlation between Marxist-Leninist and social revolution is high (.638).

begins within 5 years of seizing power. Results of the analysis indicates that these reactive sequences do not have a significant effect on regime durability. Wartime institutions remain a significant predictor of regime durability.

To further reevaluate the effect of wartime institutions on regime durability, I revisit the initial coding decisions for rebel victory. I test whether the findings are robust to the exclusion of electoral victory. Electoral victors may be endogenously likely to survive, having inherited state institutions in reasonably good order. Wartime institutions remains robust when excluding or controlling for this category of victor.

To ensure that my findings are not simply driven by my choice of estimator (OLS regression), I re-estimate the analysis using logistic regression and event history models.[24] The findings not only remain robust to these respecifications, but also at a consistent level of significance. I also conduct two listwise deletion checks. I rerun the analysis while dropping each case from the sample and also recoding the independent variable, omitting each individual wartime institution from my 8-point index. The relationship between wartime institutions and rebel regime durability holds, indicating that no single case or variable in the index is driving the findings.

As a final, tough test of the theory, I rerun the analysis while dropping extreme values of wartime institutionalization (zeroes and sixes). This test is extremely tough as it drops the likeliest cases driving the findings, excluding both regimes that died in infancy (e.g. Somalia 1991, Chad 1979-1982), and party-state Leviathans (e.g. Eritrea 1993—present, China 1949—present). Wartime institutions nevertheless remain statistically significant across all four models. This ought to provide additional

24. For the event history analysis use a Cox proportional hazards model which imposes minimal assumptions regarding the shape of the underlying hazards. The Schoenfeld residuals test indicates that the proportional hazards assumption has not been violated. Previous studies of regime durability and breakdown employing event history models include Bernhard et al. 2001, 2004; Svolik 2008, 2012; Kadivar 2018; Casey 2020; Lachapelle et al. 2020.

confidence that wartime institution-building “matters" even at intermediate levels. Wartime institutions are not redundant and even incremental leaps in institution building can yield postwar returns.

3.6 Conclusion

All told, statistical analysis lend considerable empirical support to the hypothesis that rebels' wartime institutions undergird postwar regime durability. I argue that wartime institutions constitute the basis of regime durability, and facilitate regime survival through streamlining the postwar state-building processes. Both the descriptive data and regression analyses in this chapter provide unambiguous support for the theory. Nevertheless, these cross-national analyses only present statistical correlations, potentially suffer from bias, and cannot tease out the causal mechanisms by which wartime institutions connect to postwar durability. To observe these mechanisms at work, and overcome these inferential limitations, I now turn to qualitative analysis of two regimes established through rebel victories in Uganda – the Milton Obote II regime established following the 1979 Liberation War, and the Yoweri Museveni regime established following the 1980-1985 Ugandan Bush War.

Chapter 4 | Victors and Vanquished: Wartime Institutions and Uganda's Rebel Regimes

4.1 Case Selection

The Milton Obote II (1980-1985) and Yoweri Museveni (1986-present) regimes constitute an attractive controlled case pairing for most-similar systems research design. Both fit the scope conditions of the theory, with the Obote II regime coming to power following the victory of the Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA) in the 1979 Liberation War, and Museveni seizing power through the 1986 victory of the National Resistance Army (NRA). In selecting these two cases of Ugandan rebel victors for comparison, a number of structural covariates and potential confounders are held constant. Both the UNLA and the NRA captured central state power in the same country during similar periods in world-historical time i.e., postcolonial Cold War era Uganda. Additionally, both groups bore organizational similarities. Both were ethnic composites, the UNLA largely an alliance of Northern tribes — the Langi and Acholi — while the NRA was largely a Southern-based group, encompassing Baganda, Banyankole, as well as Banyarwanda refugees. Neither group possessed social-revolutionary ideologies,[1] instead formulating broadly populist political plat-

1. Per Levitsky and Way (2022).

forms. Both victors inherited failed states requiring wholesale reconstruction. Finally, on the eve of victory, both newborn regimes were plunged into new domestic struggles against armed opponents seeking state power. In terms of context, organizational structure, and post-victory challenges, the cases exhibit marked similarities.

By holding potential confounders close to the minimum, we can better isolate causal conditions. These cases exhibit meaningful variation in both my theory's explanatory variable (wartime institution-building), and dependent variable (postwar regime durability). In this chapter, I trace the process by which wartime institutional endowments (or lack thereof) shaped the ultimate trajectories of Uganda's rebel regimes. The statistical analyses in Chapter 3 reveal a relationship between wartime institutions and postwar regime durability/state strength. However, while what the statistics reveal is suggestive, what they conceal is vital. Cross-national statistics alone lend no insight into whether the causal process I propose unfolds in the manner I specify. Through process tracing however, I open this black box, testing the theory in richer fashion.

The process tracing exercise demands first, evidence that rebels' wartime institution-building practices match up to regime outcomes. If I find that the (failed) Obote II regime nevertheless possessed a wealth of wartime institutions, then the theory is thrown into question. Second, I require evidence that the scope of victors' wartime institutional portfolio informed postwar statebuilding trajectories. An absence of wartime institutions should force victors towards implementing *state resurrection* or *statebuilding from scratch* strategies. Finally, I must observe that these strategies shaped the regime trajectories in the manner theorized. For state resurrection, this implies that the utility of resurrected prewar institutions is choked off by the three-headed monster of prewar weakness and unpopularity, additional wartime depletion, and divided loyalties. For statebuilding from scratch, I must show that the creation of

new and unfamiliar political institutions makes prohibitive demands of victors' time and political expertise, as well as threatens the autonomy of the armed forces. For weakly-institutionalized victors, these *post hoc* organizational changes must be "costly and seem to subject [the] organization to greatly increased risk of death" (Hannan & Freeman 1984, 156). For well-institutionalized rebels however, we ought to see greater evidence of *continuity* rather than change. Wartime institutions differ primarily from state-institutions in degree rather than kind. For these rebels, the postwar statebuilding process should be shown to consist in the expansion and augmentation of existing wartime institutions. An extensive portfolio of wartime institutions should thereby mitigate the inherent costs and risks of state reconstruction.

I largely focus on the early-term threats to regime durability. As discussed in the empirics chapter, rebel victors tend to get cut down in their youth, with the majority of regime breakdown events occurring within 5 scant years of victory. The early stressor of renewed conflict is far and away the greatest threat to regime survival. I also focus on the secondary threat of a military coup, observing how victors' combatant controls shaped their sensitivity to coups and, consequently, their approach to military reconstruction. The theory suggests that victors without extensive wartime institutions should be leery of postwar military integration, lest the incorporation of former rivals destabilize the army and prompt a coup. Poorly-institutionalized victors are considerably less able to use military integration as a tool of counterinsurgency. Conversely, the theory predicts that victors with a robust battery of combatant controls should be able to comfortably incorporate rival insurgents into the army. These combatant controls both produce a corps of trusted wartime loyalists that impose a barrier to coups, and also, subject new recruits to political domestication through disciplinary and normative mechanisms.

Process-tracing requires close description. Accordingly, the case analysis below

draws upon an expanse of sources. I use interviews with ex-rebels and state elites collected during fieldwork in 2019, archival materials, period-era newspaper articles, declassified intelligence documents, as well as written interviews, biographies and autobiographies of rebel leaders and participants. These sources provide a detailed picture of the salient variables and processes under discussion.

I now turn to the Obote II case. The selection of the Obote II regime confers an additional inferential bonus. Obote II is a *hard case* for the theory. Milton Obote had previously ruled Uganda from its independence in 1962 to 1971, whereupon he was ousted by Idi Amin and fled into exile. The UNLA insurgency, hatched in exile, ultimately restored Obote to power. As observed by Kirunda-Kivejinja (1995, 203), "as the longest occupant of State House, apart from Amin, there was no one more knowledgeable of its keys and doors than the Chief Exilee." Obote possessed a number of inbuilt advantages that ought to have steadied him in power: administrative wherewithal, national reputation as "founding father", and crucially, preexisting state institutional machinery. As will be detailed further below, Obote was ostensibly ideally positioned to resurrect the institutional structures developed under his first regime in order to sustain his second. If any leader could have effectively implemented state resurrection, it should have been Obote. And yet, despite drawing on a raft of political institutions conceived under Obote I, the Obote II regime capsized after a scant 5 years. The regime was incapable of defeating insurgent challengers, kneecapped by weak administrative structures and ultimately deposed by a delinquent coercive apparatus. The ultimate failure of the state resurrection strategy under Obote II attests to the inherent, acute difficulties thereof. Despite implementing state resurrection under near-optimal conditions, Obote was unable to compensate for the dangerous absence of wartime institutions.

I divide the Obote II case into six sections. First, I discuss the origins of the UNLA.

This gives a sense of the initial organizational endowments of the group, its goals, and leadership, all of which would have formative influence over its organizational trajectory. Next, I observe the UNLA in action — its wartime development with regards to controlling combatants and governing civilians. I then turn to a discussion of state inheritance i.e. the state of the state on the eve of rebel victory, and the monumental reconstruction process facing the victors. I then delve into Obote's postwar statebuilding strategies, detailing the ways in which he attempted to both meet the challenges of state reconstruction and overcome the deficiencies of the UNLA through *state resurrection*. The final section concludes with the regime's collapse and a theoretical autopsy of the regime, outlining the ways in which the case conforms to the predictions of the theory.

4.2 Uganda 1979-1985: UNLA and the Milton Obote II Regime

In the following section, I present the unhappy organizational trajectory of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) from its conception in Dar-Es-Salaam to its victory over the Amin regime. This section does not aim to reconstruct the course of the war beat-for-beat, but rather to provide a sense of the origins and wartime organizational evolution of the armed group.[2] I contend that the UNLA was organizationally stunted from the start. Philosophically, UNLA's chief leaders and military commanders persistently prioritized seizing power in Kampala through sheer force of

2. There is but a slender body of primary and secondary source literature on the Ugandan Liberation War, variously known as the Kagera War, or the Uganda-Tanzania War. The most detailed overview of the 1979 Liberation War is Avirgan and Honey (1983), which is admittedly a journalistic account. For a military history of the war see Cooper and Fontanellaz (2015). For an overview of the war, and of the available primary literature, see Thomas (2022).

arms and numerical strength, with negligible effort devoted to screening or socializing political recruits. Structurally, the speed with which the UNLA expanded afforded little time to build norms and structures through which to enforce discipline. For similar reasons, the UNLA failed to engage in wartime governance. I trace the wartime trajectory of the UNLA with an eye towards the incentives and choices its chief architects faced with respect to wartime institution-building. I pay special attention to Obote's *Kikosi Maalum* faction, which became the backbone of the postwar army. With the military cart placed firmly before the political horse, and with each faction vying to maximize their share of postwar power, mass recruitment fast outstripped the UNLA's ability to control its combatants. As a result of this institutional missingness, the UNLA was ill-prepared to function as an instrument of state power and regime survival.

4.2.1 UNLA: Organizational Profile

Origins, Leadership Philosophy, and Organizational Design

On February 23, 1979 the Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA), an umbrella group of Ugandan exiles headquartered in Dar-es-Salaam, invaded Uganda. At face value, the UNLA crystallized under auspicious circumstances. The cruelty and ineptitude of the Idi Amin regime had successfully brought together a rainbow coalition of Ugandan opposition movements. Further, with Amin having thoroughly worn out his welcome with the international community by 1979, the Ugandan exiles possessed a powerful benefactor in the form of Tanzania. In November of 1978, Amin erred fatally in attempting to annex the Kagera Salient – a strip of Tanzanian territory – slaughtering some 1,500 Tanzanian civilians in the process. Tanzanian head of state Julius Nyerere, who had long itched to "teach Amin a lesson" (Roberts 2014,

702), leapt towards retaliation.

Tanzanian exiles, who had unsuccessfully labored to unseat Amin for nearly a decade, similarly jumped to take advantage of Tanzania's indignation. The "desire for political unity was overwhelming" (Nabudere 1980, 333) within the exile community. As such, the Ugandan exiles, which had hitherto worked separately against Amin, set aside their differences to create a united front. The UNLA constituted a nationally representative body of Ugandan political factions, ethnic and linguistic groupings (Minority Rights Group 1984, 6). Stocked by a "who's who" of Ugandan political elites, senior military officials, intellectuals, students, and activists, the UNLA seemed to offer true hopes of broad-based postwar government. A "second liberation"[3] (Reid 2017, 75), and an opportunity to rescue Uganda from misrule, seemed near at hand.

Nevertheless, the circumstances of the UNLA's origins lamed it right out of the gate. The UNLA was "a creation of convenience" (Golooba-Mutebi 2008, 12), whose unity was born of opportunity. Two major players bear discussion. The first major faction, the *Kikosi Maalum*, was a multiethnic alliance of northern Acholi and Langi soldiers driven into exile by the Amin regime and loyal to former president (and ethnic Langi) Milton Obote. Obote's lieutenants, Northern co-ethnics/co-linguists and party loyalists fleeing in the wake of the Amin takeover, had followed Obote first to Sudan, then to Tanzania. Senior members of the Ugandan political and military establishment figured prominently within the UNLA. On the eve of the war the *Kikosi Maalum*, numbering 700 men (Kasozi 1994, 124), politically and militarily dominated the UNLA. The second major faction, FRONASA, numbered roughly 80 men. FRONASA, a largely Southern-based group of left-leaning intellectuals and

3. Indeed, Obote in his own words framed the rebel victory as a "second liberation", the opening of an optimistic chapter in Ugandan history. A flattering biography of Obote, written midway through his second stint in power, is titled "Obote: Second Liberation" (Gupta 1983).

activists, operated under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni who had trained with FRELIMO in Mozambique.[4]. The two groups made strange bedfellows. Between the Northern-based old guard of military and political elites that had dominated Uganda since independence, and a younger leftwards-leaning Southern-based activists, the "only common denominator was the hatred for Idi Amin, and...the quest for personal political ambitions" (Ogenga-Otunnu 1990, 36).

In addition to the these horizontal cleavages, the UNLA faced a vertical cleavage between political elites and military commanders, in part resulting from the exile nature of the group. UNLA military commanders on the ground operated out of reach of UNLA's chief political leadership in Dar-es-Salaam. Under such circumstances, it is easy to see how armed subordinates could break the leash of their erstwhile leaders, and act autonomously. An abortive 1972 invasion testified to this potential danger. In the opening stages of the 1972 invasion, Obote complained to Nyerere that he was losing control of Acholi troops under the military command of Colonel Tito Okello.[5] Nyerere attemped to rein in Okello's independence, transferring the troops for training closer to Obote's headquarters. While Okello was, nominally, allied to Obote, this indicated both: (1) the potentially fragile relationship of the *Kikosi Maalum's* Langi-Acholi alliance as well as (2) the potential autonomy that military commanders operating in Uganda proper could develop due to the distance between them and their exiled political leaderships in Tanzania.

Exile additionally introduced a third complication. While the demographic profile of the group, at face value, was a cross-section of Ugandan society, it lacked social ties on the ground. Obote's group, after years of exile, was largely detached from Ugandan

4. While some 20 exile groups participated in the front, these two carried rather greater weight by virtue of their ability to mobilize manpower. The others were, by and large, rebels on paper.

5. This proved to be a prescient assessment. In 1985, Acholi troops under the command of Tito Okello and Basilio Okello (no relation), would in fact depose Obote.

society. The prior 1972 intervention was green-lit after the exiles promised Nyerere that a successful military operation against Amin would unleash a grassroots uprising against Amin. The exiles misread the situation spectacularly. Despite claiming to have cultivated a thousand-strong "fifth column" of loyalists on the ground, the exiles arrived in Uganda to find no trace of support (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 35; Daily Monitor 2019). In short order, the exile army suffered a stinging defeat, with one historian describing it as "one of those rare events in military history: a perfect failure" (Karugire 1980, 68). All signs prior to 1979 suggested the exiles possessed a dangerous lack of support inside Ugandan borders. A lack of social ties made it impossible to accurately gauge the level of domestic support, or collect adequate intelligence regarding the the stability of the Amin regime.

As indicated above, the UNLA was born an unwieldy composite, divided across organizational and ethnic axes. North-South ethnopolitical cleavages that had long polarized Ugandan politics resurfaced in the UNLA coalition. These horizontal cleavages could however, have been mitigated by the imposition of a robust body of combatant controls. Nevertheless, Obote and the *Kikosi Maalum* evidenced a broad disinterest in politicizing the armed forces and overcoming intraorganizational cleavages. As noted by Nabudere (1980, 333), "Dr. Obote's reaction was that it was good to go on 'talking about unity', but that the military front was more important. The militarist approach permeated his whole thinking". This concentration on purely military efforts contrasted sharply with the FRONASA coalition, which advocated emulating the FRELIMO approach of classical guerrilla warfare (Museveni 1985, 5; Brett 1995, 140). Indeed, the origins of FRONASA can be traced back to a 1971 dispute between the Museveni and Obote camps regarding the importance of political education. Museveni (1997, 53-54) recounts, "the debate was: should have have political education or ideological training in the army or not? The Obote people would say: Politics

mbaya sana (politics is very bad) in the army."

The indifference towards the political dimensions of armed struggle was further evidenced by the belated development of the UNLA's political wing. In a letter dated March 11, 1979, Obote apparently demanded "that the establishment of the Ugandan force be separated from the formation of a political organization. The intention of such a political organization, if formed, was apparently not the bring the fighting forces under its political control, but merely to act as the arm of the fighting force to deal with 'political aspects' and issues 'pronouncements' but with no political control" Nabudere (1980, 334). While Obote was unable to thwart the creation of the UNLA's political wing, he was crucially able to delay it. While the UNLA had started fighting on February 23rd, the UNLF came into being more than a month later, on March 25th. In the intervening period, the rebellion was an exclusively military affair, with military commanders exercising personal discretion over recruitment, training and violence. The UNLF did not formatively shape the UNLA, but merely inherited it. Notably, the UNLF, despite nominally being the political wing of the *Kikosi Maalum*-dominated UNLA, *excluded* Obote. Cutting out the most influential political actor badly neutered the UNLF. After the UNLF's creation it was but a vestigial structure, lacking control over UNLA combatants whose real loyalties lay with their military commanders, largely Obote loyalists.

Second, proposals to engage in wartime administration of Ugandan territory, though contemplated, were ultimately unsuccessful. The UNLA was split between the view that "an interim administration should be formed to immediately to administer the liberated areas in the South of the country" and the alternative proposal "to mobilize the people and resources necessary to bring an end to the dictatorship, instead of thinking about a government which was not fully liberated (Nabudere 1980, 334-335). The UNLA opted ultimately for a focus on liberating the capital city, rather

than organizing society in the countryside. This too, was in part, a matter of leadership philosophy. The leaders of the larger factions, including Obote, were of the view that political power would ultimately be a function of who had more “commanders in the field" (Tandon 1986, 87). As such, emphasis lay on recruiting a large military force to seize power rapidly, rather than developing a mass civilian social base (Bwengye 1985, 148). The 1979 debate and strategy again reprised that of 1972. While in 1972, Museveni voiced the position that protracted popular warfare was vastly preferable to what he termed “putschist solutions" i.e. attempts for quick, militarized knockout blows, Obote “dream[t] up plans for a quick strike that would return them all to their rightful places" (Rice 2009, 177). As noted by Karugire (1980, 66), “Obote’s thinking from the moment he landed in Nairobi and then Dar-es-Salaam and right up to 1979, was to muster an invasion force from whatever source to oust his ouster, but never to foment a popular rebellion among the people". After Obote’s troops had been routed in 1972 due to poor intelligence[6], Nyerere, who “had always had major reservations about the conventional military approach of Obote’s commanders, preferring guerrilla warfare...remarked: “I hope they have learned their lesson" (Martin 1974, 226). They had not. As in 1972, the fateful decision to depose Amin through rapid conventional means, rather than through the protracted building of wartime social support, won the day. Fortunately for them, Amin’s provocation had thrown Tanzania decisively behind the invaders. They would receive a wealth Tanzanian arms and support needed to oust Amin, without needed to focus on popular warfare. While in the short-term this strategy proved to finally succeed in unseating Amin, it would have disastrous effects on long-term postwar statebuilding.

6. The intelligence failure of the operation attested to the Obote forces’ weak social ties on the ground. Indeed, this was a general issue with organizing Ugandan insurgency from the safety of Tanzanian exile, as noted by Museveni. His warning, nevertheless, went unheeded.

We can pause here for a moment of organizational stocktaking. The UNLA, from the start, possessed leaders and goals diametrically opposed to the elaboration of wartime governance and political control. The technologies of protracted popular warfare were disdained. Instead, the UNLA's chief faction, the *Kikosi Maalum*, envisioned a path to power that was nasty, brutish and short. Form followed function. The UNLA was organized as an entirely combat-centric entity, as no investment had been made in the organizational roles, skills and structures that could be used to tame military force or assume administrative functions.[7]

Why did the UNLA (the Obote faction in particular), variously demonstrate hostility or indifference to wartime institution-building? The 1972 disaster had given them ample signage of the UNLA's failures, and yet the *Kikosi Maalum* proved hardheaded. Two factors likely figured into the *Kikosi Maalum* decisionmaking. First, Obote's experience was that contests for political power were largely decided by armed men. In 1966, Obote's *autogolpe* was achieved through military means. Obote, then prime-minister ordered his loyalists to shell the palace of his rival, the president and *Kabaka* (historical King) of Buganda. It was, as described by Phares Mutibwa (1992, 39) "the first major bloodbath in independent Uganda". Obote's victory - the destruction of his rival's seat of power - was rooted in the ethnicization and expansion of the Ugandan army. Obote's ability to command military loyalty was "initially due to his belonging to the same ethnic and linguistic groups as the majority of its recruits"(Kasozi 1994, 89). The denouement of Obote's 1966 takeover further confirms Obote's conflation of military and political power — the royal palace was converted into a military barracks (Rice 2009, 85). Obote learned the apparent virtues of ethnically-organized violence from his defeats as well. Amin, formerly Obote's chief

7. The UNLA scores a 0 out of 8 on my scale of wartime institutionalization i.e., wholly devoid of combatant controls and civilian governance structures.

of staff, had, through a 'quasi-secret recruitment drive' (Scott 2019, 171), built up an enormous internal military coalition of West Nile coethnics. Obote also had built up a competing coalition of armed men drawn heavily from his own Lango tribe. It is hard to say who made the opening move, but ultimately, Amin struck faster. Amin's preemptive strike, the 1971 coup, relied on the cooperation of West Nile military loyalists to rapidly capture key infrastructure in the capital. Obote had therefore, the multiple experiences of seeing power seized through direct strikes at the heart of political power by military commanders, with coethnicity functioning as the glue of loyalty. The UNLA largely retreaded this organizational trajectory.

Second, the nature of the military commanders within the UNLA also boded ill for the construction of combatant controls and wartime governance. The UNLA's senior military manpower was drawn from Uganda's inherited colonial-era army. The Ugandan army, and its institutional predecessor, the colonial-era King's African Rifles (K.A.R.), historically had little use for independent thinking, initiative, and political *savoir-faire* among the African soldiery.[8] Tito Okello, the senior commander of all UNLA forces for example, personified the K.A.R. soldier. Okello, who entered the K.A.R. in 1940 after completing primary school, was widely considered illiterate.

8. Notably, Idi Amin's career trajectory exemplifies the K.A.R.'s organizational philosophy. Amin, who had entered the K.A.R. as a cook, nevertheless rose to the highest position possible for a black African prior to independence. Amin was described by one British officer as "a splendid type and a good rugby player, but virtually bone from the neck up, and needs things explained in words of one letter" (quoted in Leopold 2020, 85). Racial and ethnic stereotype doubtless played a role in such assessments. Amin, though questionably literate, operated throughout his career with a degree of political acumen and cunning. However, the fact is that academic or intellectual inability was no barrier to advancement within the K.A.R. As Angus Shaw (1979, 30-31) writes "In the young Idi Amin, the British officers of the 4th Battalion, King's African Rifles, found all the qualities for which they were looking. Intelligence was not one." Indeed the postion can be stated more strongly — a lack of educational and intellectual credentials facilitated recruitment and advancement. Gwyn (1977, 25) observes "Amin was the type of soldier whom these British officers preferred. Large and physically impressive, he had little education. The theory was that those with least education made the best troops...It would be wrong to assume that all British army officers in Uganda took this view, but there were enough."

Assessments made by external military officials were unflattering. An Israeli military officer who had previously worked with Okello reported "the highest rank for which Tito Okello is suitable is that of a Company Sergeant Major Only" (quoted in Bwengye 1985, 150). Okello's superior in the K.A.R, Major Iain Grahame, recalled in his autobiography that Okello "had served in successive companies of 4 K.A.R with both Idi and myself and *his illiteracy then had been marginally worse than that of Uganda's future dictator*. Whereas Idi had on many occasions proved his capacity efficiently to control and inspire a large fighting force, Tito's limitations were those of a charming elderly unimaginative platoon commander who ten years previously had been considered ripe for retirement" (Grahame 1980, 137). The desire to muster up all available manpower against Amin thrust men like this into senior UNLA military command positions. These UNLA commanders frankly lacked both the will and skill to embark on ambitious institution-building projects, or to implement political education regimens among the armed forces. Additionally, the colonial-era institutional norms in which these military commanders were steeped meant they simply "could not be expected to instil in their new recruits pro-people, anti-imperialist and democratic norms and practices" (Amaza 1998, 16). Accordingly, the UNLA reprised much that was pathologized in the Ugandan state military itself.

The Quick and the Dead: The UNLA at War

With the military cart positioned well in front of the political horse, the UNLA was immediately vulnerable to disciplinary collapse. Its initial structural pathologies were not nipped in the bud. Over the course of the war, to which I now explicitly turn, these pathologies would furher intensify as a result of the UNLA's fighting strategy.

The UNLA adopted a two-pronged fighting strategy. First, Tanzanian troops and the UNLA made a mad dash towards Kampala. The "headlong movement towards

Kampala was fast and furious, its objective: capturing the capital and setting up a new government" (Vincent 2005, 177). The UNLA, consistent with its aforementioned disinterest in "partial liberation", was motivated in large part by the prize of capturing the capital city, and the symbolic legitimacy and physical advantages that holding the capital would confer.[9] Second, the UNLA adopted an aggressive wartime recruitment strategy. Even before the fighting commenced, the UNLA began domestic recruitment in earnest. *Kikosi Maalum* commander David Oyite-Ojok, a staunch Obote loyalist, having crossed into Uganda with six hundred soldiers, had eight hundred by the time he reached the town of Kalisizo, a mere 38 miles from the Uganda-Tanzania border. FRONASA, roughly eighty strong upon leaving Tanzania, exploded in size, accumulating three thousand additional fighters by the time it had reached Kampala.

At face value, these strategies were straightforwardly consistent with stated logic the of marshaling all available resources to speedily destroy Amin. However, both strategies concealed a darker, Machiavellian aim. A militarily strong position in Kampala was key to winning the cat-and-mouse game playing out between UNLA's *Kikosi Maalum* and Fronasa factions. The security and political benefits of being the largest faction in Kampala were self-evident — the ability to coerce, dominate and capture the postwar administration-to-be, and with it, lay claim to the lions' share of political and military spoils (Golooba-Mutebi, 12). The emphasis on military size as the basis and guarantor of postwar power unleashed a powerful security dilemma within the UNLA. Accordingly, the war became both a foot-race and an arms-race, as factional UNLA military commanders military commanders worked furiously to maximize their respective share of postwar power.

For even a well-institutionalized group, the overnight influx of a mass of raw re-

9. See Landau-Wells (2018) on the importance of holding the capital for rebels who aspire to sovereign recognition.

cruits would test organizational cohesion and combatant discipline. The institutionally-threadbare UNLA was overwhelmed completely. Both the helter-skelter pace and the manner in which wartime recruitment was conducted, did violence to the organization. Recruitment disproportionately drew from the *bayaye*, the social and educational margins of society(Mamdani 1988, 1158). The UNLA "absorbed a mixture of freedom fighters, opportunist thugs, and delinquent school children, who could never be sorted and many of whom deserted with impunity when the battle seemed be won, throwing away their uniforms or using them as cover plundering the general population" (Southall 1980, 629). Further, UNLA military commanders recruited largely among their coethnics. Fronasa, composed primarily of ethnic Southerners, grew substantially as it marched through the South. *Kikosi Maalum* recruited "massively" upon reaching Langi and Acholi areas. The ethnopolitical siloing of the UNLA, always present, was thereby further reinforced. Finally, recruitment increasingly took place outside the UNLA's formal structures. Absent political oversight, UNLA military commanders exercised broad discretion over combatant recruitment, training and conduct, practically forming "private armies". Thousands-strong militias loosely aligned to Obote sprung up in Acholi and Langi strongholds (Nabudere 1980, 343). Indiscipline reigned as these "personal armies were... poorly trained, lacked discipline and were... excessively violent." (Otunnu 2017, 48).

Even works written with pro-Obote or pro-Museveni political slant, are unanimously compelled to admit that the speed and scale of recruitment took a toll group-wide. Ondoga ari Amaza, an NRA veteran, writes that the haste of training and the large number of new Fronasa recruits rendered it impossible to effectively impart progressive political lessons (1998, 16) as the war unfolded. Kenneth Ingham's biography of Obote, which often verges into Obote apologetics, states: "The small, disciplined force which Ojok had originally commanded during the invasion had grown rapidly

during the pursuit of Amin's forces...In this way the UNlA ceased to be a tightly controlled unit. Instead it became an armed rabble" (2006, 159).

While the premise of Ingham's claim is suspect, the conclusion is not. Even in the opening stages of the war, the UNLA demonstrated limited restraint and cohesion. The (sketchily recorded) accounts of the UNLA's first combat actions suggest disciplinary problems materialized rapidly. Kasozi (1994, 127) recounts that the first "liberated" towns of Masaka and Mbarara were:

> razed after they had been occupied by Tanzanian forces and exiled Ugandans. All the best houses in rural Masaka, Ankole, and Mpigi districts were destroyed. One angry Muganda told me that Oyite-Ojok gave orders to his soldiers to destroy the South to reduce it to the same level as the North. Many of the destroyers were Ugandans.

Many of the new recruits from Masaka and Mbarara fled after the first long march (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 93). Disciplinary problems would continue to mount as the UNLA chased the rump of Amin's routed army fleeing to the Northwest border regions of the country. West Nilers, Amin's Nubian and Kakwa coethnics, were categorically deemed 'Amin Soldiers' and accordingly suffered brutal recriminatory violence (Harrell-Bond 1982, 7). UNLA forces in West Nile, in tandem with local vigilantes, unleashed a "wave of terror" upon the West Nile population (Otunnu 2017, 46). Intra-UNLA skirmishes also claimed civilian casualties, with the Ugandan Government's Human Rights Commission finding FRONASA/*Kikosi Maalum* clashes to be partially responsible for the West Nile violence. Indeed, in the closing stages of the war, the Tanzanian forces, having witnessed prior massacres of West Nilers, "had specific orders not to allow any of Ojok's, mostly Acholi and Langi UNLA troops" into the region (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 190).

The speed of the war, a mere four months, also precluded wartime governance. The choice of rapid war to the detriment of wartime administration, was in part a

decided UNLA strategy. The UNLA moved through Ugandan territory “hazardously fast" — far more quickly than the classic guerrilla model in which liberated zones would be established, and further territorial capture only sought after having build up popular local support (Twaddle 1988, 29). The brevity of the war was also however, a matter of circumstance. Immediately before the conference Tanzania, anticipating a prolonged attritional conflict, had drawn up plans for the UNLA “to make appropriate arrangements for the possibly somewhat lengthy interim administration of the 3 million or so Ugandans living in the liberated zones of Masaka, Mbarara, and Kigezi" (Twaddle 1979, 219). Wartime administration would have helped signal to the international community the domestic legitimacy and administrative seriousness of the liberating forces to the international community. This was a particular concern of Tanzania, which had faced strong regional condemnation for having violated Africa's historically robust antibelligency norms. Wartime administration by the exile forces would have helped assuage the impression that the war was an exclusively interstate conflict between Nyerere and Amin. Tanzania however, had been fooled by Amin's bluster regarding Ugandan military strength. To the surprise of the Tanzanians, Amin's army “disintegrated like butter in a hot oven" (Kasozi 1994, 104). While the UNLA had strategically dismissed the idea of wartime governance, the sudden collapse of Amin made the matter moot — the UNLA was soon knocking at Kamapala's doorstep. Arguably, the UNLA had neither the time nor the inclination to engage in wartime governance prior to victory.

Barbarians at the Gate: The UNLA on the Eve of Victory

On April 10, 1979 the victorious UNLA entered Kampala riding high on a tide of optimism, cheered by massive civilian crowds (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 133). The UNLA was much removed from its humble origins as a small exile force. As a result

of the wartime recruiting arms-race, the UNLA, a force of originally 680 combatants, had mushroomed to over 32,000, with Obote's *Kikosi Maalum* faction responsible for roughly 75% of that number (Byrnes 1992, 32). Upon reaching Kampala, Obote loyalist and *Kikosi Maalum* Commander, Colonel David Oyite-Ojok "personally rushed to Radio Uganda to be the first one to make the radio announcement that the invading forces had taken over the government" (Bwengye 1985, 148). Supposedly, Museveni who "badly wanted" to announce Amin's fall, "lost his temper" upon hearing Oyite-Ojok on the radio (Kalyegira 2013).[10] Indeed, Oyite-Ojok's announcement carried with it Obote's imprimatur, signaling to many that the Obote forces bore responsibility for the "liberation" of Uganda. This initial legitimacy, as well as the fact that the *Kikosi Maalum* had won the wartime recruiting race, became the sticks with which to beat other UNLA factions and aspiring political elites in the immediate postwar era.[11]

Despite public enthusiasm in the capital, the newly sovereign rebel victors stood on extraordinarily shallow institutional foundations. The rebel front had "very limited presence outside of Kampala" (Gertzel 1980, 477), and had garnered nothing in the way of mass civilian support or wartime administrative expertise. Intraorganizational rivalries were boiling to the surface. UNLA military commanders, uninhibited by combatant controls, had acquired considerable autonomy over large armed contingents. Presciently, a 1979 CIA memorandum warned that notwithstanding Obote's nominal control over the *Kikosi Maalum*, "ambitious commanders might use the troops

10. This however, is Obote's recounting, so it should be taken with a grain of salt.

11. Much as in military coups, sovereign transfer of power was signaled by broadcasting the the capture of the capital over state radio. This, obviously, would have been known to a military man such as Oyite-Ojok. Radio Uganda was also the most effective device with which to do this. As a result of both wartime damage and Amin-era depredations, Uganda's road and transport networks had been destroyed. In 1979, Radio Uganda was essentially the only way to relay information country-wide.

to wrest control for themselves" (CREST No. CIA-RDP80T00942A000900070001-8). In short, a lack of wartime institutions cast a shadow over postwar state formation and regime durability.

4.2.2 State Inheritance

State Decay under Amin

The challenges of postwar reconstruction following UNLA victory are difficult to overstate. In the wake of Amin's fall, Uganda in 1979 "was in a real sense, a broken-backed state" (Gertzel 1980, 461). A Commonwealth Team of Experts, dispatched to assess the damage, and outline a plan for Uganda's postwar rehabilitation, characterized "Europe and South East Asia in mid-1945" as the "obvious parallel" to the 1979 Ugandan state. The breakdown of the Ugandan state however, however, had been underway since 1971, when Idi Amin seized power.[12]

To be sure, Amin's erratic and ill-considered policy misfires were much to blame for the rapid deterioration of the Ugandan state. A decade of mismanagement under Amin had "brought the economy to a virtual standstill" (Tindigarukayo 1988, 608). Amin's 1972 expulsion of the Asian community (a large portion of Uganda's commercial and industrial class) left the country virtually without a skilled workforce, with Uganda losing access to credit and suppliers in the process. Additionally, as many Asians within Uganda held British passports, anti-Asian violence and expulsion led to a Britain (hitherto one of Amin's chief suppliers of military equipment) ceasing military aid and imposing an economic embargo (Brzoska et. al 1994, 200). Amin's 1975 appropriation of foreign business, "had resulted in increasing paralysis of trade and

12. Indeed, one could argue that the Ugandan state had begun its decline arguably earlier, under Obote I, or indeed, prior to independence, due to colonial era military recruitment and administrative policies.

commerce, and shortages of food and other basic commodities, as well as equipment, spare parts, and most consumer goods" (Gertzel 1980, 469). Amin's foreign aggression, and aggrandizement, also proved economically suicidal. His fantastic claim to the entirety of Western Kenya in 1976, led to a closure of the Kenyan border and a *de facto* blockade of goods to be shipped to and from the Kenyan coast. Exports in coffee, a chief source of foreign exchange, as well as imported fuel for the army, dried up (Southall 1980, 631). By 1979 the average annual rate of inflation was estimated at *200 percent*. Amin's attempt to compensate for the spiraling economy, by running the economy as a military unit, also backfired. Amin's "campaign to reduce prices amounted to a threat to shoot any shopkeeper who failed to sell his goods at a price arbitrarily set by the government. As the figure was usually well below the level at which any profit was possible, shops were quickly cleared of goods" (Hennessey 1974). These goods, predictably, reappeared only on the *magendo* (the black market).

Against this grim economic backdrop, the infrastructure "vital for proper administration had broken down and the country was paralyzed" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 146). The most rudimentary of social services collapsed: "water, sewerage and electricity services were...breaking down for lack of maintenance" (Southall 1980, 645). The physical sinews of state power had also been snapped. Uganda's public transports had "been decimated by misuse during the Amin years" (Rothchild 1981, 119), with the number of buses in the country having dropped from 780 in 1972 to 40 in 1979 (Southall 1980, 645). Whether Uganda had public transport is perhaps a moot point, as the road system itself had been made largely unusable through neglect (Rothchild 1981, 119). The human infrastructure needed to maintain social services also collapsed, as skilled labor fled Uganda for greener pastures. The number of doctors, for example, dropped from 1650 in 1970 to 620 in 1979. The population bore the brunt. In 1973, over 70% of Ugandan children had been immunized. By 1980 that number

was under 10% (Iliffe 1998, 147).

However, it was Amin's deliberate (albeit heavy-handed) attempts at ensuring his political survival that took the greatest toll on state and society. It is no accident that Amin, a semiliterate soldier with a narrow social base, was nevertheless able to prolong his rule on power for 8 years — and even then could only be ousted through external means. Amin's political calculus was first, to firmly place guns before butter. That is to say, his West Nile military constituency was his political power base, and it, unsurprisingly, was the last to feel the ruinous effects of his policies. Second, Amin sought to eliminate alternative power centers that could potentially serve as a basis for political opposition. To a great extent therefore, the administrative state itself (formatively shaped by his predecessor, Obote) was a target of Amin's paranoia.

Amin's attacks on the state ranged from administrative assaults to outright violence. On the bloodless end of things, Amin comprehensively ripped up the remnants of his predecessors' administrative network: "city councils were dissolved and city clerks dismissed. New Police Commissioners were appointed..top civil servants were sacked" (Kiwanuka 1979, 93). Amin dismissed district chiefs appointed by Obote, and frequently replaced them with soldiers, who used their coercive powers to engage in intimidation and rent-seeking. Amin's appointment of military officials to senior administrative posts, prioritized loyalty or coethnicity over skill, seniority or ability. These soldiers' acted as "warlords, plundering and killing who they chose" (Karuigire 1980, 68). This"arbitrary and coercive behavior weakened any administration that remained" (Gertzel 1980, 470). Amin's cabinet and senior civil servants were caught in a political game of musical chairs, constantly facing demotion, transfer and house arrest. The process of civil service dismissal became such a regular feature of political life that "every morning all senior government employees had to listen to the "news" on Radio Uganda to ensure they were still in employment before venturing to their

office" (Karugire 1980, 69). Many civil servants simply opted out entirely, fleeing or resigning rather than endure political uncertainty in this fashion. Amin's response was to fill the cabinet with semiliterate soldiers. Together, these actions resulted in a comprehensive militarization of the civil service and erosion of its administrative powers (Otunnu 2016, 287) at virtually all levels of government.

Of course, the blunt instruments of terror were the other means by which Amin attempted to crush political opposition. By 1978, Amin had left the civil administration "in ruins", so depleted by "death and exile... that at liberation Uganda was in some respects a country without a bureaucracy" (Gertzel 1980, 469). Ex-ministers, the Former Governor of the Bank of Uganda, the Chief Justice and the Archbishop of the Church were just some of the many victims of Amin's terror. This depleted state power in all fashions: destroying experienced senior personnel, creating a widespread climate of terror, alienating large social constituencies and earning massive international condemnation. The death of the Archbishop Luwum for example, resulted in the US imposition of a mandatory trade embargo on Ugandan coffee in October of 1978 (Otunnu 2016, 310). This of course was but a fraction of the large-scale ethnic violence and political repression that characterized Amin's rule.

Given the overwhelming reliance on force, the coercive apparatus was the only institution in Uganda that could be said to be in working order during Amin's rule. By 1979 however, even this was not the case. Amin's army in 1979 had been racked by mutinies and rumored coup attempts. The resulting gyre of intramilitary infighting and purges severely weakened the army. Ironically, Amin's provocation towards Tanzania are frequently cited as a tactic of "diversionary war", whereby Amin hoped to deflect military attentions away from the political center towards an international opponent (Goemans 2008; Powell 2014). Unfortunately, this strategy proved suicidal — Amin's militarily fragmented and weakened army was in no state to fight, much

less win a war.

State Decay through War

In a way, Amin's rule approximated a war in itself. Through expulsion, exile, internal violence, and finally, the purges and infighting in the military, violence touched virtually all parts of state and society. Widespread repression however, only succeeded in driving political opposition beyond Uganda's borders. State weakness provided the opposition-in-exile with the opportunity to retake power. The 1979 War however further exacerbated state weakness, "provid[ing] the coup de grâce" to the moribund Ugandan state (Commonwealth Secretariat 1979, 3).

During the war, Amin's retreating soldiers, Ugandan civilians and the liberating forces themselves became agents of state destruction. Amin's army, though wholly inept at fighting, was quite adept at looting. Retreating Amin forces tore a swathe of destruction across the country: " factories were sabotaged, stocks of currency stolen from banks, tens of thousands of rifles and vast supplies of ammunition taken from the armories, everything left removed from the shops, and all the vehicles they could lay their hands on were driven out of the country" (Southall 1980, 22). In West Nile, retreating Amin forces had even smashed building walls to rubble in order to strip out the electrical wiring within (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 189). These ill-gotten gains would inflict two blows against the state, both depriving the new victors of state resources, and creating the initial resource base for postwar West Nile insurgency.

In the power vacuum brought on by Amin's departure, civilians also took to the streets to engage in celebratory, recriminatory and opportunistic violence. Much of this violence was in the form of looting, as Amin had appropriated businesses and properties to transfer to coethnics and loyalists. Nevetheless, retribution and redistributiton quickly lost any selective character, spreading "like an epidemic" (Com-

monwealth Secretariat 1979, 1). Industrial establishments, government offices and private homes were ransacked (Kasfir 1985, 171). Ugandan civilians stripped public infrastructure and private property bare: "crops were damaged and livestock killed; houses, factories and public buildings were gutted; school supplies, textbooks and writing materials were looted" (Commonwealth Secretariat 1979, 8).

Insecurity after Victory: "It was Better Under Amin"

With respect to the the liberating forces, they had razed the southern districts of Masaka, Ankole, Mpigi to the ground.[13] Civilians displaced from these regions would stream into Kinshasa, introducing further strains on its overtaxed infrastructure. In West Nile, civilians fleeing UNLA violence streamed over the border into Sudan, creating a serious refugee crisis on the border. Tanzanian troops also made the costly decision to release *en masse* those found in Amin's prisons. The liberators simply did not have the capacity to feed and care for prisoners in the midst of fighting (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 151). While many of the imprisoned were doubtless innocent victims of Amin's purges and witch-hunts, the release of tens of thousands of prisoners also ejected a raft of hardened criminals and specialists in violence into the postwar environment (Tindigarukayo 1988, 609; Posnett 1980, 149). Into the hands of these criminals, and indeed to any aspiring entrepreneur in violence, fell thousands of weapons, discarded by Amin's shattered army. The injection of guns and criminals into the displaced population would contribute considerably to the incipient climate of postwar lawlessness and disorder. In West Nile, retreating Amin forces used the loose weaponry and refugee population to recompose themselves into insurgents. In the East of the country, Karamajong pastoralists seized upon abandoned weaponry to

13. Decades later, much of Masaka remains rubble. See New Vision, "Amin's 1979 War still plagues Masaka".

engage in armed cattle rustling and raiding (Ingham 167). In the South, the Baganda — Uganda's largest tribe — were smarting both from the wartime damage as well as what seemed to be the incipient restoration of their old rival, Obote.[14] The weakened Ugandan state was ripe for renewed war.

Nowhere was the scale of political disorder more evident than in liberated Kampala. Amin's military rule, though tyrannical, had not produced a wholesale collapse in order. As cruel as they were, Amin's coercive agencies were nevertheless used (and abused) to keep alternative violent actors from threatening the political center. The streets of Kampala under Amin were, as remarked by many Western observers at the time, "kept almost excessively clean" and visibly orderly (Leopold 2020, 522) In the aftermath of victory however, the army, the military police, the State Research Bureau and the Public Safety Unit - Amin's most powerful intelligence and security apparatuses - had been wiped away. The police force, through attrition, resignation and defection, had collapsed to roughly 3000 men, less than a third its original size (Posnett 1980, 148). In short order "anarchy replaced tyranny" (United Press International, July 18, 1981) in Kampala, with murder becoming widespread in the capital. "As night falls", reported one Kampala newspaper "no Ugandan is sure whether he will live to see the dawn" (Weekly Topic (Kampala), April 18, 1980).

Indeed, the UNLA was playing both arsonist and fireman in Kampala. Oyite-Ojok's men, drunk on looted whiskey and beer, harassed civilians (Avirgan and Honey 1984, 144-145). Victorious UNLA troops "helped Kamapala residents loot shops and state warehouses" (International Herald Tribune, Monday April 16, 1979 "Liberators Join in Looting of Kampala). The UNLA were initially greeted as *bakombozi*, or

14. Recall that Obote violently deposed the Baganda king in 1966, dramatically curbing Baganda political power in Uganda and setting in motion the "Northern Domination" that would persist until Amin's coup, at which point the fulcrum of political power shifted westerward towards Amin's ethnopolitical base.

“liberators". In short order however, the term *bakombozi* came to be used ironically, as the UNLA “became notorious for ‘liberating’ civilians of “watches, radios, shoes and mattresses" (Ward 1995, 87). The UNLA quickly won itself a new nickname, the “Looting Army" (Karugire 1985, 79).

Nevertheless Kampala’s “Liberation Hangover" (The Guardian Apr 21, 1979) was keenly felt by the victors. Anarchy and state weakness would weaken any postwar administration out of the gate. With the political wing of the exile forces (UNLF) returning to set up the postwar government, “they found that offices had been looted, records destroyed and the civil service so ruined...that it could not provide efficient service or support to Ministers" (Posnett 1980, 148). The liberating forces immediately established a curfew in the hopes of curbing the rampant looting, violence and murder in the capital. Such efforts were largely ineffective. Indeed, in the aftermath of liberation it was widely said among the Ugandan population “it was better under Amin" (Southall 1980, 629). Even in the very seat of power, the incoming government could feel the disorder breaking out nationwide.

State Inheritance Overview

Consistent with the theory, rebel victors inherited a Ugandan state that was weak thrice-over. Amin’s actions, while they had made internal challenges to his rule near-impossible, made external military overthrow near-inevitable. The weakened Ugandan state crumpled quickly when faced by the modestly-equipped TPDF and UNLA invaders. The victors, having themselves struck blows against state power during the war, created a yawning institutional vacuum by dismantling Amin’s coercive instruments. The UNLA stepped into a yawning institutional vacuum. The enormous task of state reconstruction was made additionally urgent by the parlous security situation. The UNLA however had limited institutional strengths. Lacking both wartime

governance experience and control over its combatants, It was little more than an "armed rabble". In next section, I discuss how the UNLA's threadbare institutional portfolio frustrated postwar state formation and the survival of the Obote II regime.

4.2.3 The Obote II Regime

In this section, I turn to the topic of postwar state formation and the trajectory of the Obote II regime that emerged from the UNLA victory. I argue that Obote, from the very start, heavily relied on institutions initially developed under his *first* stint in power to underwrite his second. Obote resurrected his former ruling party, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), his former intelligence apparatus, the General Service Unit (GSU)[15], and his former paramilitary counterweight, the Special Force. These, in addition to the UNLA state army, were the organizational pillars upon which the regime stood. Nevertheless, the *state resurrection* strategy failed to insure regime survival. The UNLA's threadbare wartime institutional portfolio thwarted Obote's ambitions to build a state capable of resolving economic and physical insecurity. I trace how Obote attempted to use resurrected state structures to impose control over the newly expanded UNLA state military, and well as create a working civil administration. I show that resurrected institutions, unable to escape their founding weaknesses, were not equal to the tasks. I also show that the reputational stains and the behavioral continuities of the resurrected institutions reactivated the old ethnopolitical rivalries that brought down the original Obote I regime. From origins to breakdown, the Obote II regime in large measure retraces the steps of Obote I. First, however, we must address why Obote II is such an excellent case for investigating state resurrection and its limits.

15. Referred to as the General Service Department (GSD) in some sources.

State Resurrection under Obote II

Milton Obote possessed two distinctive advantages that allowed him to execute state resurrection under near-optimal conditions. The first, was, simply, *experience*. Uniquely for a rebel leader, Obote already had the experience of having occupied the highest echelons of state power. Even politically well-connected rebel leaders tend to only have had relatively modest positions within an incumbent government. Even modest prior experience in government can help stabilize newly victorious rebel leaders.[16] Obote however, was an elder-statesman of the first order. His credentials were not merely local, but continental. Obote was one of the founding leaders of the OAU and one of the founders of Kenya's KANU party. Further, Obote had not merely been Uganda's prime minister and then president, but he had been Uganda's *founding* prime minister. Obote had a founding hand in the construction of Uganda's very first postcolonial political institutions, including, importantly its first ruling party, the UPC, in 1960. *A fortiori*, this rarefied experience meant that Obote had already accumulated a wealth of the resources so valuable to new incumbents: administrative skill and experience, international standing on the world stage[17] and, perhaps most importantly, the political machinery with which to mobilize a domestic constituency. Obote was an old hand when it came to state power. Compared to virtually any

16. Rwanda's Paul Kagame for example, served as Deputy Director of Military Intelligence in the victorious NRA regime. This position strengthened Kagame in a number of ways: after coming to power, he was able drew on strong diplomatic relations with Uganda to help wage counterinsurgency. Additionally, Kagame used his skill-set developed as a Ugandan intelligence officer to quickly set up a new and powerful Rwandan Intelligence Directorate.

17. Indeed, Obote's experience and foreign connections had been instrumental to his ability to outmaneuver his rivals. Obote's friendships with Kenneth Kaunda and Nyerere initially allowed him to flee successfully into exile and operate crossborder insurgency. Nyerere's implicit backing also helped Obote dominate the UNLA coalition and postwar government. Brittain (1986, 57), reports, "Obote still retained an extraordinary degree of credibility within Africa, partly because of the continuing loyal support of his influential friend, Nyerere". Also see Kanyeihamba (2010, 119), "President Nyerere and former President Kaunda found it hard to accept a Uganda without their personal friend Obote".

other rebel leader, Obote's unique experience in having shaped and wielded state institutions should have also given him an edge in resurrecting them.

Second, and relatedly, Obote's prior presidency meant that Obote did not have to resurrect Amin-era institutions. Instead, Obote was able to reach further back into the the past and reactivate his *pre-overthrow institutional machinery* that had operated between 1962 and 1971. These older institutions had manifold advantages over the more proximate Amin-era institutions. First, Obote's pre-1971 institutions were relatively intact. Unlike Amin's intstitutions, which had been shattered by the 1979 fight, Obote's institutions were, to a considerable extent, preserved by flight. Amin's 1971 coup had, strategically, been launched when Obote and his primary intelligence-service chief, GSU head Akena Adoko, were out of the country (Martin 1972, 112).[18] While in the short-term this was a tactical masterstroke by Amin, the long-term effects were consequential. Obote in exile was a lightning rod for his former lieutenants, military supporters, intelligence operatives and party elites. Many fled to join Obote in exile, while others went underground in Uganda. Indeed, Obote's ability to mount both diplomatic and military offensives in exile testifies to the extent to which his party and intelligence infrastructures remained operational.[19] Second, Obote had built the very institutions he now aimed to resurrected. Most resurrection strategies, as mentioned, are blighted by by principal-agent problems. New leaders attempting state resurrection ordinarily have to reckon with institutions organized by hated rivals, and staffed by their loyalists and coethnics. Obote however, was simply bringing his own organizations out of cold storage. He thereby faced considerably less trouble with organizational loyalty.

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18. Obote had flown to the 1971 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Signapore. Akena Adoko was on an unrelated trip to London.

19. See Krcmaric and Escribà-Folch (2023) on how exile leaders increase the likelihood of political destabilization in their home countries.

For most rebel victors, resurrected state institutions are badly frayed hand-me-downs. They bear terrible signs of wear and tear, and were shaped and wielded by entirely different (indeed, rival) political actors. To appreciate this, one need only consider the counterfactual — having to resurrect *Amin's* institutions. Amin's institutions were, as detailed earlier, decrepit, administratively inexpert, unreservedly violent, smashed by war, and of such dubious loyalty that at the end they escaped even Amin's control. No rebel victor could conceivably make them work.[20] Luckily, Obote could effectively implement state resurrection "once removed". Amin's shattered institutions and West-Nile loyalists could simply be skipped over in favor of Obote's handmade, less-worn institutions. Obote, to a great extent therefore, had mitigated two of the classic deficiencies — wartime attrition and organizational disloyalty — that often render state resurrection an unviable strategy for postwar statebuilding.

Plus Ça Change? State Resurrection and Persistent Organizational Weakness

Nevertheless, Obote's pre-1971 institutions were still beset by organizational failings that ultimately damaged their utility as instruments of postwar state formation. First, Obote had to reckon with these revived institutions' original organizational frailties. Even setting aside the damage done by war, resurrected institutions' weaknesses have deep roots. Resurrected institutions necessarily represent a subset of institutions built and used by overthrown regimes. By definition, these institutions were, at minimum, too weak to prevent regime overthrow. At maximum, they were sufficiently provocative and unpopular as to outright cause overthrow. Foundational

20. Indeed, Gertzel (1980, 486) argues, "In one sense the new government had in April 1979 derived an initial advantage from the fact that Amin's overthrow had left the country without any armed forces, for it meant they did not inherit an army that had already experienced political power."

weakness and/or unpopularity are the chief inherent defects of resurrected institutions. In this respect, Obote's political and security instruments — the UPC, GSU, and Special Force — were no exception.

Accounts of these institutions, in their original 1962-1971 iteration, attest to their underlying weaknesses. First, the UPC party machinery had, throughout its history, been plagued by limited mobilizational abilities, ethnic particularism, as well as internal rivalry and factionalism. Lofchie (1972, 31) summarizes the UPC's organizational failings:

> The UPC had never been an effectively organized political movement and was, in fact, little more than a congeries of loosely associated and sometimes warring factions...This condition prevailed even in the northern part of the country where the party was fairly popular. It meant that the UPC was chronically unable to organize its popular support into an integrated political movement. Even in Lango, the home district of the president, there were in 1965 only about 2,000 paid up party members out of a population of more than 300,000. The internal factionalism and organizational immobility of the UPC rendered it highly vulnerable to any attempted coup. Like the Government of which it was a unable to act decisively in the moment of crisis.

Notably, several of these unflattering assessments are *contemporary* characterizations of UPC organizational weakness i.e. not post-hoc rationalizations made after Obote's overthrow. A 1966 issue of Africa Report argues that "the props of presidential power available to African leaders are un-dependable or nonexistent in Uganda. The UPC is weak in organization and riddled by factions" (December 1966, "The Uganda Army: Nexus of Power). Gertzel (1964, 7) similarly observes, "the UPC is still more a confederation of district branches than a national unitary party...factional disputes and personal rivalries in party branches have weakened the party's position...to maintain a highly centralized organization with control at the center, requires first of

all an efficient party machine at headquarters. This the UPC has lacked".[21]

Despite being the ruling party, and therefore best-represented in Parliament, the UPC's size, was deceptive as a gauge of strength. The UPC "never had a mass base, even during periods of increased membership, UPC was a superstructure without a solid foundation" (Provizer 1978, 256). According to Kalule (1967, 58), size"was merely concealing internal conflicts which, by 1966, were virtually tearing the Party apart". Attempts to enhance party coherence merely stripped away what little mass and cross-national support the UPC had. A series of purges throughout the 1960s cost the UPC its mass base among workers (Mamdani 1975, 45), as well as enraged more independently-minded UPC members. Additionally, the "A long-standing power struggle between northern and southern elements of the UPC was decisively won by the northern group in early 1966", culminating with Obote's 1966 overthrow and expulsion of the Baganda *kabaka* (Lofchie 1967, 53). While this would help shore up Obote's internal position, it cleaved Southern support entirely from the UPC. Thenceforth, Northern-based ethnic groups, primarily Obote's own Lango tribe, would "furnish the UPC not only with its most fervent supporters but with virtually all of its top leadership" (Lofchie 1967, 53). Accordingly, as noted by Gerzel, (1980, 475) "the [1980] attempt to restore Uganda's institutional framework itself contributed to the revival of old ethnic and religious rivalries which had been the basis of party politics in the past".

On the other hand, Obote's security apparatuses, the GSU and the Special Force,

21. Additionally, the UPC's organizational issues were not merely a generic matter of East African independence-era ruling party weakness. Bienen (1978) notes that among the three East African ruling parties, Tanzania's TANU, Kenya's KANU, and Uganda's UPC — the UPC was the organizational runt of the litter. Even KANU, a notably fragmented and mobilizationally weak ruling party (see Levitsky and Way 2012; Slater and Smith 2016), was "never on the verge of coming apart as the UPC was in early 1966" (Beinen 1978, 329. Appe (1995, 91) observes that "Another factor that contributed to Obote's weakness was that the UPC was organised in such a way that he could not use it for control, as Kenyatta was able to do with KANU".

were, in addition to being weak, deeply politically provocative. The GSU and Special Forces were, in the main, stocked full of Obote's Lango coethnics, and to a lesser degree, Acholi Notherners. The GSU was intimately tied to Obote, through both coethnic and familial ties; GSU head Akena Adoko was a cousin of Obote. Both were intended to curtail Amin's growing power within, and Obote's reliance on, the army. The GSU and Special Force were thus tasked with monitoring the armed forces and operating as Obote's personal military counterweight respectively. However, in their ethnic exclusivity and its creation to function as an institutional rival to the army, it proved explosively provocative. Gingyera-Pincywa (1978, 245) considered the primary grounds for estrangement between Obote and the Army in 1971 to be "fear that Obote was creating a rival to the army". The Special Force, which received plum foreign Israeli training and had its own secret budget, as well as access to military intelligence, fit the bill. The military additionally considered the GSU as usurping army prerogatives and challenging military autonomy, framing it as a "second army" operating out of the Cabinet. In additional to institutional jealousy was the fear that GSU operatives could capture the armed forces, "like the Nazi secret police infiltrated the Wehrmacht during the Second World War" (Martin 1972, 106). The overt ethnic stacking of the GSU gave the rivalry an added dimension, in that West Nilers felt that any targeting of the armed forces would be to target the West Nilers as an entire social category. Amin himself saw in these organizations evidence of a "Lango Master Plan" to install Langi in all of the regime's vital positions. After staging the coup, Amin made no secret of the poisonous relationship between the military and Obote's counterweights. Of Amin's "18 Points Given to Justify the Coup", *five* concern interference in the military, with three of these mentioning GSU head Akena

Adoko.[22]

The GSU and the Special Force had, self evidently, failed to protect Obote from Amin's coup.[23] Indeed, the coup itself was facilitated by Obote's intelligence bungling. The GSU head was out of the country at the the same time as the head of the state, giving Amin unusual freedom of maneuver. Obote's intelligence apparatus also squandered his first-mover advantage: Obote, upon leaving for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore, had given orders to the GSU to assist military officers in arresting Amin. This order however, was intercepted by one Sergeant Major Musa, one of Amin's West Nile coethnics, allowing Amin to flip the script. Even had the order gone through with secrecy, the military, as noted by Martin (1972, 112) would have refused to be helped by the GSU, its hated ethnic rival. Amin's first act upon seizing power was to disband the GSU and the Special Force, rounding up and massacring hundred of its Langi and Acholi operatives in the process (Rice 2009, 99-100).

This brings us to the second organizational deficit: the reputational stain borne by these institutions. By the time of Obote's 1971 overthrow, the UPC, GSU and the Special Force were largely regarded as stalking horses for Lango domination of the state. The resurrected institutions reignited old ethnopolitical rivalries and fears. Baganda in the South had never forgiven Obote's anti-Kabaka actions in 1966. The prospect of renewed UPC dominance seemed to indicate that the door was again shut to Baganda influence in politics. Militarily, Obote's Acholi allies in the army

22. Amin's "18 Points" communiqué, formally known as "General and Administrative Order No. 2 (GAO 2/1971)" is reprinted in full in Omara-Otunnu 1987, 182-184. Point 15 references the "Lango Master Plan".

23. Indeed, Willetts (1975, 289) notes that not only had the GSU played virtually no effective part in resisting the 1971 coup, it had also failed to avert or give warning of an assassination attempt on Obote in 1969 — at UPC headquarters. Kasozi (1994, 95) implicates elements of the armed forces in the assassination attempt.

were acutely aware that they were in the very same position that Amin's West Nilers were in between 1966 and 1971. The recreation of the GSU and Special Force, as I will discuss more extensively in the following sections, stoked the same fears of ethno-military exclusion that motivated Amin's coup.

Finally, Obote's institutions had not altogether escaped organizational attrition in the eight years between his overthrow and restoration. Natural death and exile had themselves taken a toll. Some of the critical Obote personnel simply died in the intervening period. Others, like Obote's GSU chief, Akena Adoko, opted not to return from exile. Age and disillusionment stole perishable skills and vigor from institutional personnel in exile. Many Obote UPC loyalists, stationed in the Tanzanian refugee camp at Tabora "had been in Obote's army, but since the 1972 invasion they had not had any military training. Over the years they had aged — a number were now over 50 — and had become more expert at farming than fighting" (Avirgan and Honey 1983, 73). Charcoal selling and farming took the place of political organizing (Wheeler 2000, 116; Lamwaka 2016, 38).[24] Finally, though many of Obote's institutional personnel escaped Amin, many also perished in Amin's purges. Avirgan and Honey (1983, 31) note that in January of 1972, "Amin succeeded in eliminating the last surviving contingent of Langi and Acholi soldiers, polite officers and General Service Department [Unit] officials...560 detainees were transferred to Mutukula prison...and murdered. Only twenty-three managed to escape to Tanzania". While these factors did not rise to the level of wartime destruction, they nevertheless tore holes in Obote's pre-1971 institutional structures.

Obote II is thus an excellent case for investigating the inherent limits of state

24. Lamwaka (2016) notes among those forced to turn to charcoal selling to survive were future UNLA Acholi military commanders Tito and Bazilio Okello, which may have contributed to resentments between Obote and Acholi elements of the army.

resurrection. Given the threadbare organization infrastructure of the UNLA, Obote faced the choice of rebuilding the entire Ugandan state from the ground-up, or relying on his old instruments. He largely chose the latter, which, in their loyalty and intactness, were a far preferable option. And yet, despite practicing state resurrection under near-ideal circumstances, Obote was still brought down by institutional weakness. Additionally, the Obote case allows us more thoroughly identify the distinctive consequences of resurrected institutions' foundational weakness, as opposed to organizational attrition brought on by war. I now turn in earnest to the 1980 elections, and the shaky start of the Obote II regime.

4.2.4 Obote Restored: The 1980 Elections

In anticipation of imminent postconflict elections, Obote returned to Uganda on May 27, 1980. The intervening months since the liberation of Kampala had witnessed the rise and fall of four provisional governments. While the full scope of the provisional government era is beyond the scope of the present analysis, two points bear emphasis. First, all of the provisional administrations had collapsed in the course of attempting to impose political control over the army. Interim president Lule, for example, had attempted to introduce basic academic and literary requirements for army membership, which would have struck directly at the UNLA's core constituency. Following Lule's ouster, his successor, interim president Binaisa miscalculated similarly in attempting to sack Obote's man, David Oyite-Ojok from his UNLA command position. Binaisi shortly found himself under house arrest. The short and unhappy careers of the interim governments made it quite plain that the army was the decisive power behind the throne.

Second and relatedly, since the liberation UNLA commanders had only grown in

autonomy and strength. UNLA commanders, operating unchecked across the country engaged in massive independent recruitment campaigns. In Northern Uganda for example, "children under eighteen, men over forty-five, and women were recruited, hurriedly trained, and given uniforms to join either the army or the militia" under David Oyite-Ojok and Tito Okello. Once again, recruitment took place across ethnic lines, with the *Kikosi Maalum* heavily favoring Acholi and Lango coethnics. Such was the level of ethnic exclusivity that "all non-Langi were expelled from the Lango region (Apac and Lira)." In this fashion, "private armies" and militias, loyal to individual UNLA commanders, proliferated wildly.

Accordingly, Uganda's aspiring leaders felt profound ambivalence towards the armed forces. The military was considered both "a critical factor in the power game, and then as a monster to be domesticated" (Mudoola 1989, 132). The military's role as kingmaker, and the successive collapse of four provisional governments had left any hope of consolidating political authority tenuous. In turn, the political instability had left Uganda's reconstruction process entirely unfinished. The new government had "no police, army, judiciary, civil service or chiefs. All these had to be *built from scratch*" (Karugire 1985, 73. Emphasis added).

In this febrile political context, Obote began to reactivate his institutional machinery. Hisfirst act was to resurrect his original political party — the UPC. Obote "was confident that the basic organization of the UPC would re-emerge from wherever it had been concealed to support his cause" (Ingham 150). His confidence was not misplaced. UPC members in exile summarily decamped to Uganda while, domestic UPC supporters, driven underground by the Amin regime, came out of the woodwork.[25] The UPC's political vintage and "deep roots" (Gertzel 1980) seemed to give

25. Indeed, Avirgan and Honey (1983, 175) note that UPC supporters seemed to reemerge immediately after liberation. Upon arriving in Masindi in 1979, Tanzanian forces "found the local

it an advantage in a country where nearly all other institutions were either broken or new. The UPC "*did not need to begin building from scratch*" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 156).

The UPC campaign further gave the immediate impression of organizational strength. The UPC was the only party to publish a complete election manifesto. With a fleet of buses, the UPC campaigned nationwide, including in the Southern region of Buganda, where it had faced strong opposition since 1966 (Southall 652). Additionally Obote's campaign rhetoric drew on both historical and newly-acquired reputational strengths. The UPC's experience in governing Uganda was invaluable rhetorical fodder. The UPC had "built more hospitals, health care centres and schools in the 1960s than the British colonial government had built during the entire colonial period" (Otunnu 2017, 57). Obote, in reiterating this, was by implication the only candidate with the wherewithal and experience to rehabilitate Uganda's ravaged national infrastructure.[26] Additionally, Obote strove to claim the victory over Amin squarely for the UPC. By virtue of having the largest armed coalition in the UNLA, the *Kikosi Maalum*, as well as Oyite-Ojok's announcement of victory, Obote sought to cast the UNLA as an exclusively "UPC army" (Otunnu 2017, 59). Both were powerful rhetorical salvos against Obote's electoral opponents. While FRONASA commander Yoweri Museveni's newly-created Ugandan Patriotic Movement (UPM) party had liberation war credentials — indeed, Museveni forebodingly warned Obote against claiming that only the *Kikosi Maalum* had overthrown Amin — the fledgling

population still there and decked out in the yellow, red and black colors of Obote's UPC. One old man wore an Obote T-shirt which he said he had hidden for the past 8 years. Another man had a UPC membership card which he said he had kept concealed inside a mattress".

26. In effect, Obote used the UPC's prewar governance record to effectively reproduce the reputational and skill-building advantages the theory associates with wartime governance. Additionally, the UPC had built 22 hospitals after British departure. Given the threadbare state of welfare facilities in many postwar and postcolonial societies, one can easily grasp how rebels providing social services gain reputational benefits as well as scarce administrative skills.

party lacked the longstanding governance reputation of the UPC. On the other had, the UPC's primary rival, the Democratic Party (DP), had even greater vintage than the UPC, being created in 1954. However, the DP was largely pacifist in orientation, and played no martial role in the liberation war. Five months before the election, DP leader Paul Ssemogerere, seemed resigned, telling the BBC "Obviously the UPC has some advantage over the Democratic Party" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 154).

However, the ultimate conduct of the 1980 election laid bare the UPC's fundamental organizational weakness. The UPC again displayed its old failings: factionalism, as well as the inability to mobilize a genuinely national following. Indeed, the fissiparous qualities of the UPC had only deepened since 1971. In the run-up to the election senior UPC members "defected to the DP in droves in order to distance themselves from Obote who had turned the UPC into his own private fiefdom" (Karugire 1985, 74). Further, while DP claimed UPC's senior leaders, Museveni's UPM party stripped the UPC of youth and dynamism. The UPM largely drew its leadership and supporters from young men who had formerly been members of the radical UPC Youth Wing of the 1960s (Karugire 1985, 74). In short order, the UPC in 1980 was left " bereft of both its seasoned leaders of the pre-coup period and faced with the desertion of its youth wing" (Karugire 1985, 74). As the election neared, the mirage of UPC strength was dissipating. The post-Amin UPC was "a weakened party, in fact, a shadow of its old self" (Mwakikagile 2012, 156). In the closing weeks of the campaign the DP appeared to be headed for an upset victory (Tall 1982, 43).

Ultimately, the UPC, bereft of organizational strength and cohesion, turned to the one "trump card" in its hand — force (Gertzel 1980, 484). The UNLA cast a shadow over the election from the start. A campaigning Obote frequently appeared on stage alongside David Oyite-Ojok, making plain the UPC/*Kikosi Maalum* alliance

(Byrnes 1992, 32).[27] In one debate Obote, standing alongside UNLA commanders, taunted DP rival Paul Ssemogerere, asking "where are your generals?" (Bwengye 327, Amaza 18). What was intended as a jab at the DP's military irrelevance during the Liberation war revealed much about the UPC's organizational weaknesses[28] Having resurrected a political party with both structural and reputational defects, Obote's political survival was virtually completely dependent on specialists in violence. Further, to fill the vacuum left by the wave of desertions to the UPM and DP, the UPC "recruited a youth wing largely from the riff-raff of society: the unemployed and the unemployable, petty criminals and other social misfits" (Karugire 1985, 76). Accordingly, the election was won through a massive campaign of civilian repression as *Kikosi Maalum* commanders and the UPC's youth wing launched aggressive violence against Obote's opponents.[29] The campaign of murder, torture, extortion, intimidation and rape made a fair election "inconceivable" (Karugire 1985, 74). Cynically, the *Kikosi Maalum* also systematically killed high-ranking civil servants with suspected loyalty to opposition groups, plunging the administrative apparatus into deeper disrepair in order to present Obote as "the only leader who could restore law and order" (Kasozi 1994, 34). As votes were counted, Oyite-Ojok ordered three hours of concentrated firing into the air to signal that "the army voted tonight" (Torchia 1980).

The UNLA was allowed to operate unchecked in this way for three reasons. First, the UNLA was, at this point, kingmaker in Uganda. It would have been impossible for any political force to reign them in. Second, the Military Commission, the interim body established to oversee the election, was stacked with UPC loyalists and

27. Bwengye (1985, 163) presents a photograph of soldiers on polling day, draped in the UPC flag.

28. The comment was also consistent with Obote's general trend of conflating of men-under-arms with political power, as described in the sections above.

29. See Bwengye (1985, 142-163); Karugire (1996, 98–108); Mutibwa (2010, 140–142)

UNLA commanders. Finally, Obote had the imprimatur of international legitimacy. Commonwealth election observers felt that "only the UPC had the organisation and experience required to govern and, most especially, that an external attempt to set the process aside would be politically disastrous" and risk renewed war (Brett 1995, 141). Trapped on the horns of this "observers' dilemma", the Commonwealth team turned a blind eye to the outrageous vote rigging, certifying the election as free and fair (Willis et al. 2017).

As of December 12, 1980, Obote was once again prime minister of Uganda. Britain, France, Canada, the United States and the IMF endorsed Obote's victory, "promis[ing] to help rebuild the economy and restore law and order" (Otunnu 2017, 71), and showering the new regime with an treasure chest of relief funds. Nevertheless, the election was an ominous portent. It demonstrated conclusively that political power resided in not in any civilian party structure, but among *Kikosi Maalum* commanders. Further, the militarized election-rigging motivated the outbreak of renewed civil war, as Museveni's UFM party took the election rigging as a *casus belli*. Recognizing that political power could not be won at the ballot box, Museveni "went to the bush" i.e. turned to violent rebellion. The ethnic bent of the UPC victory also motivated a Baganda insurgency, the UFM, in the South.[30] Ultimately, Obote's reliance on the UPC and *Kikosi Maalum* produced a Pyrrhic victory. The exercise of "*despotic power used without infrastructural power* confirmed the vulnerability of state managers and, at most, emboldened opposition factions" (Khadiagala 1995, 38. Emphasis added).[31]

30. The DP won overwhelmingly in Buganda (Kasfir 2005, 279).

31. Various scholars note the UPC election immediately weakened the regime out of the gate e.g. Otunnu (2017, 64): "[Terror] tactics undermined the legitimacy of both the UPC and the elections"; and Kasfir (1985, 172): "The process by which the UPC returned to power further reduced its political acceptability".

4.2.5 Obote II Part I: State Reconstruction and Regime Fragility, 1981-1983

By 1981, Obote faced aggressive insurgencies in Uganda's East, South and West Nile regions, collectively known as the Ugandan Bush War. With insurgency breaking out nation-wide, Obote's survival depended on the effective elaboration of state coercive and infrastructural power. However, efforts to restructure and enlarge the army in order to effectively restore national stability, while simultaneously imposing control over combatants *post-hoc*, verged on the impossible. Additionally, the faction-ridden character of the UPC left Obote with few means of properly reconstructing the civil service and implementing domestic policy. Both the UNLA's threadbare combatant controls and the organizational weaknesses of his resurrected institutions, would thwart Obote's ambitions to address fight insurgency and rebuild the state.

Military Reconstruction: Coup-Proofing and Counterinsurgency Failure

Following the election, Obote's *Kikosi Maalum* faction effectively monopolized the top positions within the newly constituted UNLA state army.[32] *Kikosi Maalum* commanders Tito Okello and David Oyite-Ojok took the reins of the UNLA state army, with Okello as Military Commander and Oyite-Ojok as Army Chief of Staff. In a *de facto* purge, FRONASA veterans of the liberation war "became targets for harrassment and ambitrary imprisonment" (Amaza 1998, 30), fleeing the army in droves. In their place entered the massive Northern-based Acholi and Langi "private armies" and militias that had proliferated in the wake of liberation. Nominally, both of these latter developments seemed to work in Obote's favor. Obote had rid himself of FRONASA rivals without sacrificing military bulk. Northern recruitment seemingly

32. The reconstituted Ugandan national army under Obote II retained the name UNLA.

further cemented the Acholi-Langi alliance that had established him in power and well as provided the requisite manpower for nationwife counterinsurgency operations. In practice however, it endangered the regime twofold. Defecting FRONASA veterans joined Museveni's upstart NRA rebellion, filling its ranks with specialists in violence. More importantly, the massive expansion of the UNLA carried grave consequences for military performance, discipline and loyalty. From the start, UNLA seemed impervious to postwar attempts to impose discipline upon it. Tanzanian troops, departing Uganda in October 1981, had tried to retrain the UNLA since the liberation. Their efforts were in vain. "They have had two years", reported one exasperated Tanzanian military officer "and they can't even march in a straight line" (New African, July 1981).

Grafting both new recruits and independent Acholi militias onto the UNLA's threadbare combatant control infrastructure was "the straw that broke the camel's back" (Interview, NRA military official, Kampala 2019). By 1981, the UNLA had expanded to some 15,000 scantily-trained troops. In the wake of Tanzanian withdrawal, what little restraint had been drilled into the UNLA evaporated, with newly formed battalion commanders "order[ing] UNLA units all over the country to help themselves to civilian property within a radius of some five to six miles of their barracks" (Kasozi 1994, 150). Structurally, the UNLA's internal intelligence and record-keeping capabilities broke down under the strain of intense and "unofficial independent recruitment by commanders and other officers" (Minority Rights Group 1984). With such pell-mell incorporation of highly irregular forces, The UNLA had no accurate documentation of the strength and disposition of its units, and therefore struggled to make systematic provisions for food, housing, discipline, training and pay.[33] As

33. Indeed, after 1981 it is only possible to gather rough estimates of total UNLA manpower, with various 1983 estimates ranging from 15,000 to 40,000 men under arms (Minority Rights Group 1984,

summarized by Mamdani (1988, 1159):

> There was not one but several armies; not one but several intelligence services. Each responded to a different centre of power. No one in the state could have any idea of the combined numerical strength of these forces...The national army was thus no more than an arithmetic summation of various competing semi-private armies.

The collapse of the UNLA's logistics and records-keeping machinery, combined with the ill-trained nature of its new recruits had disastrous effects. Starving soldiers, frequently drunk, became predators of the civilian population, engaging in widespread looting, raping and killing (Otunnu 2017, 83). Under cover of "counterinsurgency", UNLA soldiers also inflicted scorched-earth eliminationist violence against Baganda southerners and West Nilers.[34]. With the UNLA unleashing both strategic and opportunistic violence, the scale of killing under the Obote regime outdistanced that had occurred under Amin.[35] The lack of social ties between soldiers and citizens was evident, with civilians describing the UNLA as "an army of occupation". Director of the US Committee for Refugees, Roger Winter recalled that during his tour of Uganda, "fear of the soldiers was palpable...the UNLA had clearly become the worst enemy of the bulk of the civilian population (Winter 1987).

UNLA violence empowered the regime's domestic enemies and destroyed its international alliances. With respect to the former, UNLA brutishness and incompetence, while anathema to civilians, was a proportionally terrific boon to insurgent movements. Baganda southerners, fleeing the wrath of the regime, fled directly into the

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34. Documentation of UNLA indiscipline and anti-civilian violence is extensive. See Amnesty International June 1985; Bell 2016; Kasozi 1994, 145-164

35. Estimates place excess mortality under Amin between 80,000 and 300,000 deaths, and excess mortality under Obote II between 100,000 to 500,000 deaths.

arms of Museveni's NRA. UNLA forces were sufficiently inept that the NRA, who had extremely limited international support, was able in large part to overcome its weapons deficit by capturing them from UNLA soldiers. Indeed, Museveni was able to boast on several occasions that Obote was the NRA quartermaster (Amaza 1998, 67). On the international front, military indiscipline badly eroded Obote's international standing. Damaging reports proliferated in Western media e.g. The Guardian (May 1982, "Horror Story from Africa's True Heart of Darkness"), The Sunday Times (August 29, 1982 "Obotes's Uganda Plunges Back Into Bloodbath"). As evidence of military brutality leaked to the outside world, reputational losses became economic ones, with Obote's increasingly-embarrassed Western international financiers beginning to withdraw support (Kasozi 1994, 172).

Obote was not indifferent to the costs of counterinsurgency failure, making (as his predecessors in the provisional governments did) multiple efforts to establish control over the armed forces. The most mundane were to simply issue orders requiring senior officers to instill discipline, circulating a guideline prohibiting "banditry" during military operations in 1982 for example. However, far from enforcing discipline, senior officers "who were expected to enforce army rules, regulations and laws, often encouraged and accepted looted property from low-ranking soldiers" (Otunnu 2017, 83). Chief of staff Oyite-Ojok, himself a "serial looter and embezzler" bore "a relaxed attitude to his soldiers own looting" (Reid 2017, 77). Nor too, could political education be entrusted to military commanders. Political education among the northern-dominated *UNLA*, such as it was, "consisted largely in identifying the Baganda (southerners) in particular and other Bantu speakers, in general as the enemy" (Kasozi 1994, 150).

Recognizing that virtually no internal military instruments were available to reassert control, Obote aggressively sought out foreign assistance. As early as 1981

Britain responded to Obote's request to send a Commonwealth military training team "to try and remedy the situation" (Furley 1989, 285). This failed to have any effect of note. By 1982 Obote had redoubled his efforts, "the contract of the Commonwealth Military Training group was extended for another year, and its strength doubled" (Schmitz 2006, 78). Nevertheless, the UNLA proved untameable. Obote oscillated between making a virtue out of necessity — authorizing scorched earth violence against the civilian bases of his insurgent opponents in Buganda and West Nile — and attempting to preserve his international support through renewed attempts at military professionalization.

The strengthening of insurgents and the cooling relationship with international benefactors was certainly of concern. However, military expansion had brought another danger closer to hand. UNLA expansion had increasingly drawn upon ethnic Acholi, dwarfing Langi reputation within the armed forces.[36] As early as November of 1979, Acholi had outnumbered Langi in the UNLA by 3:1 (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 150-151). Acholi so heavily dominated the UNLA rank-and-file positions that Baganda civilians often simply referred to the UNLA national army as "the Acholis" (Gersony 1997, Pain 1997).

Acholi overrepresentation was to a considerable extent the result of path-dependency and accident. After Amin's overthrow, army seniority was backdated such that returning soldiers-in-exile could count the exile period as active service, allowing them to take up new more-senior positions in the reconstituted army. Acholi made up the bulk of these returnees (Kasozi 1994, 150-151). Not only had Acholi been the largest section of the Army prior to the Amin takeover, but the proximity of Acholiland to Sudan enabled Acholi flight across the border when victimized by Amin's post-1971

36. Acholi, a mere 6% of the Ugandan population, made up 40% of the regular army and 50% of the militia forces.

purges. Langi, more centrally located in Ugandan heartland, were less able to escape into exile. A substantially greater proportion fell into Amin's net. Accordingly, the recruitment pool of Acholi was simply larger after 1979.

Notwithstanding the reason, the massive Acholi recruitment brought latent tensions in the UNLA's delicate Acholi-Langi alliance to the fore. First, notwithstanding Obote's campaign claim that the UNLA was "a UPC army", UNLA support of the UPC had been far from unanimous during the 1980 election. Specifically, prominent UNLA Acholi commanders, General Tito Okello, Colonel Basilio Olara Okello and Colonel Peter Oboma — had demonstrated no such UPC loyalties. As recounted by Otunnu (2017, 58):

> Tito Okello asked some high-ranking Acholi military offcers not to get entangled in the campaigns because the UNLA did not fight for a particular political party. This message was restricted to high-ranking Acholi offcers because Tito Okello did not want Obote to mistake it to mean opposition to the UPC. Basilio and Oboma, for their part, publicly challenged the claim made by the UPC that the UNLA was a UPC army. The two senior UNLA officers were also strong members of the DP. Basilio, for example, also declared at public rallies in Kampala, including at Kamwokya, Bukoto, Ntinda and Kibuye, that Ugandans should disregard the erroneous claim by the UPC that the UNLA was its army. Basilio's outspokenness during this period compelled the UPC supporters in the government to facilitate his transfer from the sensitive Central Brigade (Buganda) to the Northern Brigade (Gulu).[37]

Obote found himself in a military situation that bore uncomfortable resemblance to that of his first regime. Under Obote I, Amin's enthusiastic recruitment of his West Niler coethnics had placed Obote's Langi on the back foot, ultimately allowing Amin sufficient military support to advance his 1971 coup. Acholi under Obote II

37. The Central Brigade was located some 40 miles from Kampala. The Northern Brigade was located 200 miles from Kampala. The "sensitivity" of a command post was largely a function of its perceived coup-threat.

had stepped into the shoes formerly filled by West Nilers under Obote I. Obote's political, if not physical survival, again turned on the support of non-coethnics in the army whose political loyalties seemed far from ironclad. Obote was, understandably, acutely sensitive to the possibility of an Acholi coup. Additionally cementing Obote's paranoia, two plots on Obote's life — Kitgum, 1981 and Gulu Road 1982[38] — were rumored to be backed by Acholi in the armed forces (Minority Rights Group 1984, 8). Finally, on Christmas Eve 1982, the aforementioned Acholi commander, Colonel Oboma, and a small coterie of defecting UNLA soldiers, marched on Kampala with the intent of overthrowing the government. While they were intercepted and executed by UNLA loyalists, the abortive coup signaled the beginning of the end of the Acholi-Langi alliance. The alliance had, from the start, been cemented by convenience and opposition to Amin, rather than through any robust body of institutional controls or normative consensus. The Acholi viewed the summary execution of the Acholi officers, who had not resisted arrest, as a prelude to broader intramilitary attacks on the Acholi.[39] For his part, Obote, once-bitten in 1971, could not suffer these portents lightly.

As a result, Obote, reprising the actions taken in his original intramilitary stand-off with Amin, undertook extensive efforts to coup-proof the UNLA. To this end, he called his old security instruments to hand. First, Obote established a personal intelligence service, the National Security Agency (NASA). While nominally a new organization, NASA was, I argue, merely the resurrected GSU. Several pieces of evidence corroborate this characterization. NASA and the GSU exhibited considerable continuity in personnel. NASA's founding recruits were largely former GSU men, who

38. Both in Acholiland.

39. See Otunnu (2017, 77-78) for an account of the entire abortive coup plot and its effect in unwinding the Acholi-Langi alliance.

reinstalled the fundamental organizational character of the agency (Byrnes 1992, 229; Interview NRA cadre, 2023). When comparing the higher ranks of NASA, one observes additional continuities with the GSU. The NASA Director-General, Kwasenda Dddumba, was an old GSU operative from the 1960s. Chris Rwakasisi (Minister of State and Head of NASA), is named in the memoirs of GSU head Akena Adoko, as a GSU operative (Adoko 1983, 88). Further, in addition to retreading the original demographic makeup of the GSU, both in ethnic makeup and specific personnel, NASA also drew on familial loyalty ties. Closely corresponding to the model of the earlier GSU, "NASA was staffed with [Obote's] close associates and family members at its head" (Agaba 2009, 49). Obote, having lost the original GSU head (his cousin, Akena Adoko) to exile, once again relied on familial loyalty, making another cousin, Nathan Engena, NASA Deputy Director. Heavily staffed with Obote loyalists and Langi coethnics, NASA fulfilled GSU's old brief: spying on the regular army. Additionally, Obote, once again stoking military fears of creating a "rival army" in tasking NASA with increasingly widening counterinsurgency responsibilities. Counterinsurgency operations Luwero Triangle (the hotbed of Souther based insurgency), had been turned over almost entirely to NASA by 1984 (Nasong'o 2016, 47). Finally, NASA was a last-second appellation. Obote's original name for the agency was, as in 1971, the GSU (Kalyegira 2005). As corroborated by former NASA operative Tony Masaba, Obote, changed the name to NASA "because the GS had a bad reputation and people were scared of the letters "GS"" (New African January 1986, 20). The change-of-name vindicates the theoretical logic of state resurrection — cognizant of the reputational baggage that saddles resurrected institutions, Obote sought to distance himself from the past through organizational renaming. The "new" NASA was the GSU, quite literally in all but name. Despite the nominal changes, the GSU was never transformed

qualitatively (Kisembo 2020, 162). [40]

NASA, as the rechristened GSU, exhibited similar failings to its predecessor. NASA's mere existence alienated and antagonized the regular armed forces (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 161). NASA's brief — spying on the army — further aroused military anger (Otunnu 2017, 98). The biography of one UNLA veteran offers a window into UNLA-military relations. Engur (2013, 122) characterizes NASA as "the most hated and despised security organization in Uganda" and claims that in the eyes of the military, working for NASA was "tantamount to signing your own death warrant". The UNLA "despised NASA so much there was no interaction between the two security apparatus" (Engur 2013, 122). As in 1971, ethnic rivalries ran alongside institutional ones, with NASA being construed as an anti-Acholi organization (Wasonga 2015, 47). Altogether NASA provoked what it sought to prevent — further military indiscipline and redoubled efforts to assert military autonomy from Obote.

To further counterbalance Acholi influence in the army, Obote's also resurrected his old Special Force paramilitary unit, heavily stacked with Langi coethnics. As in 1971, the regular army recognized the Special Force as an institutional and ethnic rival. Unlike NASA, the Special Force was an undisguised paramilitary outfit: "the second time around there were no pretensions about the para-military nature of the latter, from its military combat-style uniforms, to the counter-insurgency training methods (disseminated primarily by North Korean instructors), to the weaponry it used (semi-automatic AK-47 and G-3 sub-machine rifles and pistols)" (Oloka-Onyango 1990, 30). Immediately, the regular army and the Special Force butted heads. Per Minority Rights group (1984, 8), "the very first time that the Special

40. Accordingly, Minority Rights Group (1984, 15), in characterizing the intelligence structure of the regime, observed "the General Service Unit of the 60s has been resurrected", while Rubongaya (2007, 55) identifies, the "reinstitutionalization of the General Service Unit".

Force appeared in Kampala they were attacked by the army" and "on another occasion the Langi Special Force commander was deliberately run over by an army truck". By 1983 Obote's coercive apparatus was literally at war with itself.

Finally, Obote also intervened within the UNLA itself. Declassified CIA documentation reveals a laundry-list of Acholi military grievances due to Obote's interventions:

> The claim Langi officers are promoted rapidly to the detriment of Acholi military careers. The most powerful positions are held by Langi officers... Acholi members of the military assert they are sent to the front to fight against insurgents from the National Resistance Army, while Langi enlisted personnel are given noncombat positions...Acholi officers favor negotiated with rebel leader Museveni in order to end the insurgency... they believe president Obote and Langi officers oppose negotiations and our prolonging the fighting at the Acholi's expense[41]...the Acholis are convinced Obote has forgotten that the Army has been his main source of support since he assumed office in 1980...Lastly, Acholis believe they suffered greatest under Amin and are now entitled to some sort of restitution" (CREST No. CIA-RDP87T00289R000100340001-1).

While these coup-proofing efforts successfully put distance between Obote and his Acholi troops, they did so at great cost. The competing and adversarial relations between NASA and regular military intelligence, as well as the Special Force and UNLA handicapped counterinsurgency. Each security agency "acted independent of the others and each was responsible to a different authority..resulting in overlapping operations and competitive counter-insurgency activities" (Ngoga 1997, 260). Additionally, the sending of potentially threatening Acholi units to remote postings

41. It is of note that Obote refused categorically to integrate former Amin soldiers and/or Museveni soldiers into the UNLA, despite the obvious benefit to ending the insurgency. Obote, from the start, found himself on the horns of a "coup-civil war trap" (Roessler 2011; Roessler 2016). As discussed in the theory, the proximity of non-coethnic rivals, i.e. incorporation into the state army, raises the possibility of a military coup. Obote's shaky combatant controls left him vulnerable to both newly-integrated recruits, as well as loyalists potentially disgruntled by the military integration of rivals (White 2019). The non-integration of ex-Amin forces was, in its logic, identical to the early decision to purge FRONASA forces from the army.

increased their autonomy from the central administration. In areas such as West Nile this resulted in mutiny, looting and mass violence, as these understocked faraway units preyed upon civilians for resources. NASA, which selected for loyalty rather than competence, was also characterized by "poor training and a high level of indiscipline" resulting in further heavy-handed counterinsurgency (Tindigarukayo 1988, 617). Finally, the resurrection of Obote's old coup-proofing instruments breathed new life into old ethnic fears of "Lango domination".

Bureaucratic Reconstruction

Additionally, Obote struggled to repair the national bureaucracy. In part, this was a knock-on effect of weak combatant controls. Without effective disciplinary, intelligence or ideological wings in the army, Obote was instead forced to allocate enormous budgetary outlays to the army in the hopes of purchasing support (Kasozi 1994, 159). The defense budget represented between 16 and 25 percent of total government expenditure between 1981 and 1984 (Republic of Uganda 1983a and 1983b). The scale of this expenditure siphoned away valuable resources from civilian welfare and social services. Additionally, UNLA abuses further hampered civil service reconstruction efforts, as highly skilled populations fled the country rather than risk death.

Further, Obote had little in the way of wartime governance infrastructure that could be expanded in the postwar era. As a result, he was forced to outsource much of the welfare functions of the state to external sources, inviting groups such as the International Committee of the red Cross (ICRC) to help resettle displaced populations. However, having external groups operating inside Uganda allowed them to bear witness to UNLA abuses, profoundly embarrassing the Obote regime. Even more costly was UNLA violence against these organizations themselves. The Ombaci Catholic mission, which "supplement[ed] a number of social services - educational,

medical, and others - not provided by government", was attacked in 1981 by UNLA soldiers (Kasozi 1994, 159). The cirumstances of the Ombaci massacre provide a bloody, object lesson in the UNLA's deficiencies. The UNLA units responsible were the underpaid, poorly supplied, and remotely located in West Nile. These units were in a state of outright mutiny in 1981, having unsuccessfully attempted to blackmail the government into supply additional food, salaries and equipment. In this context, these units then received faulty information that the mission had previously treated wounded guerrillas. The West Nile units massacred the social workers and civilian refugees at the facility, looting the bodies of their possessions. The weakness of Obote's civil infrastructure and combatant controls, wholly overwhelmed by military expansion, exposed external aid workers and international audiences to violence. As a result, international support continued to be withdrawn from the regime, leaving state social services even more conspicuously absent.

Finally, as Obote's administrative staff, such as it was, could not be drawn from a pool of experienced and dependable wartime administrators, two other populations became the bureaucratic talent pool: the resurrected UPC, and the military. The former proved incapable due to its factionalism and further decay in the intervening years since 1971. While in 1971, Obote possessed some control over the UPC, the youths hastily-recruited to compensate for the wave of UPC defections during the election, shattered central control. Many UPC members had, like the UNLA, recruited personal gangs (Karugire 1985, 76). As a result, "many party functionaries acted independently of the UPC secretariat" (Otunnu 146), engaging in violent and rent-seeking behavior within their local administrative fiefdoms. The UPC was "too weak internally to perform the functions of mass mobilization, interest aggregation, and provi[sion] of viable policy alternatives" (Rubongoya 2007, 55) Nevertheless, in the hopes of purchasing loyalty, Obote dished out "lucrative government contracts and

tenders...to northern tribesmen and close associates", including control of the coffee and cotton export businesses (Okiror 2018, 192). The selection of loyalty over competence, while helping to shore up the regime, further degraded the administrative state.

To compensate for the UPC's loss of experienced administrative staff, Obote would attempt to fill the holes with *Kikosi Maalum* military veterans, unwittingly reprising the very strategy that had damaged the Amin regime's administrative ability. Senior military commanders took advantage of plum civil service positions to plunder the state. Military Chief of Staff David Oyite-Ojok for example, appointed chairman of the Coffee Marketing Board in 1981, was able to embezzle substantial wealth.[42] While this helped satiate the UNLA's endless appetite for state resources, it further deprived Obote of both hard budgetary resources, and the reputation for welfare provision that had been a plank of his electoral campaign. Ultimately, the Obote II regime could not compensate for the administrative skill and professionalism. The ensuing state civil service, drawn from a shallow pool of unskilled administrators, was ineffective in resolving postwar economic crisis. In turn, southern insurgents capitalized on state administrative weakness, making civilian governance, anti-corruption and economic reform and integral part of their political platform, winning increasing domestic civilian support.

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42. The Coffee Marketing Board, at that time, earned over 90% of Uganda's foreign exchange. See Minority Rights Group (1984, 17) and Reid (2017, 77).

4.2.6 Obote II Part II: State Failure and Regime Breakdown, 1983-1985

UNLA Chief of Staff David Oyite-Ojok's death in a December 1983 helicopter crash is frequently cited as a turning point in the Ugandan Bush War.[43] Despite his deserved reputation as a "womanizer" "looter" and "embezzler" Oyite-Ojok was also by all accounts widely respected, well-liked by both the Langi and Acholi elements of the UNLA, as well as Obote's most trusted officer. Decalo (2019, 118) refers to Oyite-Ojok as "the army's most competent officer and veritable ethnic bridge-builder". Oyite-Ojok's death was a major blow to Obote. With the linchpin of the Acholi-Langi alliance removed, the question of Oyite-Ojok's succession was brought into play, with both Acholi and Langi officers angling for the position.

Following Oyite-Ojok's death, Obote left the Military Chief of Staff position unfilled for *8 months* (Bwengye 1985, 322; Karugire 1988, 80) while fighting multiple insurgencies. Obote was paralyzed by the "coup-civil war trap" (Roessler 2016), recognizing that promoting a senior Acholi would improve military performance but at the cost of positioning the Acholi to stage a coup (Kiyaga-Nsubuga 196). UNLA disunity and Obote's paralysis dithering gave the insurgents a new lease on life. Despite the UNLA's altogether lackluster military performance, the main insurgencies were in a militarily difficult position at the end of 1983, and "had the government and national army been strong and united at this time it is likely the guerrilla opposition could have been stamped out" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 162). However, 1984 saw the

43. Ingham (1994, 198) writes that "the loss to Obote was incalculable...[Oyite-Ojok] was utterly loyal to Obote's government, but above all he was an outstandingly able commander in an army which was woefully deficient in well-trained senior officers, and he had won and maintained the respect of all the soldiers, no matter to which ethnic group they belonged. To replace him was impossible".

UNLA reach a new nadir of counterinsurgency performance. The NRA, which had throughout the war exploited UNLA barracks and troops as a source of weaponry, seized gladly upon this opportunity. The February 1984 raid on the UNLA barracks at Masindi, which supplied the NRA with the bulk of its weaponry in the tail end of the war, was made possible by the UNLA's declining competence. As recounted by McLauchlin (2008 ,23), " the garrison had been prepared for a raid for month, the garrison had been prepared for a raid for over a month, but apparently "lost interest" over time; the commander was absent, his deputy drunk (AC 11 April 1984, 7)". By 1984, UNLA effectiveness against the UNLA had declined to such a point that UNLA commanders had ceased issuing UNLA soldiers in the bush the correct quota of ammunition — lest it be captured by the NRA (New African July 1985, 16).

Obote's ultimate decision to promote a relatively junior Langi officer, Smith Opon Acak, over senior Acholi officers, inflamed Acholi fears that Obote was intent on the elimination of Acholi from the army. These fears were not assuaged by the violence unfolding between Acholi and Langi in the armed forces in the run-up to Opon-Acak's appointment. In the 8 months since Oyite-Ojok's death, scores of Langi and Acholi soldiers had been killed at the others' hand. Opon-Acak himself proceeded to pour salt in this wound, dispatching Langi Special Force soldiers to take Acholi troops from the Magamaga barracks at Jinja to the fighting front (Akol 2006, 250) in June. These acts — Opon-Acak's promotion, being placed under the *de facto* commander of their rivals in the Special Force, and being shipped off the to fighting front — were a perfect storm of Acholi fears. The aftermath was bloody. The barrackS mutinied, and a bloody shootout ensued. Obote also began to arrest prominent Acholi politians in Kampala. To forestall armed resistance to the arrests, Opon-Acak was ordered to confiscate armoured vehicles from the nearby Mbuya garrison, and eliminate its Acholi commander. Further, Basilio Okello, who Obote apparently perceived as the main

threat to him (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 164), was issued orders to return from Gulu to Kampala.

Matters came to a head in early July. Tito Okello, the Acholi Chief of the Defense Forces, ordered Chief of Staff Opon-Acak, to return the armoured vehicles. Opon-Acak's refusal kicked off a war between the rival camps. Acholi forces including Tito Okello's, facing ambush and murder in Kamapla, retreated to Basilio Okello's headquarters in Gulu. Finally, "as if determined to replay the January 1971 events" (Byrnes 1992, 35), Obote issued orders for the dismissal and arrest of Bazilio Okello. With both sides possessing mutual credible fears of elimination, the only question remaining was who would strike first. As in 1971, the 1985 coup was outran the imminent purge. Bazilio Okello mobilized his Northern forces to march on Kampala, toppling Obote on 27 July 1985.

4.2.7 Case Discussion and Theoretical Stocktaking

The trajectory of the Obote II regime closely corresponds to theoretical expectations. The trajectory of the Obote II regime indicates the fundamental irony, and inadequacy of state resurrection. As observed by Kiyaga-Nsubuga, (1995, 201) "the irony is that it was Obote's second regime, more than any other, which should have been better placed to avoid the above pitfalls...That Obote's second regime responded to domestic political challenge in exactly the same way as his first indicates clearly that he and his advisers had not learned much from their previous experience". Obote's resurrection of his prewar instruments resulted in regime déjà vu, as institutional pathologies migrated from the first regime to the second. Party fragmentation, military-counterweight rivalry, and credible fears of ethnic coup-proofing conspired to destroy Obote II as it had Obote I.

While the coup seems to upend the expectations of the theory, that coup-proofing should reduce coup-vulnerability, while increasing vulnerability to insurgencies, the 1985 coup is the exception that proves the rule. Omara-Otunnu (1987, 164) observes that "in the history of military coups world-wide, this coup was remarkable in that it was organized and prosecuted from a peripheral region of the country". Bazilio was, as mentioned, stationed in Gulu due to his pro-DP actions during the election. Removing Bazilio to such a remote command seemingly placed a coup out of reach. Indeed, Obote had successfully thrown up serious obstacles to coup success in terms of distance and time: the coup attempt took 3 days and involved a march of some 200 miles — virtually unheard of for a military coup.

In another sense however, the coup is entirely compatible with the premises of the theory. Obote reprised, in almost exact fashion, the moves that precipitated the original coup that overthrew him in 1971. Earlier in July, the NASA intelligence apparatus gained foreknowledge of a imminent coup (Omara-Otunnu 1987, 162) and yet somehow, failed to avert it. Intelligence bungling had, once again, squandered the opportunity for first-mover advantage. The UPC party machinery was, as noted by Hanson in 1971, yet again incapable of mobilizing resistance to a coup that took 3 days to reach completion. The 1980 coup was "a replay of the 1971 coup" (Mapolu 1985, 1473). In turn, the Okello regime was overthrown in short order by Yoweri Museveni's NRA insurgency some six months later. The UNLA "with no political or ideological cause to fight for...disintegrated as Amin's army had done" (Kasozi 1994, 175).

While the fallout from Oyite-Ojok's death is often cited as the proximate cause of Obote's overthrow, in reality it merely brought to the surface the long-running institutional weaknesses within the UNLA originating even before the 1979 war. From the start, Obote's pursued a conventional military strategy, hoping that a rapid knockout

blow would vault him back to power in Kampala. The focus on speed, and men-under-arms, came at the expense of cultivating civilian social ties (wartime governance), and imposing control over combatants. Obote's short term calculations were correct — the UNLA did in fact become master of Kampala. However, this strategy proved shortsighted, as a lack of wartime institutions kneecapped his postwar regime. The absence of an extensive administrative infrastructure forced Obote to rely almost entirely on military force. In turn, the absence of combatant controls made Obote's position precarious, with Obote dependent on a highly autonomous army born without structures to enforce ideological conformity, cross-ethnic cohesion, or discipline. This was, in fact, a recurring assessment made by Obote himself. Obote frequently complained he "inherited" the army that was largely built under the oversight of military commanders during the 1979 war. In a 1983 interview, Obote claimed that the "trying circumstances" of the UNLA's rapid recruitment were to blame for violence. Finally, in a 2005 interview, Obote stated: "I consider control of the military as being my major failure" (The Monitor 16 April 2005). His resulting attempts to assert control through bribery and coup-proofing further degraded state power and frustrated counterinsurgency. Ultimately, the downstream effects of having a paper-thin wartime institutional portfolio were regime fragility, unsuccessful postwar state reconstruction, and regime collapse.

4.3 Uganda 1981-present: NRA and the Yoweri Museveni Regime

In this section, I retrace the trajectory of the National Resistance Army (NRA) in Uganda.[44] I show that, unlike the UNLA, the NRA hewed closely to the model of "protracted popular warfare", opting to building wartime institutions rather than focus on simply seizing power. I show that the NRA both emulated the organizational model of a proximate insurgency (Mozambique's FRELIMO) as well as drew corrective organizational lessons from a failed prior insurgent experience (FRONASA). Both gave the NRA confidence in the virtues of wartime institution-building.

True to the theory, NRA wartime experiences and institution-building reads like a dress rehearsal in state formation. As insurgents, NRA responded to the challenges posed by military and territorial enlargement, by investing in wartime institutions. Wartime familiarity with the tasks of controlling combatants and governing civilians gave the victorious rebels a "flying start" into the statebuilding process. In the postwar era very same wartime institutions, were simply scaled up to perform the similar tasks of postwar military expansion and bureaucracy-building on a national scale. The victorious NRA maintain its initial institutional goals, roles and structures, while expanding the institutional framework to capture national territory and populations. Organizational continuity stabilized the NRA in the face of postwar demographic and territorial expansion.

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44. The NRA is also known as the National Resistance Movement (NRM), or the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M). For the sake of consistency, I use NRA throughout, excepting quotations that use the alternative nomenclature.

4.3.1 NRA: Organizational Profile

Origins, Leadership Philosophy, and Organizational Design

On February 6 1981, Yoweri Museveni launched the NRA "Bush War" against the Obote regime.The newborn insurgency, then-named the People's Resistance Army (PRA), seemed badly outmatched to start. In 1981, Obote was the possessor of powerful international cachet in the form of regional support, Western aid and international military trainers. Even Obote's army, though an organizational shambles, was nevertheless ten-thousands strong and capable of using scorched earth violence on a massive scale. By contrast, the newborn PRA was a diplomatic orphan. Nyerere's unilateral abrogation of OAU antibelligerency norms in 1979 was largely a one-off.[45] Further, the NRA (PRA) insurgency was based in the Buganda heartland — a scant 100 miles from Kampala, but far removed from Uganda's borders. It was therefore unable to benefit from the crossborder support, exile camps, and territorial refuge that had nourished the West Nile insurgencies. On the military side of things, Museveni's initial reservoir of military manpower — FRONASA — had been dispersed by the Obote government, and could only be reassembled piecemeal throughout the course of the conflict (Ngoga 1998, 222). The 1981 NRA (PRA) was skeleton crew of 40 men, armed with 27 guns. With the intention of reducing its yawning military deficit, the NRA (PRA) fired the first shot of the war in a raid on the Kabamba military barracks. The raid failed, resulting in the desertion of seven members. Following the raid, the bruised NRA (PRA) withdrew into hiding.

Materially weak, the infant NRA (PRA) found itself very quickly at a crossroads.

45. Indeed, in Museveni's 1986 maiden speech to the OAU, he bitterly chastised his fellow heads of state for their "betrayal, that most of Africa kept silent while tyrants killed [Ugandans]" (Fisher 2020, 77)

With now 33 men and 27 guns, it was barely a conspiracy, much less an army. However, it faced two attractive potential means of offsetting its material shortfalls. The first was to merge with an existing group. Andrew Kayiira's Uganda Freedom Alliance (UFA), a Baganda outfit, had evident appeal. The UFA was a rival group in the region, and possessed unimpeachable bona fides as an ethnically Baganda organization. Despite being likewise based in Uganda, the initial core of Museveni's PRA was Banyankole-Banyrwanda. This ethnic discrepancy posed a potential barrier to recruitment in the the region. An alliance with the UFA could kill three birds with one stone: converting a rival to an ally, supplementing the manpower shortfalls with a contingent of experienced insurgents and finally, opening the door to further Baganda recruitment. Another potential merging partner, the Ugandan National Rescue Front (UNRF), offered the NRA a larger West Nile contingent. However, the most important prize that the mergers offered was state support. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, a patron of both movements, offered to extend support arms to the NRA (PRA), provided it consented to a merger.

Second, the NRA (PRA) could have made a virtue of necessity by opting for a "focoist" strategy of insurgency. While its modest military capabilities ruled out frontal confrontation, it also provided the NRA (PRA) with the advantage of discretion. Easily concealed and proximate to Kampala, the NRA (PRA) could have used small cells of operatives to destabilize the very seat of political power through bombings and urban terror. Indeed, this very strategy,"through spectacular attacks, to cause chaos in the city and then capture power in the ensuing chaos", was the *modus operandi* of Kayiira's UFA (Amaza 1998, 67).

However, despite the advantages provided by these options, the infant NRA (PRA) spurned both. Instead, despite its profound initial weaknesses, the NRA (PRA) consciously opted to subject itself to considerable organizational hardships — organizing

itself around the strategy of "protracted people's war". NRA veteran Amaza (1998, 28), describes the strategy as:

> ...rel[ying] on educating the masses about actual needs and reasons for resisting the regime in power, organizing and training the masses to dismantle it through their own efforts, and replacing that regime with structures moulded during the course of the struggle by the masses.

Such a strategy made onerous institution-building demands of the NRA (PRA). It obliged the NRA (PRA) to rely heavily on a domestic mass base for support and soldiers, to supply this popular army with political education, and to develop popular administrative structures as an instrument of both wartime and postwar governance. The NRA (PRA)'s farsightedness and willingness to undertake these costs seemed to fly in the face of its initial weaknesses. Weakness ought to have foreshortened the NRA (PRA)'s time horizons, incentivizing short-term actions to boost its modest military powers. Relying on external support, merging with preexisting rebel infrastructure, or forgoing institution-building would have been easier paths.

Why did the NRA (PRA) choose the costlier path of popular (and uphill) struggle? To appreciate the NRA (PRA)'s choices requires delving into the organizational philosophy of its leader and chief architect — Yoweri Museveni. Extensive biographical literature and conflict histories from Ugandan authors, including those produced by NRA (PRA) veterans and Museveni himself, permit a retracing of Museveni's thinking.[46] Two experiences stand out as having formative influence over Museveni's organizational decision-making in 1981: his career as a student-radical at Dar es Salaam University, and the rocky organizational trajectory of his previous FRONASA insurgency.

46. See Amaza 1998; Kyaligonza 2006; Kutesa 2006; Museveni 1986; Museveni 1990; Museveni 1992 [2000]; Museveni 1997; Ngoga 1998; Ngoga 1998

With respect to the first, Dar-es-Salaam in the late 60's and 70's was the ideological epicenter of radical and revolutionary thinking on the African continent.[47] In this crucible of student, liberation, and Pan-African activism, Museveni was exposed to a raft of revolutionary and classical guerrilla theorists: contacts with Walter Rodney (then lecturing at Dar), Stokely Carmichael, and FRELIMO leader Eduardo Mondlane, helped introduce Museveni to theories of African political liberation (Ngoga 1997, 195). The FRELIMO contacts were perhaps the most important, insofar as it provided Museveni with an organizational template through which liberation could be pursued. Museveni's contacts with FRELIMO proved, in his words, "invaluable, both in our own education and in our future struggles" (Ngoga 1997, 198). In December of 1968, Museveni organized a trip for himself and seven students, to visit FRELIMO liberated zones. In these zones, Museveni got his first taste of rebel organization, not only witnessing FRELIMO's "state-within-a-state", but also receiving training from FRELIMO cadres. Museveni was greatly impressed by FRELIMO. His writings on FRELIMO give special commendation to the collegiality and discipline among FRELIMO combatants, as well as the good relationship between FRELIMO combatants and civilians. Both, in Museveni's estimation, were born from a deliberately cultivated combatant discipline, in which combatants were educated to respect civilian immunity and property rights (Ngoga 1998, 198; Bell 2016). This organizational principle was, quite literally, textbook—it was FRELIMO's implementation of the second of Mao Zedong's "Three Rules of Discipline": "Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses." The NRA would, in its 1982 code of conduct, adapt near-identical principles. In addition to the foundational impression left by FRELIMO's combatant controls, FRELIMO would also help function as the organi-

47. Indeed, the very decision to attend Dar, rather than the prestigious (and more proximate) Makerere University is suggestive of Museveni's early thinking.

zational template of the NRA's popular wartime governance institutions. Museveni (1997, 30), recalls: "We found that FRELIMO had evolved a good system of organizing the population in branches and neighbourhood committees similar to those we were later to introduce in Uganda as Resistance Councils and Committees". Organizationally, NRA (PRA) wartime governance was very much the lineal descendant of FRELIMO.

However, the NRA was not simply a carbon-copy of FRELIMO. Rather, the NRA had another organizational parent — Museveni's FRONASA. While FRELIMO provided a successful model of guerrilla warfare, Museveni's FRONASA disappointments provided harder, more proximate, but no less informative, lessons. FRONASA's debut, the initial 1972 invasion, ended in fighter defection, detection, and failure. Undisciplined, unsupervised fighters and uncoordinated strategy doomed FRONASA (Ngoga 1997, 51-52). FRONASA's next stint, its "success" under the UNLA umbrella during 1979 invasion, was a Pyrrhic victory. Museveni's autobiography provides an organizational postmortem of FRONASA failures. Museveni observed that FRONASA had in part been undermined by a lack of self-sufficiency. Having been chain-ganged to its larger Tanzanian patron and *Kikosi Maalum* partner, Museveni was unable to autonomously direct FRONASA activities according to his own organizational model. In his squabbles with Obote regarding the choice of correct strategy throughout the 70s, Museveni's preference for guerrilla warfare persistently lost out to Obote's conventional approach.[48] Additionally, Museveni observed the danger in inherent in attempting to lead an insurgency from exile viz. the autonomy of fighting forces in the field and the resulting erosion of political control. The FRONASA fighters that in-

48. In relitigating the 1971 argument, Museveni (1997, 53) writes "The best would have been a guerrilla war against Amin, tiring him first and only going on to the conventional stage when we had marshalled enough forces in materials and men and experience to overwhelm him".

vaded Uganda in 1972, untethered from the leadership structures in Tanzania, lacked adequate supervision, discipline and political education. Finally, reliance on external partners throughout the 70s had also introduced moral hazards. UNLA's ability to survive without cultivating domestic civilian ties, and the negligence towards wartime administration, had produced terrible downstream costs.

In this light we can reappraise the NRA (PRA)'s repudiation of Gaddafi-backed merger with the UFA and UNRF, as well as its forswearing of urban terror. With respect to the former, while the NRA (PRA) had no objection to mergers per se, Gaddafi's backing and the UFA's tactics made such alliances impossible. Museveni's Tanzanian experience made Museveni greatly wary of ceding autonomy to a powerful foreign patron. Further, Gaddafi, who had long held grand aspirations to continental conquest, would likely have sought to use the merged force as a mere foreign policy instrument, to the detriment of local support.[49] Finally, Gaddafi's sympathies largely lay with the Muslim UNRF, giving it the 'swing vote' in organizational decisionmaking. Any merger would have risked the NRA being swallowed up by a more powerful coalition partner, as it had in 1979. Under these circumstances and once-bitten in FRONASA, Museveni decided against the merger.

The NRA organizational philosophy also ruled out both the UFA alliance, and the use of terroristic urban violence. Tactics of urban terror were diametrically opposed, in both goal and organization, to protracted popular warfare. The demands of urban concealment in Kampala imposed a low ceiling on potential recruitment, while people's war required a large mass base which could only be constructed in the peasant

49. Gaddafi's backing of Goukouni Oueddi's Chadian insurgency in the late 1970s provided clear illustration of this dangers. While Goukouni was able to parlay Libyan support into victory, his regime was badly de-legimized as a mere catspaw of foreign powers. The regime's pro-Libya affiliation as well as pro-Libya policies supplied mobilizing grievances, leading to its overthrow after 4 years at the hands of another insurgent group.

countryside. Additionally, Kayiira's urban terror (which made mince of the civilian immunity commitment that was central to FRELIMO) placed virtually no emphasis on the need for governance or combatant control. The UNRF, similarly, did not have a code of discipline, and used force to extract resources from West Nile civlians (Kasozi 1994, 169). Having learned from its 1979 experience within the UNLA umbrella, the 1981 NRA understood that these colliding organizational philosophies could not coexist within a single merged group.

As such, the NRA insurgent praxis would ultimately closely conform to the FRELIMO example, with care taken to avoid the FRONASA pitfalls. FRONASA supplied "painful but valuable" lessons. Museveni resolved to practice self-sufficiency, implement tight political control over fighters, and construct a "liberated zone" within which political education and social welfare would capture civilian support. Museveni opened the 1981 war with a clear organizational model in mind. Unlike his 1971 experiences, he would not let it be derailed by "convenient" mergers or beholdenness to external state patrons. The resulting insurgency would wage a "textbook people's war" (Cooper and Fontanellaz 2015, 44).

"A Textbook People's War"

While the strategic/organizational embrace of protracted popular war was in large part a matter of emulating FRELIMO and course-correcting after FRONASA, it was also calibrated to the particularities of 1981 Uganda (Amaza 1998, 23-28; Ngoga 1997, 223). Alternatives to guerrilla warfare were also considered and ruled out on practical grounds. For example, the option of attacking the capital directly, as in a putsch or coup, was complicated twice over. First, Tanzanian forces tasked with retraining the UNLA, had not yet completed withdrawing from Uganda. As Museveni argued "By trying to capture radio and take power in one day, we would be making a gift of

ourselves to the Tanzanians, since they had already shown themselves to be backers of Obote's dictatorship" (Amaza 1998, 28). Second, the ranks of FRONASA commanders within the UNLA had been heavily thinned by purges, arrest and defection. Those few FRONASA commanders that remained had been carefully stationed far from Kampala, to neutralize them as a potential coup threat. "How" wrote Museveni, "could pro-Museveni soldiers move from Moroto, Ladong on the Sudanese border and other remote areas to come and challenge Obote...in Kampala?" (quoted in Amaza 1998, 27). Indeed, the NRA proved prescient in this estimation. After two botched and abortive coup-attempts in February and March 1981, the UFA was in the sights of the UNLA. Under military pressure, the UFA, which had never sought to screen or socialize its soldiers, buckled under strain. These soldiers, with short time-horizons, no political organization and limited organizational dedication disintegrated by 1982 after modest UNLA offensive. The demise of the UFA seemed to vindicate NRA criticisms of the "putschist" organizational philosophy: it selected riff-raff, placed no emphasis on politicization, and focused heavily on the capital to the detriment of the organization.

On the other hand, Uganda was ripe for protracted popular rebellion. While the Obote regime held the high cards in terms of military and diplomatic muscle, it had also provided the NRA with ample means, motive and opportunity for rebellion. The arsenal of readily available weaponry left by Amin's fallen army, meant the the NRA could address its weapons deficit over the course of the war. The Ugandan state was weak in both reach and grasp — Obote's Northern-based government could not exercise firm authority far beyond Kampala, especially into areas populated by Southern tribes. The NRA took advantage of this established its base area in the Luwero Triangle, a mere 100 miles from Kampala and populated heavily by Baganda. Finally, the dented legitimacy of the UPC after the rigged elections and its historical

rivalry with the Baganda southerners provided the NRA with a ready-made mass base of potential recruits. The large pool of opponents and the poor reach of the Obote regime meant the the NRA had the necessary time to make weapons of the weak — mobilizing and politicizing a large domestic mass into rebellion.

It is here that the NRA proved itself to be a practical organization. In retracing Museveni's thought and strategic logic it is tempting to categorize the NRA as being structured and motivated by revolutionary ideology. The NRA's long-time horizons, emphasis on political organization as the prerequisite of liberation, and willingness to construct an institutional portfolio far in excess of what would be required for a "specialist in violence", suggest revolutionary ideological rationales motivated NRA behavior. However, I argue that any reading of the NRA as revolutionary ought to be tempered for three reasons.

First, as mentioned, the choice of guerrilla warfare also reflected a practical assessment of the NRA's relative strengths and weakness. The Obote regime, in Museveni's estimation, could not be successfully destroyed through alternative strategies. The virtues of institution-building were not considered ideological ends-in-themselves, but a means of advancing the NRA's military and post-victory goals. Second, despite the stint at Dar, Museveni's writings frequently construed political "liberation" in relatively thin terms. Recognizing that the "evils of tribalism" often derailed social cohesion, security and political order, Museveni's idea of liberation was closest to a broad nationalist populism. Expansive forms of social transformation, such as land redistribution and abolition of traditional chiefly structures, were not within the NRA remit. The NRA's "revolutionary repertoire", such as it was, skewed towards the lower end of the spectrum.[50] The NRA's "Ten Point Program", created during the Bush

50. On revolutionary repertoires see Stewart 2021.

War, distills the NRA's political goals into:

1. Democracy
2. Security
3. Consolidation of National security and elimination of all forms of sectarianism
4. Defending and consolidating National Independence
5. Building an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy
6. Restoration and improvement of social services and the rehabilitation of the war-ravaged areas
7. Elimination of corruption and misuse of power
8. Redressing errors that have resulted in the dislocation of sections of the population and improvement of others
9. Co-operation with other African countries in defending human and democratic rights of our brothers in other parts of Africa
10. Following an economic strategy of mixed economy

These goals, as noted by Thaler (2018) were a far cry from the maximalist transformative projects propounded by FRELIMO in Mozambique, or the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau. The NRA's imitation of its anticolonial guerrilla forebears took place primarily at the organizational, not the ideological level.

Finally, throughout the war, the NRA would further reduce its ideological radicalism as it expanded its recruitment base. Ideology was a casualty of strategy, with the NRA recognizing establishing the widest-possible wartime social base was integral to its postwar survival. It could not afford to turn away recruits on the ground of political difference. The NRA's actions to cultivate Baganda support, to which we now turn, illustrates this neatly.

On June 8 1981, Museveni's Popular Resistance Army (PRA), and Yusuf Lule's

Uganda Freedom Fighters (UFF), merged. It was a strange bedfellow partnership – the PRA was a left-of-center, ethnically Banyankole organization, while Lule's UFF was a conservative Baganda formation. Nevertheless, the UFF was an attractive coalition partner on practical groups. Lule, as a Baganda and former interim prime minister, offered the NRA support in two critical respects: garnering legitimacy among the Baganda, and a degree of international recognition. Additionally, as Lule was in exile, there was virtually no risk of bifurcated and confused decision-making at the top. Lule was little but a figurehead. With Museveni retaining sole operational control, the NRA was able to avoid the too-many-cooks problem visible in the UNLA. The NRA thereby sacrificed little in organizational cohesion, while gaining a much-needed influx of Baganda recruits.

As a result, the post-merger NRA bore a substantial resemblance to the UNLA in terms of its initial organizational and social structure. The merged NRA was a cross-ideological, and cross-ethnic alliance. The diversified social base of the NRA prompted Museveni (2000 [1988], 154) to write:

> In our movement you will find feudalists, capitalists and socialists; but we are insisting that one line of thought must lead all those tendencies. If you are a feudalist or a capitalist or a socialist, you must at least accept to be a nationalist. Even if you have feudalist tendencies, you must subject them to our nationalist aspirations.

The NRA, to accommodate its new pluralism, shed whatever youthful Marxist had initially existed within the organization. The left-wing ideological tint of the NRA would only continue to fade during the war. Museveni became "deradicalised by armed struggle...less and less of a socialist" (Mazrui 2000, 128). A vague nationalism was better suited to the task of cross-cleavage aggregation that the NRA now faced.

Indeed, this task proved to be the NRA's chief organizational challenge. Museveni had to reckon with the potentially combustible combination of rapid expansion and

intra-organizational ethnic cleavages. The merger with the PRA, progressive reabsorption of FRONASA veterans, and steady recruitments had produced an explosion in NRA manpower. The skeleton crew of 40 men that attacked the Kabamba barracks in Febrary had expanded fivefold by May (Ngoga 1997, 243). The newly 200-strong NRA also suffered ethnic imbalances. While Museveni's original core was Banyankole, the UFF merger and recruitment in Luwero had introduced a large Baganda contingent. Accordingly, this led led to an initially lopsided representation of Banyankole in the NRA officer corps versus a majority Baganda rank-and-file. Additionally, Obote's broad-gauge repression led Southerners from diverse social and professional backgrounds to shelter under the NRA skirts. Class cleavages joined racial cleavages as another axis of organizational division.

These intra-organizational cleavages, if not smothered, held the potential for outright organizational splits. On the ethnic side of things, Baganda chafed at their underrepresentation within the NRA officer corps, even though these recruits by and large lacked any military experience. For his part, Obote preyed on racial and class differences to undermine the cohesion of the insurgency from within. Obote's attempts to frame the NRA as ethnic "foreigners"[51] engaging in the exploitation of the Baganda had some immediate successes – some dissident combatants defected to Andrew Kayiira's rival Uganda Freedom Army (UFA), which explicitly framed itself as a Baganda army. Finally the summary execution of a young Baganda soldier for a relatively minor misconduct (going to Kampala without permission) ordered by Banyankole commander Sam Magara in late 1981, brought ethnic tensions near the

51. The "foreigner" aspersion was given additional weight by the heavy presence of Tutsi Banyarwanda refugees in the NRA. Banyarwanda made up an estimated 1/4 of the NRA forces throughout the war. Further, Museveni's Hima people are close ethnolinguistic cousins of the Banyarwanda. Obote additionally sought to leverage anti-refugee sentiment against Museveni in identifying him as a "Tutsi".

boiling point (Kutesa 2006, 188).

Diverse class and professional identities also challenged early NRA cohesion. Makerere University-educated recruits who "tended to regard themselves as the 'natural leaders' of the struggle" sought to be exempted from the more grueling aspects of fighting (Ngoga 1997, 250). There was, according to NRA/M veteran Ondoga Ari Amaza, (1998, 31) "the danger of petit bourgeois elements with very little revolutionary experience being propelled into leadership positions". On the military side of things, FRONASA veterans and defectors from the Ugandan Army chafed at political oversight, regarding themselves "as military professionals and as such, better qualified than the civilians" (Ngoga 1997, 101).

At the start of 1982, the NRA had reached a point of organizational crisis. The initial PRA had been sufficiently small and ethnically coherent that *ad hoc* means had sufficed to maintain control over combatants. However, the rising size and diversity exposed the weakness of these *ad hoc* methods. With political education and disciplinary structures to rein in commander behavior, episodes like the Magara incident threatened to set off an internal ethnic security dilemma. Military-politico cleavages, unless addressed, threatened to empower an autonomous military commander class within the organization. Finally the NRA could not afford for its much-sought social support to evaporate. It needed means of signaling to the Baganda civilian audience that the NRA had genuinely representative aspirations as an insurgency and aspiring government. All told, to right the ship the expanded NRA simply required a more formidable institutional armature with which to govern combatants and civilians alike.

The NRA's wartime institutional infrastructure largely emerged at this juncture. It was, as mentioned, shaped by both the FRELIMO and FRONASA experience as well as adapted to the NRA's proximiate circumstances. By 1982 NRA developed

an expansive portfolio wartime institutions.[52] In terms of its combatant controls, the NRA devised an extensive political education regimen, created the role of political commissar, and empowered robust disciplinary structures. Not only did these instruments serve to control combatants, but political education was used to foster insurgent-civilian solidarity. These combatant control innovations, and how they ultimately fed into wartime governance, will be discussed below.

Formal structures, specialized personnel and codified guidelines gave institutional heft to the NRA's ambitions to control combatants and quash ethnic factionalism. Museveni consciously developed a politico-military education and training regimen for all NRA recruits. The program was strict and mandatory. Inspired by Samora Machel's warning that, too often "ethnicity was the Commander-in-Chief" of Africa's armies, the NRA also devised an ideological course called *chaka-mchaka*, that focused heavily on the resolution of vertical and horizontal cleavages within both the organization and the broader Ugandan society. Museveni wished for the recruits to internalize the NRA's message and raison d'etre. Hence, socialization and political education were given topmost importance.

The NRA's standardization of promotion and hierarchy further facilitated organizational cohesion. Museveni personally organized a public rally in Luwero to explain the NRA/M commitment to national unity and non-ethnic politics. Further,

52. The NRA scores a 5 on my 6-point index of wartime institutions. The missing category, taxation, which the NRA abolished for the duration of the war, is also revealing of the NRA's priorities and organizational heritage. Anxious to be seen as a "people's army" and not an occupying force, the NRA subscribed to a system of voluntary contributions. Indeed, the NRA at times went out of its way to invert the civilian provision-soldier protection relationship. As noted by Furley, "They created something akin to a 'Robin Hood' legend: typically when they robbed the bank at Kabale, they bought the townspeople a public lunch and bought them shoes" (Ngoga 1997, 232). Additionally, the decision not to tax was in all likelihood drawn from the FRELIMO example. FRELIMO, which considered taxation as simply an instrument of Portuguese colonial exploitation, abolished taxation in zones under its control during the Mozambican War of Independence. Of course, it should be noted that even "voluntary" civilian donations were made in the shadow of the NRA's armed strength; see Meert 2020, 402.

NRA leadership launched a campaign to explain that the underrepresentation of the Baganda within the officer corps was due to their recent recruitment, and need for further training and experience. Organizational reforms followed swiftly thereafter. The NRA, determined that all recruits, regardless of social background or education would be "subjected to the same conditions of basic training; subsequent promotion depended solely on their capacity, commitment and contribution to the struggle" (Ngoga 1997, 253). Merit-based promotion patterns quickly resulted in increasing Baganda representation in the officer corps, thereby shutting off a potential source of ethnic tension. By 1983, "there were several Baganda commanders and talk of the Banyankole using the Baganda ceased in the NRA" (Amaza 1998, 30). Prewar categorical hierarchies of class identities were formally eliminated in favor of a new egalitarian fighting structure in which all recruits "called themselves commander" (Pike 2019, 57). In this manner, NRA combatant controls explicitly dissolved ethnic and class cleavages.

The NRA leadership was further able to effectively rein in military autonomy through its political commissar structures. The political commissar, who "owed his office to the assumption that he fully understood and internalized the political program of the NRA", was present at every level of military organization (Amaza 1998, 41). Political commissars, as well as civilians, were authorized to bring charges against errant soldiers (Bell 2016, 505). Their omnipresence, fluency, and representation at regular meetings with political leadership, empowered them to keep order among the armed forces. Commissars and military commanders cooperated tightly – "everything had to be consensus" (Interview NRA cadre, Kampala 2019). Commissars served not only as the connective tissue fusing the NRA to its political leadership structures, but also as an integral component of the NRA's socialization and disciplinary infrastructure. They were tasked in implemented, and identifying violations of the NRA

Code of Conduct — to which we now turn.

While *chaka-mchaka* served to disseminate the importance of military discipline in cultivating civilian support, the NRA Code of Conduct gave the socialization regimen additional teeth. To credibly communicate the authority of this new Code of Conduct, Museveni himself personally taught it in political education courses, to which combat units were subjected daily (Weinstein 2006, 141). Drawn up on Christmas 1981, the Code of Conduct, was intended to provide a clear and comprehensive stature regulating the relationships among soldiers, as well as between soldiers and civilians.[53] The Code of Conduct imposed systematic clarity in defining intra-NRA relations. Fully one-half of the Code of Conduct — Section B. Relationships among the Soldiers — was devoted to this task. The code delineated the NRA hierarchy and stressed the vital need for political education: "Political education should be mandatory every day so that the cadres and militants can understand the reasons for the war as well as the dynamics of the world we live in. "Conscious discipline is better than mechanical discipline" (NRA Code of Conduct 1982, 1). Additionally, by clarifying the powers that NRA officers had over the rank and file soldiers, *ad hoc* punishments, such as the incident that occurred under Commander Magara, were stamped out. Commanders did not have omnipotent powers. Indeed, as noted by Weinstein (2006), the NRA Code of Conduct implemented a decisionmaking systems of democratic centralism. In practice, this empower rank-and-file soldiers to criticize their commanders and shape NRA strategy. Such practices were not merely permitted by the code of conduct, but explicitly condoned. In this way, soldiers even at the lower levels felt themselves to have skin-in-the-game, while commanders had to operate with both audience costs and the code of conduct in mind.

53. See Ngoga (1997, 396-400) for the NRA Code of Conduct in full.

As the Code of Conduct enabled the NRA to govern soldier-soldier relations, so too did it operate as tool through which the NRA could control the behavior of combatants vis-a-vis civilians. An extensive literature attests to the discipline with which NRA combatants conducted themselves towards civilians (see Bell 2016, Weinstein 2006, Kasfir 2005). NRA restraint was the behavioral culmination of its battery of combatant control instruments. From the very beginning, new NRA recruits were embedded in a regimen intended to make them well-versed in the doctrines of popular warfare and civilian immunity. New recruits were immediately sent to the "Nkrumah" training unit, where they received intensive training.[54] Recruits were introduced immediately to the idea of combatant immunity. The the first training briefing new soldiers received, entitled "Who is the Enemy?," drew clear distinction between civilians and combatants (Bell 2016, 504). Days were split evenly, with half-day devoted to military training and the other, to political education. Notwithstanding the NRA's overwhelming numerical inferiority in comparison to its UNLA opponent, these new recruits were prohibited from combat, from even holding a weapon, until completing the *three-months'* long training and education course (Bell 2016, 504).

However, in the words of one NRA officer, political education was important, but so was punishment" (quoted in Weinstein 2006, 144). The first half of the NRA Code of Conduct — Section A. Dealing with the Public — spelled out a variety of prohibited behaviors, centering heavily on the promotion of noncombatant immunity (Bell 2016). Murder and rape were punishable by death. Theft was rigorously deterred, with the Code of Conduct (1982, 1) stating, "never take anything, in the form of money or property, from members of the public. Not even somebody's *kikajo* (sugarcane) or *menvu* (sweet bananas) ... Ask the owners if you must and always

54. Testifying to its admiration of the Pan-African and pan-ethnic ideal, various NRA units were given the names of Pan-African heroes e.g. the Mondlane Unit and the Nasser Unit

offer to pay". Drunkenness, looting, smoking bhang and "illegitimate relations" with women, incurred (depending on the gravity of the offense) imprisonment, demotion and *kiboko* (corporal punishment). The NRA was unhesitating in its use of trial by courts-martial and if necessary, execution (Kasfir 2005, 284; see also Tripp 2000, 55). In 1985 for example, Museveni presided over the court-martial of two drunken NRA fighters that killed several civilians in Semuto. They were publicly executed.Such acts demonstrated to both internal and external audiences the seriousness with which the NRA took combatant control (Schubert 2006, 110).

The NRA's ability to govern its fighters was integral to its civilian governance project. The NRA's conceptualized its fighters as "politicians in uniform" and a "people's army" (Bouckaert 1999). As such, NRA combatants were tasked with a diverse set of governance roles: educating civilians, assisting civilians with tasks such as farming and food collection, and also offering health services as a public good.[55] The NRA political education curriculum was disseminated to combatants and civilians alike, involving "daily lectures on topics such as African and Ugandan history, colonialism, law and justice, democracy...civic rights and responsibilities, women's rights and economic development" (Rubongoya 2007, 63-64). The provision of healthcare services served to make the NRA's stated intentions credible in the eyes of civilians. Peasants receiving healthcare were "amazed, and many thought that if the NRA could work these miracles in the bush, they would be a good government" (Weinstein 2006, 180). NRA combatants thus developed broad administrative skills, while the NRA also enumerated specialized social service wings. NRA political structures were embedded within the fighting forces, which in turn, were heavily involved in governing

55. UNLA forces derisively characterized the NRA as "farmers, cattle keepers and academicians" (Kanyeihamba 2010, 191). This was a nonetheless an accurate assessment of the educational profile and governance roles adopted by NRA forces.

civilian communities.

The signature NRA wartime governance innovation however, was the Resistance Council (RC).[56] Resistance Council were essentially grassroots participatory democratic governance bodies in NRA territory, existing at the village, parish, subcounty, county, and district levels (Lewis 2020, 181). The councils were fully-fledged local administrations, with RC officials elected by villagers. This was new to Uganda, especially in the South, which had previously been run locally by powerful and unaccountable village chiefs appointed by the UPC. NRA elections thereby offered a striking contrast with the local "regime of dictatorship" established under Obote and Obote II. The NRA, moving into new territories, dismantled Obote's local political infrastructure, replacing them with the RCs (Lewis 2020, 181). Political commissars, the Swiss-army knives of NRA combatant control and civilian governance, convened assemblies to "sensitise" villagers and also oversaw the elections (Kasfir 2005, 287). Operating hand-in-hand with the NRA, the RCs not only provided the NRA with a popular administrative structure, but also uprooted the Obote regime's infrastructural power. As observed by Burkey (1991, 3–4), the RCs acquired "legislation, implementation and adjudication which had until then been the preserve of appointed officials and party nominees". Resistance councils allowed for joint combatant-civilian powersharing, mobilized broad political support for the NRA, and further checked potential combatant autonomy or abuses. The RCs also provided a channel through which civilians could report military misbehavior. The heads of RC could (and did) arrest or detain soldiers accused of Code of Conduct violations. This willingness to expose the organization to domestic audience costs made the contractual relationship between the soldiers and the civilian population particularly credible. The RCs also

56. On Resistance Councils see Weinstein 2006, 175-180

worked to strengthen security in NRA territory – the RC system was used to construct lightly-armed Local Defense Units (LDUs) trained in defense and observation, creating an 'early warning' system that could warn civilians of impending UNLA attacks. Just as NRA soldiers had become embedded in governance tasks, so too were civilians embedded in security. Finally, the range of administrative powers and responsibility possessed by RCs made them a veritable shadow government. In the words of one NRA commissar, "life was like you had another republic in Uganda" (Kasfir 2005, 288).

With this robust institutional infrastructure, the NRA proved resilient when expanding in both territory and personnel. 1982 was a banner year for the NRA. The NRA had beaten back several Obote offensives, including 'Operation Bonanza', which mustered up a full 50% of the UNLA's total forces in an attempt to drive the NRA out of Luwero. These operations backfired through both military ineptness and civilian targeting. Not only the NRA was able to entrench its position, but thousands of civilians displaced and fleeing UNLA violence, joined the NRA ranks. UNLA counterinsurgency strengthened insurgency. As NRA commander, Mugishu Muntu put it: "[T]he main recruiting officer for NRA was Obote himself" (Major General Mugisha Muntu, cited in Ngoga 1998, 98). Additionally, the NRA at this juncture controlled some 10,000 square miles of Ugandan territory. Territorial and organizational expansion theoretically placed the NRA under strains similar to those found at the end of 1981. Stretched over territory and newly swollen with recruits, the NRA was at risk of military commander autonomy and recruit indiscipline. However, the NRA's formidable combtant control infrastructure allowed it to whether this challenge with equanimity. Recalling the power held by NRA commanders in 1982, NRA commander Pecos Kutesa remarked "where it not for the tight control of the [High Command] it would have been easy for us to turn into warlords" (Kutesa 2006, 134). In this period

the NRA was able to absorb armed personnel without upending its organizational culture, despite growing to 4000 troops. Additionally, the NRA habitually incorporated surrendering and defecting UNLA soldiers into its ranks. Given the indiscipline of the UNLA forces, the fact that the NRA managed to remain disciplined is a testament to the intensiveness of its training and socialization process (Toft 2009, 107).

In 1983, however the NRA was put to a stiffer organizational test. In January, the UNLA launched its “Grand Offensive", committing a whopping 75% of its total forces to drive the NRA out of the Luwero triange. What the UNLA lacked in skill it made up for in sheer numerical strength. By May, NRA was expelled from the Luwero Triangle. Fearing retaliation at the hands of the UNLA, the 1.5 million civilians located in the former liberated zone followed the retreating NRA to the Singo plains. The NRA had seemingly fallen down the rung from territorial administration to mobile warfare.

To call the years in Singo lean years for the NRA would be an understatement. First, the retreat came as a massive organizational shock to civilians and insurgents alike. Morale within the NRA was “at an all-time low" (Amaza 1998, 83). The pang of retreat was exacerbated by the adverse conditions of Singo itself. Unlike Luwero, which afforded jungle-like cover and ample food for the insurgency, Singo was dry grassland. Further, the UNLA, having captured the Triangle, sealed and burnt it. Stranded in Singo and unable to even forage in Luwero, the NRA faced the very real prospect of starvation. Life in Singo was “a nightmare", as the NRA had to forage in “semi-liberated" areas, choosing between risking death by UNLA or death by privation (Remote interview, NRA cadre 2023). As recalled by one soldier:

> Sometimes we got one stick of cassava and it was for three days because we had to hide from government soldiers. You ate and sometimes you could spend four hours there and then you had to go to another place.

> Most people on the rebel side suffered a lot because they didn't have legs and they were attacked by them. (quoted in Schubert 2006, 102)

The problem of food was compounded by a lack of medicine. Malaria and contaminated drinking water competed with starvation as the primary cause of mortality. Schubert (2006, 103), notes that even bandages became so scarce that the NRA was forced to hunt for discarded mattresses that could supply the materials for dressing wounds.

For most rebel groups, the organizational shock of retreat and the material deprivations of Singo would have forced both (1) a wholesale collapse of civilian administrative infrastructure and (2) a widening of the violence repertoire i.e. a collapse in combatant control. Desperation could have opened the door to the NRA relinquishing completely its aspirations to "popular" governance and voluntary contributions, and using violence to extract resources from civilians at gunpoint. However, with its back against the wall, the NRA rejected coercion and non-governance as an instrument of survival (Weinstein 2006, 267). To be sure, concessions had to be made. The NRA could not support the expansive governance and welfare commitments had functioned in the liberated zone. It needed to reduce the demands that the civilian population made upon scarce stocks of food and medicine. It thus reluctantly made the decision to escort civilians, hitherto under its control, out of the war zone. Even in this, the NRA relied on its governance institutions, rather than summary expulsion. The chief political commissar organized a political education campaign to explain to civilians both why the NRA had withdrawn to Singo. This exercise in reassurance helped to assuage fears that the territorial loss constituted an NRA defeat. Further, the commissars invited civilians to voluntarily leave Singo, where they were certain to be targeted as NRA supporters, to chance their luck in government zones. Finally, the NRA set up a "Resettlement Commission" which investigated alternate areas

able to accommodate refugees. Elected committees, set up under the auspices of the RCs, were used to organize the civilian exodus as well an maintain governance in the refugee camps. Further, the starving NRA negotiated the loan of cows from local cattle-keepers, to be repaid upon presumptive victory. Interviews with the cattle-keepers in the post victory period turns up “no evidence" that coercion was a central dimension in these exchanges (Ngoga 1997, 289). The NRA further made good on its promises, with all the loaned cattle refunded by the post-NRA government (Ngoga 1997, 289).

Even under massive duress, the NRA did not collapse into “roving banditry". Rather, it became something closer to a “strolling bandit". The semi-mobile camps were governed by the (admittedly diminished) RC structures. Additionally, while medicine was in short supply, the NRA nevertheless continued to offer medical services as a public good (Remote Interview, NRA cadre 2023), dispatching their medical aides to provide basic care. The NRA thereby managed to marry civilian governance to the demands of mobile warfare. Internally, the NRA doubled down on combatant control (Ngoga 1997, 185), organizing a political education campaign also directed at fighters. This campaign, parallel to the civilian education campaign, reiterated the commitment to and principles of, protracted guerrilla warfare. Territory, it was explained, was less important than the retention of civilian support and the wearing down of enemy forces. Drilling soldiers in the political aims and tactics of the struggle helped deflect some attention from the territorial loss as a measure of organizational strength. Despite living on an material shoestring, the NRA weathered the challenge of Singo with intensive internal politicization work and a stubborn commitment to civilian governance

Turning the Tide

The NRA's fortunes began to reverse themselves with the death of David Oyite-Ojok in December 1983. With the UNLA thrown into (further) disarray, the NRA was able launch successful operations on the Masindi barracks (Febrary 20, 1984) and the town of Hoima (May 20, 1984), which contained a valuable bank. These operations represented the NRA's earliest excursions into the west of the country. Their debut in front of western audiences could not be marred by combatant misbehavior — Museveni ordered that soldiers abide by the "strictest code of discipline" (Amaza 1998, 93). The captured resources and UNLA confusion helped power the NRA's territorial and numerical expansion from 1984-1985. As observed by Weinstein (2006, 268), this new resource bounty did not disrupt the NRA's entrenched organizational routines: "The NRA used its existing structure to distribute these resources, vesting control in unit policy and administrative committees that involved combatants in the oversight of the critical resources". Confident of its combatant discipline, the NRA could safely delegate resources downwards through the organization.

The opening of the Western front, the NRA's revived military strength, and the internal security dilemma consuming the UNLA, seemed to confirm that the NRA held the high cards. On July 27, 1985, Obote's regime folded. The coup, while doubtless a triumph for the NRA, was also a dilemma. Thousands of late joiners, anxious to join the winning team, jumped on the NRA bandwagon in the West. As the NRA had, in addition to expanding westwards, retaken its old southern territories, Kampala lay tantalizingly close at hand.

The NRA could very well have taken Kampala rapidly in August 1985; the Okello regime was a rotten door waiting to be kicked in. However, the NRA deliberately

delayed seizing power.[57] As far back as March 1985, Museveni announced that the NRA's superior firepower and military advantages would not derail the NRA's commitment to protracted popular war. In a March, he issued letter to the NRA writ large, titled "Who is Winning the War?", writing, "For those, however, who genuinely wish to know why we have not taken Kampala in spite of our enhanced fire-power, the answer is that war is a science: it is not a gamble...it should be clear that taking Kampala is not necessarily victory. The problems we are now experiencing in the bush are nothing compared to those we would face if we took on Kampala without making adequate preparations"(Museveni 1985 [2000], 129). When asked in a July 1985 interview whether the NRA had the capacity to win the war in the near future, Museveni reiterated "Even now we can kick Obote out of Kampala, but we would invite a lot of problems. We need more preparation so that if we kick Obote out of Kampala we are able to control the whole country" (New African July 1985, 17).

Accordingly, rather than sprinting to Kampala, the NRA in 1985 took the time consolidate its wartime administrative infrastructure in its newly liberated territory. Expansion into the West gave the NRA access to an entirely new population. Possessing a resilient and elastic organization, the NRA exported its governance model into western Uganda. Its administrative experience and highly-socialized combantants were instrumental. Western Uganda was brought under the RC system, and newly elected village councils. The RCs in Luwero that had lain dormant since 1983, were revived. Cabinets were established with officers tasked with the distribution of public goods. The NRA was at this stage a full-bore state-in-waiting. Additionally, westward expansion saw the NRA formally develop a mobile School of Political Education to broadly disseminate its aims, philosophy, and intentions upon taking

57. Indeed, Museveni wished to further delay the ultimate operation to seize Kampala in January, but was outvoted by other members of the NRA High Command.

power (Amaza 1998, 154-5). The school was fleet-footed, moving across the West, from Namugongo to Wakiso and finally to Kyankwanzi. This also had the advantage of countering indiscipline. The 1985 expansion brought the NRA from a force of 4,000 to 10,000 men under arms. As the director of the School of Political Education explained:

> There was a realization that, as the army grew, we wanted not only numbers, but discipline. Our new soldiers needed to know how we wanted the country to run. If we had taken Kampala without properly politicizing the soldiers, they would have behaved like our old soldiers. We wanted them to value property and the lives of the people. (quoted in Weinstein 2006, 269)

When the now 10,000-strong NRA finally seized Kampala on January 26 1986, victory was unblemished by looting. Unlike the UNLA, the NRA assumed power with a body of resilient and elastic wartime institutions. These institutions had been essentially field-tested in the tasks of military integration and expansion, as well as civilian governance during the war. While the NRA formally seized state power in 1986, it had begun its statebuilding project well before.[58]

4.3.2 Opening Pandora's Box: State Inheritance and Insecurity After Victory

The NRA seizure of power in 1986 offered a marked contrast to the UNLA victory in 1979. Unlike the anarchy that broke out after the 1979 War, Kampala in the aftermath of the NRA seizure was kept exceedingly orderly. The NRA had their marching orders: there would be no duplication of the 70s era disorders. The sobriety

58. Lewis (2020, 181) echoes this point.

of the NRA soldiers was greeted with something approaching bewilderment by Kampala civilians. NRA commander Pecos Kutesa recalls ‘ they were‘asking themselves, “When will the looting start?" They told us: We warmly welcome you...should be show you the good shops to loot from?" (Kutesa 2006, 241). This was met with a note of reprimand from NRA officers who insisted upon three cardinal rules: no looting, no harboring of enemy soldiers, and no extrajudicial killings.

Nevertheless, what was true of the city was not altogether true of the country. To be sure, the NRA held considerable advantages over the 1979 UNLA in terms of its organizational diversity and resilience. However, it inherited a predicament near-identical to that faced by the UNLA in 1979: state failure and nation-wide counterinsurgency.

With respect to state failure, so grave was the disrepair left by the war and the statebuilding misfires under Obote, that “in 1985 Uganda could no longer be described as a state” (Kasozi 1994, 193). The assessment of Ugandan state failure in 1986 is a constant across the academic and historic literature surrounding the Bush War. 1986 Uganda was an “archetypal failed state” (Lewis 2020, 178). The Obote II regime had, as detailed earlier, been unable to realize much of its hopes for postwar reconstruction. War redoubled the Ugandan state’s weakness. Between 300 and 500,000 Ugandans had been killed under Obote — more had been displaced. The civil service had been rendered inoperative by widespread corruption and physical destruction.

Most forebodingly, the Obote II coercive apparatus — the UNLA — had, much in the manner of its Amin-era predecessor, dispersed across the country. Its organizational collapse had left it somewhat depleted of ammunition, cohesion and manpower, but the UNLA rump forces were more than capable of spinning themselves into new insurgencies. Various UNLA commanders and even UPC politicians had refashioned

themselves into the leaders of an alphabet soup of insurgent forces.[59] In the East for example, Peter Otai, Minister of State for Defence under Obote II, become overall leader the Uganda People's Army with UNLA military commander Francis "Hitler" Eregu as chief military commander. In the North, UNLA Brigadier General Odong Latek organized the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), with Eric Otema-Allimadi, Obote's former prime minister, as the leader of the political wing. These represented but a fraction of the insurgent forces, as loose arms and a heavily displaced population gave any potential entrepreneur in violence a shot at insurgency. Force Obote Back Again (FOBA), Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda (FEDEMU) and Kayiira's UFM, were among the many insurgencies mobilizing in 1986. Additionally, the NRA had to reckon with various West Nile insurgents — e.g. Former Uganda National Army (FUNA) and the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) — that had been operating on-and-off since 1979. These insurgencies were the immediate, potentially existential, threat to regime durability.

In 1986 the NRA thereby found itself on the opposite end of a familiar process: civil war. Immediately it was forced to engage in both war-making and state-making simultaneously. However, despite the characterization of the Ugandan state as in a "starting from scratch predicament" of the same kind encountered in 1979, there was a critical exception. The NRA did not need to build the state from scratch. Rather, the NRA experiences during the Bush in war had operated as a "dress rehearsal" for postwar reconstruction. The NRA had developed the skills, experience and organizational infrastructure needed to retain control whilst expanding the army, administer newly captured territories and provide public goods to a war-afflicted population. In approaching the task of state reconstruction, the NRA built upon this strong back of

59. See Lewis 2020, 17 for an overview of the (16) major groups. Day (2011), identifies *50 insurgencies* operating in Uganda after 1986.

wartime institutions. Rather than rely heavily on old institutions, or build institutions anew, the NRA simply carried over wartime institutions into the post-victory era.

4.3.3 The Yoweri Museveni Regime: Postwar State Formation and Regime Durability

Crisply summarized by Gertzel (1990, 205), "Museveni had to undertake three key tasks in 1986: to create a national army subordinate to the state, to combat insurgency and to restore civil institutions." As a wider analysis of Ugandan political development since 1986 is not possible here, this section focuses explicitly on these three tasks. We begin with the latter two, the construction of the NRA and the waging of counterinsurgency, below.

"War by Other Means": Military Reconstruction, Political Control and Counterinsurgency Success

First, Museveni had to restructure the army in order to combat multiple insurgencies. As mentioned ex-Amin and ex-Obote soldiers and ministers reinvented themselves as rebels, resulting in a massive proliferation of new and powerful insurgencies by 1987. To combat this threat, Museveni engaged in massive military expansion. Unlike in 1981, when the infant NRA picked-and-chose very carefully the organizations with which it would merge, in 1985 the NRA was near "indiscriminate" (Amaza 1998, 149). Out of the gate, the NRA began absorbing defecting UNLA, FEDEMU, UFM, UNRF and FUNA soldiers into the new state army (still bearing the name National Resistance Army). Quickly, the NRA exploded in size, first doubling from 25,000 to 50,000 between 1986 and 1987 (Gertzel 1990, 207), and then quadrupling

to over 100,000 by 1992, as it absorbed a tidal wave of fighters from other groups (Glassmeyer and Sambanis 2008, 379). Military expansion was both a means and ends. The NRA managed to cauterize the flow of new insurgencies by absorbing into its ranks surrendering soldiers who would have otherwise run rampant across the countrysize. In turn, having "flipped", these former insurgents were tapped as a source of both manpower and intelligence. As it had throughout the Bush War, the NRA proved itself a pragmatist. Recognizing that the explosion of insurgency made any prospect of a vengeful "victors' justice", remote, the NRA sought to offer amnesty and encourage defection in order to more efficiently consolidate postwar order.

While offering a slice of state power offered a solution to insurgency, integration carried with it the threat of military instability. The NRA incorporated soldiers from over 22 armed groups. The army was now swamped by "tens of thousands of "late joiners"...who did not share the activist, ideological commitment of NRA's core rebel membership" (Bell 2016, 507). The "ideological orientation of the forces in question was basically anti-people, bordering as it did on the roving rebel ideology" (Amaza 1998, 150). The NRA faced a serious danger of ideological pollution and organizational destabilization as these politically illiterate recruits, organized around rival norms and differing hierarchies, were now integrated into the NRA. Indeed, the NRA leadership, despite its preparations, was "apprehensive" about the victorious NRA, and the character it would take on after having incorporated these new forces (Mudoola 1991, 237).

However, the NRA had the virtue of having an existing organizational infrastructure with which to control combatants. It had indeed began incorporating defectors, including from the UNLA, before the war ended. Museveni's recollections attest to the recombined nature of the national army even before victory proper:

> Even before the capture of Kampala we started organising the following battalions out of the forces that had been on the opposite side: the 23rd Battalion (former UNLA), the 25th Battalion (former UNLA), and 27th Battallion (Fedemo) which was led by Nkwanga" (Museveni 2005 in Anguria 119-120). The 29th Battalion (former Teso militias of Col. Omaria), the 31st Battalion (UNLA), the 33rd Battalion (UNLA), the 35th Battalion (UFM of the late Kayiira), the 37th Battalion (UNLA), the 39th Batallion (UNLA), the 41st, 45th, 47th 49th, 51st were for new recruits. The 53rd Battalion up to the 71st Battalion (FUNA), the 73rd Batallion (UNRF Moses Ali); etc. etc. It was through that prompt bulk merging of the forces of the two sides that we, on the one hand, created a nucleus of the new national army. (quoted in Anguria 2006, 119-120)

To address the scaled up challenge of size, the NRA simply augmented its existing combatant infrastructure. The NRA's wartime combatant controls changed in degree, but remained fundamentally identical in kind.

Wartime institutional continuity was evident in a number of respects. First, the NRA Code of Conduct was formalized and incorporated into law (Gertzel 1990,207), virtually unchanged from its 1986 iteration. Political education was lengthened and strengthened, with NRA officers now required to undertake a full four months of ideology training at the Namugongo national political education school. The NRA mandated *chaka-mchaka* courses to "rehabilitate" recruits harvested from defeated rival forces. As it was during the Bush, discipline provided iron to law. The NRA also made considerable and conspicuous effort to enforce its Code of Conduct. Bell (2016, 506-7) reports that between 1986 and 1993, the NRA executed 120 combatants for Code of Conduct Violations – a number almost equal to the number of executions carried out by the United States Military during World War II, an army roughly two hundred times the NRA's size. Ironically, Amnesty International commented with concern about the NRA's frequent use of the death penalty as a disciplinary device (Gertzel 1990, 207). The NRA also, consistent with its practice during the Bush War, empowered RCs to arrest indisciplined soldiers and hand them over to the police and

military authorities.

New demographics were addressed through the old methods. The intensified Political education made comrades out of former ethnic and institutional rivals, with emphasis on the NRA's anti-sectarian doctrine, and merit-based standards for advancements. As it was in the Bush war, the NRA drew on its commissar structures. Again, bush structures were formalized, legalized and nationalized, but retained their core function and logic. The commissariat, newly headquartered at a military political school in Entebbe, retained its Bush War duties, politicizing soldiers and training new commissars. As it was in the war, commissar structures continued to penetrate every level of the army, from division to platoon (Ngoga 1997, 316). The NRA's combatant controls gave it confidence that "a potential opponent in one's ranks may be safer than one far out in the bush" (Mudoola, see Ngoga 1997, 318). Military integration allowed the NRA to wage counterinsurgency by other means. The NRA was able to incorporate even ex-Amin troops such as Moses Ali's UNRF, allowing them to claim multiethnic national credentials (Mamdani 1988, 1160), more troops and intelligence that contributed to the overall collapse of insurgency in West Nile. By 1990, much of the Ugandan West and East had been stabilized in this fashion.

In this way, the NRA was also able to solve the "coup-civil war" trap. Obote, in 1980, began his military restructuring with a *purge*, eliminating the FRONASA contingent of the UNLA even while in the midst of civil war. The purge, in addition to depleting the UNLA somewhat, also allowed the nascent NRA as wellspring of skilled manpower. Additionally, Obote stood opposed to the incorporation of West Nile insurgents within the army, which, to Acholi soldiers, prolonged the war. This was in large part a function of Obote's weak combatant control, whereby his tenuous control over the postwar army made incorporating rivals an existential coup-risk — both these rivals, or loyalists disgruntled by their rivals' integration, could have been

a coup threat. As such, Obote chose to prolong the war rather the risk a coup. By contrast, the NRA could incorporate rivals without this fear. The preexisting combatant control infrastructure allowed the NRA readily incorporate rival groups' without compromising political control. The trajectory of the UNRF's leader, Moses Ali, testifies to the NRA's self-confidence in eliminating coup risk. Ali, a former rival insurgent and ex-Amin soldier was made both a Major-General in the Army, as well as Deputy Prime Minister (Rice 2009, 264). The NRA was able to not merely integrate rivals, but to give them a seat at the high table without falling prey to a coup.

Even where organizational innovations were made, their apparent newness belied old organizational roots. The new national army reaffirmed its nonsectarian identity by adopting Swahili — a language not indigenous to Uganda — as the army's *lingua franca*, thereby further helping break down ethnic cleavages in favor of a new corporate identity (Bell 2016, 507). However, this use of Swahili was a callback to the NRA's FRELIMO parentage. Kiswhahili was the language of FRELIMO instruction to which FRONASA was initially exposed in 1971. The roots go further — Swahili was heavily promoted by the post-independence Tanzanian government as a means of forging social unity and national integration after colonial rule. Tanzania pioneered the universalizing of Swahili to overcome the common postcolonial legacy of a country fractured by linguistic cleavage. FRELIMO, in turn, had taken up Kiswahili while operating in exile in Tanzania. The NRA embrace of Swahili was thereby closely tied to Museveni's time at Dar. In the NRA, Swahili operated in the identical social engineering role it assumed in Tanzania, merely transplanted to the intra-organizational level. Apparent organizational innovation concealed the NRA's trademark organizational mimicry.

The degree of wartime continuity makes it plain that the post-victory NRA largely doubled down on its socialization and disciplinary infrastructures. This augmenting

of the existing combatant control infrastructure helped unlock the advantages of integrating ex-rebel rivals while reducing the dangers. Not only did the NRA manage to capture potential insurgent manpower, but defectors were able to enhance NRA credibility in insurgent occupied areas. As observed by Bell, "as the NRA moved into Acholiland and UPDA members began to change sides, the NRA used ethnic Acholi members to gain the trust of these anti-NRA fighters" (Bell 2016, 508). Social breadth was used to make inroads into hostile territory. Unlike the UNLA, which was sunk by its appearance of advancing "Lango Domination", the NRA's ethnic broadening managed to reduce the analogous fear of "Bantu domination". A demographic stocktaking of the NRA's demobilization exercise, initiated in 1993, is revealing: "Of the 23,000 soldiers demobilized in I993, 38 per cent were drawn from the North West, North, North East, and Karamoja; 31 per cent from the South West and West; 19 per cent from Buganda; and 12 per cent from East and South East" (Brett 1995, 147). The UNLA had been forced to rely on ethnicity as a crude instrument of political control. The NRA however, did not have to coup-proof through ethnic stacking. Rather, the NRA's "immunization" from coups, was a function of its history of political control. The NRA military core, habituated to political control, did not react to expansion of these controls as an attack on military autonomy. The political and military barrier had effectively been erased throughout the Bush War, resulting in "politico-military fusion" (Kagoro 2020).

Institutional carryover served the incumbent NRA well. Post-victory violence did not approach anywhere near the scale of that inflicted by the Obote regime throughout the 1980s. Amnesty International gave qualified praise to the NRA in 1987, observing "massive qualitative improvement in the human rights situation" in Uganda, and finding "no evidence to suggest there was a policy of killing civilians" ("Amnesty praises NRM," New Vision, 12 May 1987). However, NRA integration and

counterinsurgency was not a wholly painless process. Specifically, the NRA engaged in considerable violence in the Ugandan North, where its old UNLA opponents and their ethnic support base lay. The NRAs use of civilian detention and internment camps in the North were a far cry from the excesses of the UNLA. They were nevertheless clumsy and heavy-handed by NRA standards.

The circumstances of the NRA's early postwar integration help offer insight into the war in the North, as well as the inherent hazards of integration for even as highly-institutionalized a group as the NRA. At the beginning of the integration process in 1985, the NRA made the grave error of incorporating former insurgent groups wholesale. As made clear in the earlier Museveni quote listing the NRA's new battalions, the NRA's initial approach was to redeploy battalions made up exclusively of these ex-insurgents and still under their original commanders. With their command and organizational structures intact, these groups were more resistant to the NRA's resocializing efforts. The NRA's recombined 35th battallion offers an object lesson in the dangers. The such 35th battalion of the mobile division, was predominantly made up of UFA and FEDEMU forces. Kayiira's UFA, as described earlier, had essentially been a practictioner of terrorism, making no distinction between civilian and combatant. FEDEMU in turn was little more than "the UFA rejuvenated after its demise in September 1982", given new life by the new influx of arms and displacement after the UNLA collapse (Kasozi 1994, 170). Predictably, the unreconstructed UNLA wreaked havoc when it was deployed, committing atrocities in Kitgum district, against Acholi civilians.[60] These atrocities further encased Acholi distrust of the NRA (whom had overthrown the short-lived Acholi Okello regime), and fueled longer-running insurgency in the North. The chastened NRA made genuine attempts

60. For further details of this incident see Ngoga 1997, Mamdani 1988, Day and Woldemariam 2021.

to error-correct. The 35th battalion was dissolved in short order, its troops taken for for political reorientation, after which they were scattered across NRA army units (Ngoga 1997, 319). While the damage was done in the North, this would become the *pro forma* NRA approach thenceforth. The NRA further seemed to recognize the dangers of heavy-handed counterinsurgency with Museveni penning two monographs for army circulation: "The Importance of Political Education" (1988) and "How to Fight Counter Revolutionary Insurgency" (1989). The NRA essentially defeated the main insurgencies throughout the late 90s and 2000s, driving them into Sudan and the Central African Republic. Despite these efforts the NRA has not been able to completely mop up the war in the North. While the majority of Uganda is stable, low-grade insurgency nevertheless occasionally peeks across Uganda's Northern borders.

Bureaucratic Reconstruction

Ultimately military reconstruction proved altogether effective in restoring public security. However, the NRA did not vanquish insurgencies through military power alone – rather, counterinsurgency efforts were much enhanced by the presence of effective civil administrative infrastructure. Unlike the UNLA, the NRA's emphasis on wartime administration and civilian welfare, ensured that its fighters were "qualified to participate in activities beyond the barracks" (Ngoga 1997, 324). The NRA owed this to both its social recruitment profile and its diverse administrative portfolio. The two, naturally, had a circular relationship. The NRA cultivated and sought out skilled recruits, and skilled recruits provided the human capital behind governance. As such, the NRA profile provided a marked contrast with its UNLA predecessor: "unlike the current members of the military council [Basilio and Tito Okello's UNLA regime after the coup], who are soldiers first and foremost, NRA leaders tend to be

drawn from the professional class and include teachers lawyers and economists. In general, their level of education is higher than that of the UNLA officers" (Africa Report 1986). These personnel would put their wartime administrative skills to use on a national scale. NRA members that had cut their teeth in wartime administration now redeployed these skills within ministerial portfolios. For example, reflecting the NRA's emphasis on improving human welfare after the ravages of conflict, the first NRA cabinet contained six medical doctors. The NRA's health ministers — Ruhakana Rugunda, Crispus Kiyonga, James Makumbi — had educational careers and wartime credential as doctors. Doctors also often featured prominently as the chairmen of local resistance committees (Iliffe 1998, 154). From the top down, the NRA's administrative abilities were appreciably superior to the UNLA.

The NRA, even though it possessed an initial complement of skilled administrators, also sought to export administrative skill throughout the country. The *chaka-mchaka* system, was transported to capture a new demographic: aspiring civil servants (Thaler 2018, 199). Paralleling its military code of conduct, the government issued a "Code of Coduct and Public Interest" for civil servants, with the aim of eradicating public corruption. This code was, in turn, disseminated across the country in a series of workshops. The procedures of civil service reform and rebuilding seem to rely on the NRA's initial templates. Political education and formal codes of conduct served to regulate the military, as well as the civil sphere. While a more comprehensive accounting of Ugandan civil service reform is not possible here, it is worth noting the outcome. As characterized by Olowu (2001, 128), "It is difficult to fault claims that the Ugandan civil service reform has been one of the most successful in Africa". The successful reconstruction of capable civil administration has cast post-1986 Uganda as a developmental success story, hailed as "the main example of successful African post-conflict recovery" (Collier 1999, 1).

The NRA's RC system, as mentioned, had largely usurped the local functions of the Obote state administration during the war. The victorious NRA continued to rely on these RC structures as the administrative centerpiece of the new regime. Ddungu (1993, 368–69) identifies the RCs as an administrative kaleidoscope:

> The bureaucratic view sees RCs as mere appendages of civil service created to implement government policy more effectively...The democratic view, on the other hand, sees RCs as more of popular organs created to counter and hold in check abuses of the civil servants and all other state functionaries: that is, as organs of the people...The third view sees RCs as organs of one political group, NRM, with its socialist proclivity. This is the view held by organized political parties...The fourth view which could be taken as the semi-official version take RCs as organs of the people, organs of the Movement, and organs of the state.

What is certain is that the RCs represented the basis of NRA infrastructural power, giving it national linkages to domestic populations even in the Ugandan periphery. After victory, the RC system was extended out of the NRAs Southern and Western strongholds to encompass the entire country. Extending the RC system into new areas helped finish off the old Obote local state apparatus and give the NRA local legitimacy. Local elections were held in both 1989 and 1992, replacing unpopular incumbents (Brett 1994, 67). The NRA devolved substantial responsibilities tasks to the RC system. Local RC bureaucracies assumed "responsibility for making local policy as well as activities including regulating the delivery of services, formulating local development plans, and hiring and supervising public service providers, such as teachers and local engineers" (Lewis 2014, 578). The ability to deliver goods and services throughout the country helped eliminate anti-regime social networks that might otherwise serve as incubators of insurgency. Lewis observes that in Northern Uganda, the RCs provision of food (which had previously been provided by Oxfam), helped induce local collaboration with NRA officials, despite the historical North-South cleav-

age (Lewis 2020, 193). As recalled by one civilian in the area, the provision of food was “the turning point...we hated [the NRA] so much before that time" (Lewis 2020, 193). The NRA thus inverted the UNLA pattern of outsourcing governance and engaging in blind violence to quash social dissent. The distributive capabilities of the RCs allowed the NRA use use welfare nationwide to cultivate social support.

The RCs also continued in their hybrid administrative-security role well into the postwar era. Local Defense Unit militias, pioneered during the war, were bulked up to complement the regular civilian and police forces. The LDUs serve a complimentary function to the army, functioning in a number of capacities including combat, policing, intelligence, capturing deserters and conducting counterinsurgency. LDU forces were, for example, responsible for the decapitation of the FOBA insurgency leadership (Rukooko 2017, 217). The use of civilian volunteers as a low-cost adjunct/alternative to the military also helped the NRA avoid making enormous budgetary outlays towards security, contra the Obote II regime. In a virtuous circle, reliance on civilian volunteers freed up resources to spend on social service provision. Social services, in turn, became a means of building up civilian dependence on RC structures.

The RCs also continued to serve as a civilian check on the army. The RCs’ power to disarm and arrest soldiers (Tidemand 1994, 141) was not curtailed in the post-victory period. The RCs continued to operate as a combatant control in their own right, attaching popular accountability to the NRA’s internal disciplinary infrastructure. Given their social reach RC’s have been additionally tasked to serve as a military screening device. In Museveni’s swearing-in speech, he announced, “You cannot, for instance, join the army or the police without being cleared by the village committee". In this way, the RCs played a vital part in realizing the NRA’s aspirations to be a “people’s army".

Lewis (2020) observes the RCs serve the “popular army" role in another way

— bolstering regime security through civilian-based counterinsurgent intelligence-gathering. RCs were, as Museveni (1992, 22–23) put it, a fully-fledged "citizens' intelligence system". Nationwide, RCs are used, according to Lewis (2020, 181), "to identify all individuals in the area who had served in a military or intelligence capacity for the former regime, screening them and offering them a position in the new national military if they were found to be sufficiently skilled and loyal to the new regime." Harvesting civilian intelligence through these preexisting governance structures proved cheap and effective, with a senior intelligence official expressing "pride in the affordability of the country's intelligence system" (Ibid. 183). As discussed by Lewis (2020), this has proved useful in not only eliminating insurgencies, but *pre-empting* them. The intelligence gathering capabilities of the RCs help nip nascent insurgencies in the bud, or deter potential violence entrepreneurs from even attempting mobilization. In the North for example "The Resistance Councils (RCs) and the Local Defence Units (LDUs) set up by the NRA denounced the Holy Spirit soldiers and betrayed their location with drums" (Behrend 1992, 92). Strikingly, as noted by Lewis (2020), this is an assessment shared by Ugandan state elites and former rebels alike. One former insurgent stated "no, [starting a new rebel group] can't happen today. The government is too strong . . . it is too easy for them to pick information" (Lewis 2020, 194). Perhaps the most ringing endorsement of the RC success is that, no rebel group formed in Uganda after 1995 became viable, petering out before being able to launch any serious military operations of note (Lewis 2020, 196). For a country that witnessed scores of insurgencies since 1971, this was no small feat.

4.3.4 *Pax Musevenica?* Case Discussion and Theoretical Stock-taking

The NRA constitutes a watershed in Ugandan history. It is the longest-lived Ugandan regime since independence, and one that has seemingly cured Uganda of its "praetorian" disease of coups, ethnic conflict, and military autonomy. This section has argued that state power, political order, and regime survival is in large part a function of the NRA's wartime institutions. The causes and consequences of wartime institution-building are on full display in the NRA case. Institution-building is a conscious act, that starts at the top. Rebel leaders are the makers and molders of wartime institutions, often drawing from existing, familiar organizational models. The NRA, drawing from a highly institutionalized rebel example in FRELIMO, constructed a "neo-liberation" insurgency. Despite facing a sitting African government, the NRA operated with the intention of fully displacing not merely the regime, but the state infrastructure. With these long time horizons, the NRA acted consistently to build up a social and military base that could be the basis of a postwar state.

Diverse, elastic and resilient, the NRA's extensive wartime institutional portfolio indeed became the nucleus of effective postwar statebuilding. In wartime the NRA developed combatant controls and administrative institutions that rendered it a veritable state-in-waiting. After victory, these institutions could be readily and directly converted into permanent national-level postwar state structures. The NRA exhibits a high level of institutional carryover. Organizational constancy helped stabilize the postwar NRA in the face of demographic change, territorial expansion and military insecurity. Building on the initial wartime foundation allowed the postwar NRA to quickly and effectively exert coercive and infrastructural power. As a result, despite inherited a failed state, the NRA managed to successfully use its internal strengths

as a new wellspring of state power. The resulting state proved capable of eliminating insurgency, stabilizing the economy, improving welfare, and thereby facilitating regime survival.

This *Pax Musevenica* is not without blemish, and it would be remiss not to remark upon the NRA's various failings. Despite its commitment to "participatory governance", the NRA falls far short of representative democracy. Indeed, the NRA violates the *sine qua non* of democracy in its use of violence against political opponents. While the NRA has used violence and repression with considerably greater restraint than its predecessors, it has not shied from using armed force as a means of regime survival against civilian and armed opposition alike. The NRA's democratic scaffold is also thin. RC structures serve as an instrument of NRA civilian mobilization, intelligence gathering and social control. The NRA's mass base has limited influence over the NRA senior ranks — an influence further diminished by the NRA's post-victory access to the prerogatives of state sovereign power. In addition to limited political accountability, political pluralism has been anathema to the NRA. The NRA's rhetorical fealty to democracy has proven hollow. Despite railing against the Obote governments' electoral malpractice in 1980, and his consolidation of a *de facto* UPC monopoly on power, the NRA only, grudgingly, restored multi-party elections in 2005. The 19 year interval was rationalized on the grounds of both security, as well as the NRA's profound skepticism of political parties as a stalking horse for ethnic tribalism. While the Bush War rhetoric cast this anti-sectarianism in a benign light, as a means of forging cross-ethnic solidarity and overcoming ethnic coup traps, in the postwar era it has been used as a stick with which to beat democracy. The NRA shows both the virtues, and the limits, of liberation. The liberation technologies of wartime institutions may indeed be used to great effect to forge mass support, administrative skill, military obedience and political order. However, these very same

technologies of liberation can, in the postwar era, become an authoritarian cage for society. *Pax Musevenica* is not a democratic peace.

4.4 Uganda's Rebel Victors — Postmortem and Postscript

The final exercise of this chapter is to revisit both the inferential value provided by the paired comparison of Uganda's two rebel regimes, as well as that provided by longitudinal analysis.

As mentioned, the case pairing thrives on the logic of most-similar systems design. By holding world-historical time and country-level factors constant, we can better eliminate certain structural variables from causal consideration. The cases share additional commonalities beyond space and time. Both the UNLA and the NRA were ethnic composites — indeed, a fraction of the UNLA, FRONASA, went on to become the NRA. As victors, both regimes went on to become "donor darlings", receiving windfalls of aid. However, in the Obote case, international goodwill was destroyed by UNLA's counterproductive violence. Aid was a consequence, and a casualty, of Obote's lack of state strength. Additionally, the Museveni regime, while it has been able to successfully instrumentalize donor aid, could not rely heavily on international goodwill upon coming to power. As noted by Toft, Museveni's past Marxist flirtations led to his being viewed with initial international skepticism. Only by 1989, after 3 years in power, did the donor community gain confidence and send aid towards state reconstruction (Toft 2010, 112). Additionally, while saturated by aid, the Museveni regime is certainly not wholly dependent on it. The regime has been able to chart a political course independent of donor desires, most notably in its lack of political liberalization and violation of term limits. Domestic institutions, not international pressure, have been the primary determinant of regime longevity.

The similarities however, should not be overstated. While neither victor was social-revolutionary, Museveni's brush with FRELIMO certainly influenced his organizational philosophy. However we primarily observe *organizational* diffusion, rather than *ideological* diffusion. The NRA, as both rebel group and incumbent regime swung towards whatever ideological position could garner it domestic and/or international support. Indeed, by 1989, Museveni had gone from ex-Marxist to a "star pupil" of the IMF (Toft 2010, 112).[61] The NRA's Marxist prehistory has been effaced to the point that one former commissar stated "There was no Marxism" during the war (quoted in Thaler 2018). The forthcoming Rwanda case, as we will see, further shows how the organizational model of protracted popular war, while initially pioneered by Marxists, has diffused to rebels of varied ideological stripes.

The most salient differences in the groups perhaps, lie in the relative lengths of the wars they fought and the degree of their initial military strength. The UNLA and Tanzanian military forces were both well-armed and numbered, cumulatively, in the thousands. The NRA started with a ragtag group of 40 men, and struggled throughout the war to procure arms. Is this causally concerning? Relative military strength certainly played a role in the speed of the 1979 war, and thereby can be understood as an obstacle to institution-building. Amin's collapse was additionally, unexpectedly sudden. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that relative military strength and war length are not doing the causal "heavy lifting" for either group. First, as mentioned, the UNLA's lack of institution-building was *ex ante* part of its military strategy. The UNLA consciously ruled out wartime governance even when the Tanzanians floated such a proposal. Second, the UNLA had, in its years in exile, the time needed to incorporate combatant controls and rough out plans for wartime

61. Indeed, in Herre's (2022) coding of regime incumbents' ideologies, Museveni is coded as *right-wing*.

civilian governance. Nevertheless, Obote proved singularly focused on quick victory. Obote's 1972 invasion, without Tanzanian support, ran along these conventional lines. The 1979 invention did not demonstrate any organizational course-correction. Military support and relative strength could have comfortably coexisted with wartime governance but for the choices of Obote. The Museveni case demonstrates the opposite — a dedication to wartime institution building led the NRA to prolong the war even when in a position of commanding military strength. As discussed, the NRA consciously took the time to firm up its control over the Ugandan west, even as Kampala lay within reach. Commitments to wartime institution-building, in short, partially determined conflict length. On the other hand, from both positions of overwhelming military strength and military weakness, the NRA retained wartime institutions. This is where the longitudinal approach proves useful. In both Singo in 1983 and in Western Uganda in 1985, the NRA defied structural incentives to abandon governance. Museveni, acutely conscious of the dangers of "putschist" strategies and premature victory without adequate preparation, stubbornly pursued institution-building through thick and thin. As such, this chapter largely concludes committed to the essentially voluntaristic account of rebel governance. The NRA chose to build governance institutions, even when military circumstances seemed to militate against them. The choice to build these, in turn, equipped the NRA with a robust basis for postwar statebuilding, and regime durability.

In a country's history, rebel victory is a sharp fork in the road, portending either state rejuvenation and regime longevity, or alternatively, state failure and regime breakdown. The divergent experiences of Uganda's rebel regimes suggest that the origins of this variation lie in rebel victors' wartime institutions. The 1979 Liberation War empowered a rebel regime with neither infrastructural reach nor grasp over its own fighters. While the Obote II regime resurrected prewar state structures,

said structures proved unable to supply professional bureaucratic staff, or adequately control a refractory postwar army, resulting in regime collapse. By contrast, the following Bush War elevated a group with a diverse and dense portfolio of wartime institutions, easily rededicated to the tasks of postwar reconstruction. The Uganda case seems to clearly bear out the theory — rebels armed with a diverse portfolio of wartime institutions have a "flying start" on postwar statebuilding processes and are poised to take advantage of the destruction of old political orders and replace them with strong states and durable regimes.

Chapter 5 | Refugee, Rebel, Rebel, Ruler: The Rwandan Patriotic Front

The aim of this chapter is to provide an organizational biography, and genealogy, of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Academic and policy literature surrounding the Rwandan Civil War (1990-1994) has, for obvious reasons, been dominated by the Rwandan Genocide.[1] While this chapter acknowledges the enormity and importance of the genocide, it focuses primarily on understanding the structure, goals, roles and ultimate trajectory of the RPF. Understanding the organizational dimensions of the wars' victor is vital to understanding the distinctive post-conflict reconstruction process in Rwanda. The RPF has managed not merely to rebuild an efficient working state, but also to reabsorb a vast population of *génocidaires* into the rebuilt Rwandan army and civil society.

Various scholars have attributed the recrudescence of Rwandan state power to an ancient historical tradition of "stateness" and social deference (e.g. Reyntjens 2004; Straus 2019). In this reading, Rwandan state strength was very nearly a foregone conclusion — a return to the *status quo ante* in a country where state power is the historical norm, and state collapse, the exception. The RPF's efforts to clothe itself in domestic legitimacy, using historical narratives and postwar statebuilding strategies ostensibly drawn from indigenous Rwandan tradition, seem to vindicate

1. See for example, Dallaire 2009; Des Forges 1999; McDoom 2021; Melvern 2006; Prunier 1995; Straus 2019.

these analyses.

While my project acknowledges an element of truth to such arguments, it also observes that they leave something to be desired. First, despite beginning from the position of state failure, the RPF represents a high-water mark of Rwandan state power. No prior Rwandan state has exercised this complete a degree of control over territory and society. Second, the RPF inherited a state apparatus and political culture it viewed as intolerably genocidal. In essential respects therefore, the new RPF state thus makes particular effort to break with the old one. Finally, virtually all accounts of postwar state formation viz. military integration and peacebuilding, acknowledge that Rwanda represents a "hard case" for the success of such efforts. The ethnically charged and socially dispersed nature of genocidal violence makes such post-war reconstruction efforts particularly difficult.[2] In say, Uganda, much of the violence had been contained with the army, and could be construed as opportunistic. Postwar political education could, in this context, be heavily directed at the army. Rwanda however faced a much broader expanse of violent actors embedded in society — its postwar social re-engineering project would have to be (and was) commensurately larger. In all of these ways, the postwar Rwandan state was a qualitatively different beast from its predecessor.

Accordingly, this chapter advances an alternative theory of postwar statebuilding under the RPF. I argue that the organizational roots of the postwar state lie in the RPF's internal institutions. The RPF case provides particular theoretical value-added in two respects. First, it showcases the institutional plasticity of combatant controls. Despite being initially crafted with the purpose of dissolving intramilitary social cleavages, these institutions have, in the postwar era, been generalized to the

2. See Samii (2013) for a similar argument regarding military integration Burundi, a country often framed as Rwanda's "mirror image".

Rwandan state *writ large*, being used to socialize citizens, civil servants and soldiers alike. Second, the RPF case demonstrates that rebel institutions may in fact precede war. Despite the war breaking out in October 1990, the RPF's institutional foundations can be traced back to 1979. As in Uganda, predecessor organizations and institutional precursors formatively shape rebel groups.

This chapter unfolds in 5 parts. First, I provide an organizational prehistory of the RPF, beginning with the formation of the exile organization, the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU), in June 1979. I show how RANU provided the initial political and administrative skeleton of the RPF, as well as supplying the RPF at its early stage with technical skills and an educated leadership class. I then trace the militarization and mass expansion of RANU as well as its tutelage under the Ugandan NRA. Third, I explain how the RPF's formative experiences shaped its strategy and institution-building during wartime. Finally, I turn to the post-victory era, drawing connective tissue between the RPF's pre- and post-victory institutions. Continuity in wartime institutions was essential to changing and reconstructing the Rwandan state. Unlike the previous cases, I do not focus on military and bureaucratic reconstruction *per se*, but analyze the broad ways in which the RPF's wartime institutions have been used to restructure state and society, as well as build the RPF's postwar electoral machinery.

A final note of caution: In reconstructing the history of the RPF, one must proceed with circumspection. Rebel groups are habitually secretive, security-obsessed and skilled in the production of mis- and dis-information — the RPF more than most.

5.1 The Organizational Prehistory of the RPF, 1959-1987

While a full historical accounting of the origins of the Rwandan exile diaspora are beyond the present analysis, a few key points are necessary to orient the case. In 1959, the Rwandan 'Hutu Revolution' had resulted in the bloody entrenchment of a chauvinist Hutu dictatorship. The violence and pogroms that both accompanied the revolution and intensified in the following years, resulted in the political elimination of the Tutsi in Rwandan politics. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsi fled into exile.[3] As substantial contingent, some 200,000 fled to the Ugandan West, where they quickly found themselves entangled in Ugandan politics. While small bands of Rwandan exiles, derogated as *Inyenzi* (cockroaches) by the Hutu regime, mounted military excursions in Rwanda, the bulk of refugees simply attempted to blend into their host societies (Reed 1996, 483)

While Uganda was initially a welcome refuge, Tutsi refugees increasingly came to experience increasing discrimination, at both the local and national level. Under Obote I and Amin, the refugees were convenient ethnic scapegoats for a host of troubles. Tutsi found themselves the victim of employment bans, and widespread ethnic discrimination. The Rwandan refugees' response to the privations of statelessness and ethnic discrimination, was to organize self-help groups. In June 1979, the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU) was formed.[4]

It is in RANU that the original organizational sinews of the RPF are to be found.

3. Exact figures are difficult to come by. Prunier (1998, 121) estimates an early figure of roughly 400,000, with that figure growing to between 800-900,0000 if children born in exile are taken into account.

4. RANU was originally named the Rwandan Refugees Welfare Association (RRWF) but renamed in mere months.

RANU at the outset was a tiny organization, a mere 100 members or so. What RANU lacked in size however, it made up for in educational and vocational profile. RANU founders were largely young highly-educated left-leaning intellectuals, boasting a variety of academic degrees and administrative skill. RANU founding member Gerald Gahima for example, held a Masters in Law from the LSE. Tito Rutaremara, who would go on to become a leading organizer and "chief ideologue" in the RPF, possessed doctorates in geography and urban planning. RANU organized cultural activities, including study groups focused on Rwandan political history, in the hopes of attracting dedicated and qualified activists to its cause. RANU set up administrative branches both regionally (Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zaire) and further afield (Canada, Belgium, the USA). By virtue of its extensive "tithing" of its members in the Rwandan diaspora, RANU was also able to mobilize funding (Mushemeza 2007, 103). Despite its modest size in early years, RANU rather quickly developed political machinery, organizing: "an annual RANU congress including regional chairmen, representatives of interest groups and professions, as well as a political bureau with a 26-person executive committee" (Waugh 2004, 36).

However, it was through RANU's rendezvous with the NRA that the RPF was born as a fully fledged politico-military institution. RANU, though it dedicated itself to the prospect of a future return to Rwanda, distanced itself from the *inyenzi*, eschewing military methods in favor of pacifistic strategies. However, the violence that accompanied Amin's overthrow, and the ascent of Obote II led RANU towards strategic reorientation. Per Mushemeza (2007, 103):

> In 1979, RANU advised its followers to obtain military training in their host states throughout the world. The defeat of Amin was an inspiration to refugees that it was possible to defeat dictatorship. The idea was that Banyarwanda refugees would disguise themselves as nationals of the host country or join a rebel group, as long as it enabled individuals to obtain

skills related to handling weapons of war.

RANU made a virtue of opportunity. The militarization of the diaspora was a near-certainty in 1979. With respect to the latter, many young Rwandan exiles, facing persecution by Obote II (and having bitter memories of the discrimination under Obote I), saw little choice but to rally behind the NRA. Indeed, Rwandan antagonism towards Amin and Obote preceded 1979, and a handful of Rwandans had been part of the NRA from the very beginning. As noted by Jones, Fred Rwigyema had fought alongside Museveni in FRONASA starting in 1976. Rwigyema and Paul Kagame were both members of the "Kabamba 40", the initial nucleus of the NRA that launched the opening act of the Bush War in 1981 — the raid on the Kambamba Barracks. Both would go on to reach the highest positions within the RPF.[5]

By 1982 however, as Obote-era violence ramped up, Rwandan recruitment into the NRA would swell into the thousands. The Luwero Triangle population was 20-40% Banyarwanda, and the exile community was swept up both in Museveni's recruitment and Obote's categorical targeting of the south. Once Rwandans began joining Museveni's group, the process snowballed quickly. With Obote identifying the NRA with the Rwandans writ-large, the Rwandan exiles turned to the NRA as sword and shield. By 1985, Rwandan exiles were roughly 1/4 of the 15,000 strong NRA. Indeed, by 1985 many more refugees were part of NRA than the RANU.

In this context, the RANU-NRA relationship was a happy marriage. The NRA had an appetite for educated recruits, doctors and teachers, that could organize and man the NRA's expansive governance portfolio. These, RANU could offer. As recounted by Kuperman (2002, 205), "Museveni told RANU that he needed medical doctors, so the organization sent many physicians, most notably Peter Bayingana." Bayingana,

5. Additionally, Rwigyema had been a member of RANU since its 1979 founding. Kagame would join 8 years later as RANU converted itself to the RPF.

who would go on to serve as Chief Medical Officer in the NRA, in turn acquired the sought-after martial skills. Years later, as a senior RPF officer, Bayingana described the experience as "Capacity building...we increasingly saw the need to master military science if we were ever to overthrow the Rwanda dictatorship" (Wrong 2021, 202).

However, the NRA was not merely the military finishing school for RANU, but helped inform the RANU organizational structure root-and-branch. 1985-1987 were watershed years for RANU, as it sought to instrumentalize its NRA connection as well as reproduce the NRA organizational formula. Pre-1985 RANU, was, much like the NRA, a Marxist-Leninist organization, with a small base of intellectuals. At its 1985 congress however, RANU convened a task force to embarked upon a comprehensive organizational restructuring. RANU sought to take advantage of the large now-militarized diaspora which had been a thoroughly under-tapped source of manpower. Its marching orders were, to reorient the RANU away from being an "intellectual talking club" to a grassroots organization with a military structure. As recalled by RANU Task Force Leader Tito Rutaremara:

> Until that time it [RANU] was a movement of intellectuals, of young educaed Rwandans in exile. The challenge we faced was to create a dynamic mass movement, involving the whole population. We discussed how to do this, wrote papers and suggested strategies, until the decision was taken to deploy the task force in 1987. (quoted in Waugh 2004, 38)

The RANU task forces' organizational decisionmaking from 1985-1987 shadows the NRA's 1982 decisionmaking closely. Like the NRA, RANU rapidly shed its original Marxist ideological clothing. To broaden its reach, RANU adopted in its place a thin and accommodating nationalism. It formulated, much like the post-merger NRA, a "minimalist agenda for maximum support"(Waugh 30). Accordingly, recalling the "feudalists, socialists, capitalists" hodgepodge within the NRA, RANU "abandoned

its quasi-Marxist, anti-monarchist, pacifist ideological focus in favor of a coalition "front" philosophy, welcoming capitalists, Christians, monarchists, militarists, and anyone else dedicated to achieving the refugees' return to Rwanda" (Kuperman 2002, 206). This expansive focus was enshrined in the RANU "Eight-Point Program", calling for: national unity, democracy, an end to corruption and malfeasance, a solution to the refugee problem, a progressive foreign policy, democratization of the armed forces, a greater commitment to social services, and the creation of a self-sustaining economy. In form, content, and function, the symmetry between the RANU "Eight-Point Program" and the NRA "Ten Point Program" is self-evident. RANU, like the NRA, had chosen pragmatism over ideological fussiness.

A change in recruitment tactics was made to match the rhetoric. RANU sent out its young supporters, often students, to refugee camps and settlements across East and Southeast Africa. Like the NRA, expansion was balanced by careful screening and popular participation. New recruits were canvassed, their views solicited and ultimately, studied for the purpose of garnering popular appeal and forging consensus. This information exchange was not a one-way street. RANU also sought to recruit using political education, recalling the civilian "sensitization" exercises conducted by the NRA. As described by Rutaremara:

> We first took young people who were coming from universities. We started teaching them, because if you want to become a political cadre, you have to get tools of analysis, and we were giving them a political education, which is teaching them what is politics, the definition of democracy, giving them the tools of analysis of analyzing things, teaching them the history of Rwanda, the methodology of mobilization and other things...After that, we would send them to camps or countries where we tell them to go and mobilize...By doing that, teaching those young ones are creating the political cadres who were supposed to go out and mobilize the youth we built the structures. (Tito Rutaremara interviewed by David Hausman 2010, 2)

However, no recruitment pool was as deep or as useful as the NRA itself. As put by Waugh (2004, 35), from 1983 until Obote's fall in 1986, RANU's paramount short-term aim could have been more succinctly described as "getting our men into the NRA". The victorious NRA was a resource and organizational gold mine for RANU, offering men, experience, and the resources of the Ugandan state itself. As the relationship deepened, so did the organizational symmetry. In the December 1987 Congress, RANU made three further organizational innovations that bear close resemblance to the NRA: First, RANU established autonomous regional structures, in which leaders were democratically elected all the way up from the cell to the branch, to the region. In turn, the elected regional chairmen would sit on RANU's congress, alongside the executive committee, and the emergent military high command (Reed 1996, 486). The electoral dimension, collective decision-making and politico-military powersharing were a beat-for-beat match for the NRA's RCs and High Command. Second, RANU created a strict code of conduct, with a particular focus on barring corruption and stemming information leaks — both of which feature in the NRA Code of Conduct.[6] RANU's final innovation was to rename itself — the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was born.

The RPF now grew within the NRA in secret. It was, as former RPF member Gerald Gahima recalled "a very serious crime, with serious consequences if discovered. They had to hide that they were members of another organization" (Wrong 2021, 202). Hiding the RPF's existence was made somewhat simpler by the fact that high-ranking RPF officers also held sensitive security positions within the NRA regime. Major General Fred Rwigyema stood at the very top as NRA Chief of Staff. Dr. Peter

6. Per the NRA Code of Conduct, "giving information to other organisations without the knowledge and consent of the leadership of the Movement" is punishable by death, while corruption merited lesser penalties.

Bayingana ran Army Health Services. The Army Computer service was “practically a pure Rwandan preserve" (Prunier 1998, 128) Paul Kagame was made deputy at the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), where he recruited RPF members into key positions (Jones 2014, 63). Kagame himself owed his position to a zealous dedication to the NRA code of conduct, harshly punishing soldiers for violations thereof. His disciplinarian tendencies earned him the name “Pilato", after Pontius Pilate (Stearns 2012, 49). Additionally, many RPF officers became NRA political commissars, learning closely the NRA’s classic combatant control techniques. RPF penetration of the NRA was very high, with the roster of Rwandan graduates of the Uganda Cadet Officers school reading “like the honour roll of Rwandan military elites in the post-genocidal era: James Kabarebe, Patrick Karegyeya, Kayumba Nyamwasa, John Nyavumba, and Wilson Rutayisire" (Jones 2014, 64).

In this way, the RPF grew to organizational maturity well before 1990. RANU supplied the NRA’s initial political infrastructure, while the NRA provided it with a comprehensive education in governance, combatant control and warfare.[7] Tito Rutaremara, characterized upon the RPF organizational trajectory by saying, “The RPF and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas were the only movements that started out with the political education and awareness of their members, moving to their armed struggle at a later time".[8] Like Athena springing from the head of Zeus, the RPF was able to leap into Rwanda with organizational philosophy, administrative staff, and

7. As noted in Waugh (2004, 39) there is admittedly a bit of a chicken-and-egg dimension to this characterization. Having been asked to what extent Museveni’s thinking on popular warfare and resistance gave the RPF a template, Rutaremara points out that as the same people formed both movements, it was only natural that the two would have common ideas.

8. While descriptively a correct characterization of the RPF, this overstates the broader point; the same politicization-before-militarization sequence was true for say, *Sendero Luminoso* in Peru. Indeed, several rebel groups “incubate" prior to launching warfare. See Blaxland 2020.

combatant-control infrastructure, fully-formed.[9]

5.2 Invasion, Indigeneity and Institutions, 1987-1994

By 1990, either the RPF had worn out its welcome in Uganda, or the time was ripe for invading Rwanda. The precise circumstances surrounding the invasion are unclear, and indeed the two characterizations are not mutually exclusive. However, by 1990, suffice to say the RPF had decided that its high-ranking positions in the Ugandan state were no longer entirely secure, while the Rwandan Habyarimana regime seemed increasingly fragile. The decision was made to prepare for invasion.

At the beginning of the invasion the RPF operated with great confidence. The success of the NRA had been a psychological boost to the RPF, which began to boast not-so-secretly of its plans to take Rwanda (Prunier 1998, 126). Its confidence was warranted. RPF leadership collectively possessed a level of rebel experience almost without parallel in the history of the continent. Rwigyema had been fighting since 1976 with FRONASA, Kagame since 1981. Virtually the entire RPF had cut its teeth fighting counterinsurgency after 1986. Its social profile was intellectually and technically impressive, a sign of both its RANU parentage and the experience of holding state power in Uganda. A glance at the early RPF gives a sense of its technical and administrative abilities that would have been the envy of the 1981 NRA: "..the RPF resembles little the poor peasant-based bush NRA which was led by a handful of university graduates...out of every six people, two have gone to university, three

9. Jones (2004, 62) attributes RANU success directly to the NRA example: "RANU was dramatically more successful at organisation and mobilisation than any prior Rwandan organisation in Uganda (in part because it directly borrowed the organisational blueprint of the NRM, complete with councils, directorates, a strong intelligence wing, and a Leninist vanguard endowed with complete control over the direction of strategy), and for the first time since the 1960s raised seriously the possibility of return to Rwanda, saturated in the NRM's revolutionary language of cadre, struggle, resistance, and patriotic unity".

to secondary school, one to primary school...the RPF has 42 medical doctors as well as vets, engineers, lawyers, accountants and at least one priest" (Watson 1992, 54). Militarily, as well as administratively, the RPF seemed good to go. The RPF army, crossing into Rwanda on October 1, 1990, began with 3,000 troops. 4,000 civilians joined the group on the way.[10]

Nevertheless, the early days of the invasion dashed the RPF's initial optimism. The initial incursion into Rwanda was a disaster. The RPF's leader Fred Rwigyema, was shot in the head and killed on October 2, the second day of the conflict. Having nevertheless pushed forward 100 km over the next three weeks, the RPF received two more stinging blows. Rwigyema's immediate subordinates, Chris Bunyenyezi and Dr. Peter Bayingana were also killed. Reinforced by Belgium, France and Zaire, the *Forces armées rwandaises* (FAR), the Rwandan State Army, retook the lost territory. The RPF suffered a massive organizational shock — multiple decapitations and territorial loss in quick succession. The RPF retreated to the Virunga mountains in Uganda's remote North. In November, Paul Kagame, who had been training the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, returned to assume command.

Kagame's command saw the RPF fall back on a familiar strategy. As Kagame himself said, it was "the beginning of a protracted popular war" (quoted in Prunier 1995, 96). The initial invasion had exposed some of the RPF's previously unknown organizational weaknesses viz. lack of coordination and logistical failures.[11] However, it also testifies to the RPF's organizational strength. There are few rebel groups who could have withstood massive, successive setbacks of the kind the RPF did without suffering large-scale defection and organizational collapse. However, under Kagame,

10. Estimates vary. Prunier (1998, 130) puts the figure at 2000 total men. Reed (1996, 487-488) puts the initial force at 4000, reaching around 10,000 at the time of crossing.

11. See Kuperman 2002, 218

the RPF underwent a disciplinary overhaul. Kagame's return was accompanied by an intensification of internal disciplinary practices and the installation of a sterner and more comprehensive code of conduct. This allowed RPF discipline to keep pace with recruitment and expansion. By 1992 it had almost tripled in size to 12,000 men (Prunier 1998, 132). Nevertheless, the RPF continued to be a tightly controlled ship. Political commissars, and intelligence officers from the RPF's security wing, the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) penetrated every military unit.

The RPF's primary challenges at this stage however, were not its intra-rebel relations, but its lack of rebel-civilian ties. The RPF was virtually a completely foreign creation. The RPF army was "stole[n] from Uganda" (Kagame quoted in Reno 2011, 144-145). Even its funding, nearly 1 million a year at this point, drew virtually entirely from the diaspora. The RPF's exile character had made it an interloper in its own country. Civilians fled the initial RPF advances in droves. The initial defeat knocked back the RPF's ability to even take territory. Initial civilian fears, stoked by government propaganda, also became a serious challenge for the RPF in setting up liberated zones. Only after late 1992 did the RPF come to control extensive, and populated, territory. As the RPF was to take power on July 4, 1994, its wartime governance was squeezed into 2 short years.

RPF liberated zones were structured rather like the NRA's, albeit on a smaller social scale due to the populations' depletion via flight and genocide. Nevertheless, the classic elements of welfare provision and "democratic" governance, remain. Watson (1992, 55), characterizing the RPF controlled village of Bungwe, reveals "the villagers have elected leaders and sell crops to the RPF in return for essential commodities. An RPF doctor is assigned to them, delivering babies and providing medicine". Rutaremara gives a more comprehensive accounting. Political cadres were used to organize the election of village committees, through which basic welfare services and dispute

resolution would be administered (Tito Rutaremara interview by David Hausman 2010, 2). This engagement with the locals provided the NRA with valuable intelligence and information. This system turned largely on the use of political cadres and commissars to organize locals, disseminate RPF ideology and extract information. As the *de facto* local administrative staff of the RPF, these cadres had to be versed in governance. Accordingly, the cadres depended on an organizational manual. Népo Rugemintwaza, an RPF political cadre who later became Rwanda's director of territorial administration, recalls, "There was a library in the bush...The manual included a section on governance, and how to operationalize reconciliation" (quoted in Hausman 2010, 4). The manual was, additionally a living document, to which cadres added as more wartime administrative experience was acquired. By 1994, the manual was over 800 pages long (Hausman 2010, 4).

The RPF also engaged in domestic grassroots mobilization. Despite claims the RPF was largely disinterested in civilian welfare during the war (see Kuperman 2002), it nevertheless created safe villages for internally displaced civilians. These villages also doubled as recruitment areas for the RPF, which exposed displaced persons to its political education regimen to mobilize them behind the RPF goals. The signature instrument of RPF moblization was *ingando*. Per Mgbako (2005, 208), "From 1990 to 1993, the RPF installed participants in *ingandos* or "RPF schools" for three weeks, after which participants would be expected to return to their villages and disseminate pro-RPF ideology". Under the auspices of cadres and commissars, *ingando* camps and courses were set up in RPF territory.

Various academic works have noted that *ingando* bears considerable similarity the the NRA's *chaka-mchaka* e.g. Purdeková (2022; 2011); Sundberg (2016); Mgbako (2005). Straus and Waldorf (2011, 14), state it plainly, "*ingando* solidarity camps are lifted from Uganda's *chaka-mchaka* camps (right down to the weapons

training for students)". Indeed, participants at the *ingando* schools use the term *chaka-mchaka* directly, referring to the morning marching exercise as *chaka-mchaka*. Like *chaka-mchaka*, political education proved the main focus, with lessons on political history, liberation and (nonethnic) solidarity. *Ingando* also linked politics to war, including weapons training and courses on "demystifying" the soldier. This bore close resemblance to *chaka-mchaka's* emphasis on "demystification of the gun and political education" (Bouckaert 1999, 66). Purdeková's (2022, 180) interview with an RPF informant provides the particulars:

> At the beginning of the 1990s, 1991/1992, the RPF had captured a piece of land in the north [of Rwanda] and then organized *ingando* with military aspects there, but even for civilian cadres [they offered] military and political training. If they could, they would train everyone militarily, to demystify weapons, so that people would not be afraid of soldiers...If we could train the whole population [we would], it is a way to upgrade their minds to this mystification of army and soldiers. [Purdeková: And political education?] Political education was most important, there was a message to deliver.

With these wartime governance instruments under its belt, the RPF asssumed power on July 4, 1994. The task of postwar reconstruction would see these very same instruments redeployed.

5.3 State Inheritance and Insecurity

Jones (2014, 51) provides a crisp summary of the state weakness that greeted the RPF victors:

> Approximately 40% of the population were dead or had fled, including around 75% of government employees, leaving a country with almost all

> infrastructure destroyed, all banks and businesses plundered, all agricultural production lost. There was a deeply traumatised population of survivors and an unspecifiable number of people complicit in the genocide. There were one million internally displaced refugees (13% of the population), 400,000 widows, 500,000 orphans, 130,000 imprisoned on suspicion of committing acts of genocide, and over half a million 'old- caseload' refugees returning in a chaotic fashion...assistance of any description from the international community was slow in coming. Although 1 billion had been pledged in humanitarian aid, it was impossible to find 4.5 million to pay Rwanda's arrears to the World Bank in order to release 250 million in available loans...

State weakness had created extraordinary human suffering and with it, commensurately large demands for the restoration of public order and welfare. These tasks of state reconstruction however, were complicated by the core threats to the survival of the RPF regime.

First was insurgency. The retreating FAR and *Interahamwe* militias, given initial cover by the French Army's "Turquoise Zone", had ultimately retreated behind the Zairean border, taking some 1.5 million civilians in tow. There, in the refugee camps, the machinery of genocide revved up anew. The now ex-FAR had a massive supply of men and resources. French support had allowed them to retreat in good order, emptying the treasury on the way. As a result, the exiled state's fiscal and administrative infrastructure was intact — civil servants in the Former Government of Rwanda (FGOR) continued to be paid on time! The military and administrative apparatus of the former government had simply decamped across the border, where they held a large cross-section of the population as an additional mobilization and resource base. As former *génocidaire* leader Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza boasted in an interview, "Even if the RPF has won a military victory, it will not have the power. It has only the bullets. We have the population" (quoted in Prunier 1995, 314). The security situation on Rwanda's Northern border (with Zaire) deteriorated rapidly.

Anti-Tutsi pogroms, attacks on Tutsi refugee camps, prison raids, and assassination of RPF local officials, signaled the birth of a dangerous insurgency. By 1995, ex-FAR insurgent violence had penetrated far over the border, reaching the capital Kigali and the second-largest city, Butare. The Rwandan Northwest was fully in the grips of insurgency. While ethnic integration of the military offered a potential way out, it was, to use Prunier's (2009, 7) expression, "a bit like asking Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer in 1949 to include former Nazis in his government for the sake of national reconciliation". Nevertheless, the RPF recognized the virtues (indeed, the necessity) of incorporating ex-FAR soldiers into the new Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). The army would need to be recombined, but remade, with old combatants being captured and resocialized under the RPF gaze.

Second, the RPF, recognizing the broad social mobilization that had underpinned the genocide, also sought to remake society. The RPF thus embarked on a wide-ranging process of ideological reeingeneering, turning the institutions used to resocialize the military on the country at large. *Ingando* in many respects retreads the trajectory taken by *chaka-mchaka*. While initially pioneered in liberated zones as an instrument used to recruit, screen and socialize new combatants during wartime, *ingando* aims to supply a standardized national narrative of Rwandan history and community that aims at nothing less than the creation of a new "imagined community" via the creation of what the RPF calls "a new citizen" (Purdeková 2022, 200). This project serves RPF political survival, by uprooting the ideological and ideational basis of genocide, as well as by forcing citizens to "perform" obedience, and thereby testify to the RPF's political authority. Through both genuine internalization and performed obedience, *ingando* dampens the threat of future violence, closing the social cleavages that hitherto functioned as the basis of genocide.

Finally, over the medium-term, the RPF required a political machinery capable of

dominating elections. As a tiny minority group, the RPF has exercised tight control over the electoral process in order to retain political power. While quite evidently lacking in freeness and fairness, elections are a necessary legitimizing device for the RPF, allowing them to claim democratic standing, and pacify the donor community. However, this should not give the impression that electoral victory was any mean feat; the RPF was demographically outmatched, and faced longstanding Hutu-based parties that were able to mobilize their political constituencies into mass violence. The RPF felt that, to avoid any electoral "surprises", it was necessary to both cultivate a national party-state infrastructure capable of mass mobilization, as well as bend democratic rules "out of all recognition" (Jones 2014, 131). As such, the RPF had to transform itself from an exile "vanguard", into a party with a domestic mass base — by necessity incorporating the Hutu population. While this process has been heavily "top-down", its origins lie in the RPF's wartime governance practices. These practices provided a test-run of local election management, giving the RPF the staff, initial social ties, and template from which to generalize nation-wide. As such, party cadres and commissars during the war became the administrative "proconsuls" of the RPF, sent outwards from the political center to expand the RPF's infrastructural power.

5.4 The RPF Regime

5.4.1 Soldiers and the State: Military Reconstruction and Counterinsurgency

This section broadly focuses on the RPF's wartime organizational structures used to restructure the Rwandan army. As mentioned, the RPF faced a mature and genocidal Northern insurgency from the start. The earliest insurgent operation *Op-*

eration Insecticide, unambiguously broadcast the insurgents' intent — the extermination of the *inyenzi* (Rugasara et al. 2009, 196). Having retained considerable military strengths, the ex-FAR exploited Zairean refugee camps, as well as the welcoming Mobutu regime, as a deep resrvoir of manpower and arms respectively. The ex-FAR recuperated from their initial defeat rapidly. As early as 1994, the ex-FAR attempted to make Northwestern Uganda ungovernable, using sabotage, intimidation, assassination and banditry.

However, while the refugees and arms offered the ex-FAR strength, the mainspring of the insurgency was the local population. Many ex-FAR operating across the border retained local ties to the domestic Rwandan population. Northwestern Uganda was the primary recruitment grounds of the FAR military. As recalled by a former *Sous-Prefet*, "'Almost every family from this region has a relation or friend amongst those that insist they will come back to take power. The people in the north are fighting for an ideology which they learned long ago" (quoted in Omaar and de Waal 1998, 15). Additionally, the ethnic polarization and mobilization accompanying the genocide made virtually all Hutu natural allies. Collaboration arose out of genuine sympathy, susceptibility to ex-FAR intimidation, or fear of RPF reprisal. The ex-FAR drew on all three to capture Hutu support: reaffirming the former government's "genocide ideology" in propaganda, killing Hutu moderates and playing upon the populations' fears that all Hutu were presumptive *génocidaires* in the eyes of the RPF (Orth 2001, 86). Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the RPF victory, reprisal killings and heavy-handed counterinsurgency by the new national Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), did much to corroborate the ex-FAR narrative. Local populations thereby provided the ex-FAR with provisions, intelligence, recruits and military support. Of particular use were local government officials loyal to the *ancien régime*. These government officials played an important role in the prolongation of conflict in the Northwest, providing

travel passes to infiltrators, and mobilizing entire communes behind ex-FAR offensives (Jackson 2004, 32). Quickly, the ex-FAR graduated to mlitary operations on a grander scale. By 1997, the RPF found itself clashing with battalion sized ex-FAR units in the Northwest border prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (Orth 2001, 89).

From the start, the victorious RPF faced a serious and deteriorating security situation. Burgess (2014, 95) argues that, "like the communist Chinese, the RPF/RPA was faced with the problem of having too small an army to secure the country and counterrevolutionary forces".[12] Integration of ex-FAR had the advantage of securing the RPF's manpower needs, as well as providing the informational advantages so vital to counterinsurgency. However, it was a bitter pill to swallow. Many RPF rank and file soldiers favored retribution and exclusion of ex-FAR soldiers (Burgess 2014, 91). The RPF leadership not only faced the prospect of dissent among veterans in the rank-and-file, but the integrated rivals themselves constituted a potential fifth column inside the nascent RPA. As put by Burgess (2014, 99), "if not handled skillfully, integration could have led to mutiny and a threat to the RPF regime itself". Finally, winning over the Hutu required that the RPF exercise greater control over RPA. The U.S. Defense Attaché in Kinshasa, tasked in 1994 with establishing relations with the RPF, noted that, "Closer analysis of this issue pointed to the rapid expansion of the RPF ranks with lesser-trained soldiers during 1993 and 1994 [was] a primary source discipline problem" (Odom 2006, 7).[13]

The RPA however, was able to respond to these initial military challenges, in

12. As observed by the theory, the need to fortify the post-victory regime against insurgency suggests *re-militarization and integration* is of greater immediate concern than the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) processes that have become the bread and butter of peacebuilding approaches.

13. The original RPF had numbered 4,000. By 1995, the RPF and FAR were roughly evenly matched at *50,000* men, but the RPF found itself stretched thin across territory, as well as badly disadvantaged intelligence-wise.

large part through reinvigorating its existing combatant control infrastructure. First, though initially reluctant, by 1997 the RPF reined in combatants in a bid for civilian support: "Several high-ranking officers were prosecuted. The government also went to considerable lengths to inform civilians in the North-West of their efforts. In March 1997 the government set up the RMIP (Rwanda Military Information Platoon – built out of the propaganda corps of the struggle period)" (Jones 2014, 113). In both respects, wartime institutions reasserted themselves. The existing code of conduct was merely enforced, while the RMIP was merely the reinvented propaganda corps. The corps, built out of RPF cadres and commissars, now found itself engaging in political education using posters, leaflet drops, and public meetings to convey the RPF's commitment to national reconciliation. As recalled by former RPA chief of staff James Kabarebe, "To defeat them...we had to convince them that we would not take them to a small Guantanamo Bay. I needed to understand what they were running from. You need to be both a psychologist and a soldier to win this struggle" (quoted in Mills 2008, 77). By late 1997, this strategy began to pay dividends, with more and more Hutu in the Northwest refusing to collaborate with ex-FAR.

Second, the RPF mounted an expansive campaign of integrating ex-FAR into the RPA. Despite the risks, Kagame and senior RPF leaders were nevertheless confident that the RPA had the capacity to reeducate and thereby absorb former enemies (Burgess 2014, 91). As noted by Jones "What explains this integrative capacity is, firstly, a guerrilla army methodology forged in the refugee camps of Uganda and borrowed in part from the NRA, and secondly, a doctrine formed in response to the need to press ex-FAR into the RPA in 1998 to fight in the counter-insurgency in the north-west of the country". Past practice met present need, with the RPF setting up camps set up to resocialize and re-educate ex-FAR soldiers. These camps, as in the Bush War, were *ingando*, organized with the explicit intent of nation-building,

de-ethnicization, and military cohesion. The *ingando* program, as in the bush war, involved meetings and political education lectures dedicated to eliminating ethnic stereotypes, recount the causes of the genocide, and affirm a new national project of trust and togetherness. *Ingando* sessions were conducted in ethnically mixed units, with the intent of fostering cross-ethnic cohesion. Finally, these efforts, despite the pressing military needs of the RPA, did not skimp on length and intensity. At Gako Camp, the program lasted a full 5-6 months, upon which the graduating class was integrated into the new RPA (Jones 2014, 81). Similar exercises would take place throughout the late 90s, allowing the RPF to benefit from an enormous influx of ex-FAR manpower. Between 1995 and 1997, 10,500 ex-FAR were integrated into the RPA (Rugasara et al. 2009, 202).

As it was in the NRA case, RPF *ingando* dampened the risks of military integration while unlocking the benefits. In spring of 1998, the integration of ex-FAR into the RPF was decisive in turning the tide of the war. Proceeding by the dictum that "the best counter insurgent is a former insurgent", the RPF integrated Hutu from the Gisenyi and Ruhengeri prefectures, near the border (Jones 2014, 79). This was risky — both prefectures had been a "bastion of Hutu power" and had been a large contributor to the ex-FAR security apparatus. Nevertheless, the RPF *ingando* camps proved effective in converting rivals to comrades. Additionally, the RPF retained its basic politico-military organizational structure from the bush war — political commissars embedded at every level of the army continued to operate as political educators and internal surveillance. The RPF was able to retrieve benefits of integration without incurring potential security or coup risks. These benefits were extensive. The integrated ex-FAR not only "knew all the tricks of the ex-FAR" (Orth 2001, 94), allowing the RPA to harvest critical military information, but also credibly signaled to the domestic population the RPA's commitment to ethnic integration and non-reprisal.

As such, various scholars (Burgess 2014; Jones 2014, 79; Orth 2001, 94) frame the 1998 incorporation of the ex-FAR as a turning point in the counterinsurgency, and critical to the defeat of the ex-FAR in the Northeast.

Since 1994, this pattern of extensive integration and military socialization has been a constant in the RPA, resulting in the army doubling in size between 1994 and 2002 (Levitsky and Way 2022, 339). This has given the RPF the military musculature to not merely stabilize order in Rwanda, but also to launch operations in the Congo, as well as peacekeeping across the continent. The reputation of the RPA forces in the latter is notable. RPA forces are widely considered the gold standard of continental peacekeepers, and have won praise for their training and discipline (Jowell 2014, 1). This is all the more remarkable considering that foreign deployments constitute a scenario where the military inherently lacks social ties to the population. The RPA has, by virtue of its long-established discipline and socialization infrastructure, and strong core of "Ugandan" veterans, made effective peacekeepers out of former *génocidaires*.

5.4.2 Social Engineering and Social Control

Importantly, *ingando* was used to reeducate both soldiers and civilians alike. The RPF recognized that social support had been vital to both the genocide and the counterinsurgency. Similarly, the recreation of state-like structures in the Congolese refugee camps, under the control of the FAR, meant that repatriated refugees were themselves a potential security threat — being heavily exposed to the ideological project emphasized by the *ancien régime*. Accordingly, *Ingando* was made mandatory for all repatriated refugees from the Congolese camps, becoming the primary instrument of social re-engineering used by the RPF. As observed by Purdeková (2022, 181),

"*ingando* transformed from a wartime and exile political institution to a government-employed strategy of social re-engineering on a large scale". While *ingando* initially functioned as an instrument of socializing potential new recruits, the postwar iteration of *ingando*, enrolled society writ large (Verma 2013, 79–81). RPA Political commissars have reprised their military role in civilian-directed *ingando* camps. In this way, the RPF has sought to embed its broader *de-ethnicizing* social campaign within the minds of the population. Indeed, *ingando* rapidly expanded its target social constituency. Hutu and Tutsi "returnees", university students, civil servants, teachers, former prisoners, sex workers, and even street urchins have fallen with *ingando's* remit — indeed, the official RPF government policy ambition was for *every* Rwandan citizen to have completed ingando by 2020 (Purdeková 2022, 174-188). While laws banning "divisionism", "genocide ideology" and even the public mention of ethnicity have given teeth to the RPF project, *ingando* aims to efface ethnic thinking entirely (McDoom 2022, 550-551). The civic education program therein promotes a supra-ethnic Rwandan identity with the goal of eradicating social division at its ideational root.

Ironically, the RPF's use of *ingando* as a grassroots instrument is contradicted by its foreign origins. The RPF has since sought to reverse engineer *ingando's* origins to give it the retroactive patina of domestic authenticity, claiming that *ingando* is descended from the Kiyarwanda from verb *Kugandika*, describing the act of interrupting daily activities to reflect upon and find solutions to challenges facing the nation (Melvin 2013, 3). Nevertheless, Mgbako (2005) finds little indication of the term *ingando* being used to refer to *Kugandika*, or descending from *Kugandika*. Rather, this "invented tradition" is of a piece with the RPF's broad efforts to assert domestic legitimacy by downplaying its exile, and foreign, origins.

As a final commonality with the NRA experience, *ingando* has also been a tool

through which Rwanda has sought to stamp out political pluralism, casting it as a Trojan horse for ethnic division. *Ingando*, despite its ostensible uses as a solidarity device, has been easily retooled as an instrument of authoritarian social control in the postwar era.

5.4.3 Building an Electoral Machine

Democracy has, from the start, been integral to the RPF's appearance of legitimacy. However, the victorious RPF also found itself in a position where elections were little more than censuses. Accordingly, the RPF has deployed an extensive range of anti-democratic instruments to dominate and subvert Rwandan elections. RPF vote rigging, party bans, opposition intimidation, bribery and have largely made Rwandan elections a foregone conclusion. Observers of the 2006 Rwandan election found "the results were known in advance in all the sites visited" and "there was no free choice for candidates by the voters" (Reyntjens 2013, 44).

Yet, despite the heavy use of vote rigging, the RPF has not abnegated building an electoral machine — quite the contrary. The RPF set about establishing itself as a genuine mass party in anticipation of elections. As noted by Jones, "the RPF was not forced into running any of these elections. Rather, the regularisation of the RPF's authority had been part of the plan from the start". While the RPF's embrace of elections did not extend to the "free and fair" dimensions, it nevertheless sought to use mass mobilization as one (of its many) tools of electoral dominance. RPF elections are won by crushing margins. While doubtless rigged, even engaging in this kind of thorough manipulation requires the joint coordination of state and party actors, political organizers, electoral officials, and local leaders as multiple administrative levels. What I term the RPF "electoral machine" is a party-state apparatus that can

both mobilize at the bottom and rig at the top.

Why does the RPF bother with mass mobilization or elections at all? Virtually all scholarly treatments of Rwandan elections conclude that the transparent vote-rigging renders these elections profoundly antidemocratic exercises. Nevertheless, the RPF pursues elections for the simple reason that even with their evident rigging, the RPF has been able to garner international support, and pacify donors, by performing elections. Second, vote-rigging in and of itself is a fickle instrument. As noted by Levitsky and Way (2012, 12), even elections that are not free and fair can make autocrats "sweat". They require considerable cost and effort, and may incur international blowback. More pressingly, autocrats often miscalculate the effectiveness of vote-rigging. Treisman (2020, 803-804), finds that, since 1800, roughly 20% of democracies have emerged "by mistake", after autocrats' election-rigging fails and instead elections award surprise victories to the opposition. Even rigged elections are a dangerous game.

The RPFs initial experiences with elections seemed to confirm these fears. Reyntjens (2013, 7, n.16) summarizes: "The RPF conducted an electoral campaign for mayors in the demilitarized north in 1993 but Habyarimana's party took all the posts. The RPF realized then that it stood no chance in an open political contest". While Reyntjens is correct that all the RPF's subsequent elections would indeed be "closed" by extensive manipulation, the RPF was also spurred into party-building. In this, the RPF continued a process began during the wartime struggle. RANU's transformation to the RPF witnessed a similar process of organizational "massification", to transform the RPF from a small intellectual exile group, to a mass exile constituency. As it had in the liberated zones in 1992-1994, the RPF sought to take it a step further, growing from exile vanguard to domestic mass party.

As such, per Jones (2014, 132-133), the RPF fell back on the personnel and

practices that organized its liberated zones:

> Cadres that had first been set up in the war to mobilise, recruit and spread the RPF message in liberated zones were revived. These were the same individuals which had, in the immediate aftermath of the genocide, been responsible for the distribution of limited chains of resources, deciding on the allocation of houses in the chaos of the old caseload refugees returning, and administering order in zones not directly controlled by the military...Their connection to the politico-military structures of the struggle period, however, made them sufficiently trusted to be endowed with the project of building the RPF in the countryside, and their role as minor big men in the genocidal aftermath gave them the necessary knowledge and resources...the cadres were given the new mission of electoral victory and turning the RPF into a mass party.459 RPF cells were to be created in every administrative cell with the goal of selecting candidates for the March 1999 local elections...

Consistent with Zaks (2017), the RPF's experience in liberated zones had supplied it with "proto-party structures", that crystallized into party infrastructure after victory. The RPF's commissars and cadres became administrative, electoral and party officials. Wartime experience in liberated zones anointed these individuals as the RPF's postwar proconsuls. The RPF's narrow and brief wartime territorial control left vast areas untouched, ungoverned and politically unreconstructed. The RPF was however able to engage in "top down" machine-building, sending out these experienced proconsuls to reproduce RPF structures in the countryside.

As mentioned, mass mobilization helped the RPF avoid any (however unlikely) electoral "surprises". However, the RPF's mass recruitment has itself introduced a concern. Per Waldorf (2017, 79), after the RPF's mass recruitment campaign, it became difficult to distinguish opportunists from believers. RPF leadership is not sufficiently confident that these new Hutu recruits would actually vote for the RPF in free and fair elections. To tamp down this risk, the RPF has again deployed trusted wartime instruments, hoping that the *ingando* camps would help the RPF

discover and create a generation of trusted pro-RPF Hutu politicians (Jones 2014, 134). *Ingando* became "the foundational basis of mass sensitisation, but also political recruitment, and not-too-subtle urging to vote for particular candidates" (Jones 2014, 133). The successful local elections of rural Hutu on the RPF slate, despite voting irregularities has gone a ways towards enhancing RPF credibility among Hutu in the countryside (Jones 2014, 141). While the RPF is yet to submit itself to the ultimate test of free and fair elections, it nevertheless has, to a considerable extent, "indigenized" itself at the lower levels. The construction of this electoral mass base has required that the RPF redeploy its wartime institutions towards state-, nation-, and party-building.

5.5 Conclusion: Continuity and Change in the RPF

The final exercise of this chapter is to reexamine the Rwandan case. First, I evaluate the role of wartime institutions in Rwanda's postwar reconstruction, discussing the degree of continuity and change. Second, I discuss how the case, when taken in tandem with Uganda, helps us more fully understand the causes and legacies of wartime institutions.

In the short-and-medium term, the RPF faced three threats to regime durability: insurgency, a skeptical and potentially hostile mass population, and the need for electoral legitimation. To triumph in counterinsurgency, banish the specter of future violence, and win at the ballot box, the RPF drew on its wartime institutions. *Ingando* and commissar structures helped re-socialize and integrate ex-FAR soldiers, converting "poacher to gameskeeper" as it were. Despite initial resistance within the RPF rank and file, and a degree of apprehensiveness regarding the incorporation of former rivals within the army, the RPF's wartime combatant controls provided

the RPF with a solid organization foundation capable of withstanding demographic change. Indeed, the RPF showed itself capable of transforming a broad social constituency, generalizing its chief wartime socializing structure, *ingando*, nationwide. Finally, RPF commissars and their experience with popular institution-building during the war became the seed of the RPFs postwar electoral machinery. The model of the "liberated zones" became the basis of the RPF electoral machine. A strong back of wartime institutions helped RPF extend infrastructural power in the post-war era, notwithstanding initially slim territorial holdings. The RPF case is an excellent example of how wartime institutions afford rebel groups a portable organizational template that can be exported far beyond the liberated zones to transform "new" social constituencies.

The RPF case also pairs well with the Uganda cases in Chapter 4. The RPF and the NRA cases jointly suggest that scholars would benefit from "backdating" rebel governance — looking at the precursor experiences of rebel groups and rebel leaders prior to the war in question. The diffusion of organizational models across space and time constitute an under-acknowledged determinant of rebel governance.[14] Second, the RPF also provides something of a counterfactual for the UNLA. Like the UNLA, the RPF was (1) an exile group that (2) operated from a position of relative military strength for much of the war and (3) fought a relatively brief conflict.[15] Nevertheless, the RPF remained largely faithful to the NRA model, using its strengths to engage in wartime administration of territory and thereby build governance experience and

14. For a noteworthy exception, see Stewart (2021). However, Stewart (2021) largely focuses on the diffusion of the "China" model, looking at the diffusion of the CCP's wartime governance practices worldwide. In this project however, rebel governance is rather a more local affair, with rebels borrowing from proximate organizational models.

15. While the 4 year Rwandan Civil War is obviously longer than the 1979 Liberation War, it bears mentioning that the Rwandan Civil War's length is in the bottom quartile of all civil wars terminating in rebel victory, and that the RPF was only, practically, able to administer territory after mid-1992.

social ties. Without these wartime institutions, it is easy to see how the RPF may have found itself in a situation similar to the UNLA. An RPF unable to incorporate ex-FAR combatants may have collapsed under the pressures of failed counterinsurgency. Additionally it is noteworthy that the RPF, despite its vote-rigging, has not experienced the explosion of post-election violence that accompanied Obote's 1980 victory. The RPF, possessing a denser portfolio of wartime institutions, has simply been able to bring superior political control to bear upon state and society.

Chapter 6 | Conclusions, Extensions, and Implications

This chapter proceeds in three parts. First, I summarize the framing, theoretical logic, and main findings of the dissertation. I then turn to a broader discussion of where this dissertation fits within, and expands, the current scholarly literature. Having outlined the academic contributions of the dissertation, I then consider the policy audience, and the lessons policymakers can draw from this project. I suggest two lessons for policymakers with the aim of mapping out path by which the international community can alter rebels' incentive structure for providing wartime governance, as well as tempering policymakers' expectations regarding postwar stability and regime type.

6.1 Summary of Dissertation and Findings

Why do some rebel victors successfully create durable regimes underpinned by powerful states, while others fail? This dissertation provides a novel theorizing of the trajectories of rebel regimes, and locates this variation within rebel victors' *wartime institutions*. Previous studies have largely sidestepped the variation among victors, treating victory not only as an undifferentiated category of actors and civil war outcomes, but also framing them as a gateway to postwar stability and regime durability. Further, several works in the conflict termination and regime durability literature

apply an essentially *bellicist* logic to rebel victors, anticipating that formative experiences in war have left them in possessing of disciplined armed forces and robust infrastructural powers, and therefore ideally positioned to construct strong states, durable regimes, and lasting political order.

This dissertation interrogates all of these premises, identifying the expansive variation among rebel victors and their successor regimes, as well as showing that war in and of itself does not produce institutional strength. Despite a common history of violence, rebel victors vary markedly in their ability to deliver lasting order and establish long-lived regimes. Some victors, like those Eritrea and China, establish powerful and stable political monopolies. For others, victory ends ignominiously. In Somalia and Liberia for example, rebel victory was followed by renewed conflict, state breakdown and regime overthrow. Rebel victory in war does not necessarily produce political order. In Chapter 2, I stand the bellicist logic on its head, demonstrating that war-making leaves newborn rebel regimes vulnerable to breakdown. State weakness in the immediate aftermath of victory paves the way for a recrudescence of violent conflict. Both defeated state agents and new rebel entrepreneurs exploit the brokenness of postwar states to develop into mature insurgencies and potentially overthrow rebel regimes. State weakness is a boon to new challengers and a burden to rebel victors, who struggle to reconstruct and rehabilitate the states they inherit. The fact that many rebel regimes are indeed violently overthrown in the post-victory era exposes further limitations of the bellicist paradigm. Many rebel victors, despite a history of war-making, simply do not possess the institutional strengths needed to reconstruct powerful postwar states.

This dissertation rejects the premise that victorious rebels are institutionally strong by default, by virtue of simply winning war. Rather, this dissertation identifies a conscious decision to invest in civilian governance and combatant control, even in

militarily inauspicious circumstances, as the key to regime durability and state reconstruction in the aftermath of victory. I argue that many rebels opt against building these institutions, as their construction consumes time and siphons resources from the battlefield. However, investing in wartime institutions yields postwar dividends. I theorize that rebels with a significant complement of these institutions gain a "flying start" on postwar statebuilding. These wartime institutions mirror and simulate the coercive and infrastructural dimensions of state power. Rebels who construct such institutions in wartime, essentially engage in "dress rehearsals" for postwar statebuilding. Well-institutionalized victors ascend to power with institutions that can be readily "scaled up" into nation-wide state structures. In turn, these rebuilt, robust state structures in turn underwrite regime durability. By contrast, rebels without extensive wartime institutions face a comparatively fraught statebuilding process. They must either attempt to resurrect *prewar state structures*, or build new state structures from scratch. State resurrection is handicapped by the inherent weakness of pre-victory state structures, as well as their further depletion through war. State-building from scratch requires that rebel victors, that are novices to governing rapidly, develop governing expertise in the tumultuous post-victory era. "Learning on the job" while simultaneously contending with war, disease, and population displacement would test the mettle of even seasoned governing actors, much less newborn rebel regimes. As such, I argue rebel victors without wartime institutions face steeper barriers to state reconstruction, and are more likely to suffer regime breakdown. As a prequel to statistical analysis, I then outline competing arguments drawn from the relevant literatures, that may explain the variation in rebel regime trajectories.

Chapter 3 provided an empirical test of the theoretical claims. I introduce the VICTOR dataset, original global data on the wartime institutions and successor regime trajectories of all rebel victors from 1945-2014. I collect data on six wartime

institutions: rebel disciplinary and enforcement structures, commissars, political education regimens, social service provision, taxation and the establishing of popular governance structures. Descriptive analysis of the VICTOR data reveals patterns consistent with the theory. I find that most rebel victors simply do not build extensive wartime institutions and that rebel regimes tend to "die young", most commonly being destroyed within 5 years of rebel victory. However, those that survive the initial years following victory tend to establish very long-lived regimes. The descriptive statistics also demonstrate that new wars tend to be the greatest threat to rebel regimes, and are by far the most common cause of rebel regime breakdown. Cross-national regression analysis investigates my proposed relationship between wartime institutions and regime durability, as well as the relationship between wartime institutions and state strength. The results suggest that wartime institutions strongly improve rebel regimes' longevity and postwar state strength. Additionally, the statistical analysis tests influential theories regarding the basis of rebel regime durability, such as conflict intensity and social-revolutionary character. The results indicate that these factors are, surprisingly, unimportant as drivers of regime durability. Wartime institutions however, are a consistent and significant predictor of regime survival across multiple models.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I complement the statistical analyses using case studies of rebel victors in Uganda and Rwanda. While statistics can provide correlational support for the theory, case study analysis help discern whether the theorized mechanisms connect wartime institutions (or lack thereof) to postwar statebuilding and regime durability. In Chapter 4, I use a paired case comparison of two rebel victors and their successor regimes in Uganda — the UNLA and the Obote II regime, and the NRA and the Museveni regime. The two cases respectively represent the lower and upper bound of wartime institution-building, with the UNLA having no wartime

institutions, and the NRA having 5 out of a possible 6 institutions. The UNLA and the NRA also exhibit the trajectories expected by the theory, breakdown within 5 years for the former, and survival for 37 years for the latter. The two offer considerable inferential value as a case pairing. Uganda is one of the few countries that have seen multiple rebel victories. By virtue of operating in the same country at similar periods in world-historical time, I treat these cases as "most similar". Holding structural factors close to constant helps us draw focus to the organizational level of analysis.

As a standalone case, the UNLA/Obote II case is a "hard case" for my state resurrection argument. While Milton Obote did not invest in wartime institutions, Obote had previous governance experience and legacy institutions from his initial tenure as the former president of Uganda. Obote, more so than virtually any other victorious rebel leader, should have been able to successfully resurrect these prewar institutions and use them as the foundation stones of his postwar regimes. Nevertheless, the Obote II case demonstrates that state resurrection, even done under optimal conditions, struggles to deliver postwar order. Resurrected prewar structures demonstrated all of the deficiencies that led to, or failed to prevent, Obote's initial overthrow. Further, these institutions, due to the wear and tear suffered in the period between Obote's initial overthrow and restoration, were even less able to function as viable instruments of state power. I show that these resurrected institutions were accordingly unable to compensate for the UNLA's lack of wartime combatant controls and civilian governance.

The NRA/Museveni regime case is an extremely clear case for the theory. I show that, in the case of the NRA, the decision to engage in wartime institution-building was not a mere function of strategic circumstance, but of organization diffusion. The NRA primarily reproduced the FRELIMO model of governance and combatant con-

trol — down to their omission of taxation — as it was a model with which the NRA's founder, Yoweri Museveni, was heavily familiar. Additionally, the NRA doggedly pursued governance both from positions of relative military weakness and relative military strength, with the explicit aim of preparing itself for state reconstruction after victory. The NRA case demonstrates that diffusion can be a strong driver of rebel governance practices. Additionally, the NRA showcases an extremely high level of institutional carryover from the wartime to the post-victory era. The institutions developed during wartime have been ported over into the postwar era, often retaining near-identical names and functions. The case also demonstrates the organizational symmetry at the heart of the theory. Institutions developed to socialize new rebel recruits, were similarly tasked with integrating new actors into the state army. The NRA civilian governance structures used to administer liberated zones, were exported country-wide. The NRA statebuilding process, in short, began well before rebel victory.

In Chapter 5 I tackle a standalone case, the RPF in Rwanda. The RPF case is a tough case for postwar statebuilding and political order, as it occurs in the aftermath of genocide. Widespread ethnic and social polarization created particularly extreme obstacles to postwar military integration, social control and counterinsurgency. The RPF regime had its work cut out for it. Nevertheless, I show that the RPF was able to draw upon its internal institutional strengths to stabilize the postwar state and destroy threats to its political monopoly. The RPF provides further evidence for diffusion as a driver of rebel institution-building, with the RPF largely drawing on the NRA as a template for its own organizational practices. The RPF also calls importance to thinking outside the wartime "box". Much of the RPF's organizational practice and infrastructure were developed prior to the actual Rwandan civil war. Many of the leaders of victorious insurgencies have had long military careers, training

and/or fighting in multiple insurgent groups.[1] As such, future studies should take into greater account the previous experiences of rebel leaders and the organizational "prehistories" of victorious rebel groups.

6.2 Academic Contributions and Implications

This dissertation has aimed to advance a theory of rebel regime durability. In so doing, it makes its primary contribution in reconsidering the relationship of war, and founding struggle, to postwar order. However, the dissertation also speaks to the adjacent literature on rebel governance. Below, I discuss this dissertation's contributions. In this section, first, I summarize how my findings challenge and depart from the dominant bellicist logic of regime durability. Second, I situate this dissertation within the rebel governance literature, and discuss paths forward for the study of rebel governance and its consequences.

This dissertation reconsiders the relationship of conflict processes to state strength and regime durability. This literature, as mentioned largely proceeds from a bellicist premise. Building on works by Huntington (1968), Skocpol (1979), and Tilly (1992), many scholars have argued that regime and state origins in violent founding struggle produces ideational and organizational legacies conducive to state consolidation and regime durability.[2] Much of this literature is organized around the salutary effects of

1. e.g. Yoweri Museveni (FRELIMO training, FRONASA, NRA); Paul Kagame (NRA, RPF); Isaias Afwerki (ELF, EPLF); Laurent Kabila (PRP, AFDL); Foday Sankoh (NPFL, RUF); Idriss Déby (FAN, MPS); Robert Mugabe (ZAPU, ZANU).

2. Rather than taking this generative approach, some bellicist scholars take a selection approach, arguing that the demands of victory simply weed out the badly-institutionalized. In this reading, victors represent the cream of the rebel crop. For example, Toft (2010, 28) states, "In organizing a challenge to the incumbent government, rebels cannot afford to make many mistakes. They must be innovative, organized, and above all efficient in the distribution and deployment of scarce resources. In short, rebels need a high level of institutional capacity if they are to survive and win".

war on rebel elite cohesion and powersharing. Levitsky and Way (2012), for example, argue that violent conflict produce highly cohesive ruling parties, with "enduring partisan identities...fired in a kiln of violence". Meng and Paine (2022) assert that, "successful rebel organizations must adopt decentralized structures in which field commanders wield real authority and decision-making power", and that this experience creates the foundation of stable elite powersharing within rebel regime. As a result, they claim "rebel regimes, or those that gain power by winning a rebellion, are exceptionally durable and essentially immune from coups". Another bellicist scholar argues that victorious rebel groups that survived intense threats acquire "shared identities and solidarity ties, which in turn bolster [rebel military] commanders' confidence that newly installed rulers will look after their interests during war-to-peace transitions" (Martin 2021, 98).

I demonstrate that this is, at best, an incomplete approach. Many rebel victors do not display enduring partisan attachments. Often, the delegation control to rebel field commanders backfire after victory. The many postwar power-bids launched by military elites in rebel regimes — such as in Guinea-Bissau (1980), Uganda (1985), Algeria (1965), Cambodia (1978) and Indonesia (1965, 1966) — make it plain that rebel regimes are anything but "immune from coups" (Meng and Paine 2022, 1). Many rebel regimes simply act contrary to the broad scholarly consensus regarding the relationship between wartime origins and postwar order.

My dissertation makes a critical contribution to the study of postwar regime and state consolidation. By disaggregating rebel regimes, I observe the vast variation therein. I demonstrate that this variation is not a function of conflict. Not only do all rebel regimes have a common heritage in violence, but even variation in the intensity of conflict do not explain the downstream variation in regime durability and state strength. I propose that the current literature has largely overlooked the

central role of rebel governance and combatant control in underwriting postwar order. These wartime institutions do not arise automatically during conflict. Indeed, in many instances intense conflict *inhibits* the development of wartime governance (see Martin 2021), to the detriment of regime durability. It is these wartime institutions that provide the vital underpinnings of postwar order, by equipping rebels with the skills, loyalties and organizational templates used to engage in effective postwar state-building. Much as how rebels must go beyond their "specialization in violence", to establish durable regimes, scholars must go "beyond bellicism", to better understand postwar orders, and variation therein. The logic of the dissertation may be generalizable to other violent contexts, potentially explaining the trajectories of "foreign imposed" regimes arising from interstate war (Downes 2021), and the durability of civil war settlements.

This brings us to the second area to which this dissertation contributes: it adds to a burgeoning literature on the consequences of rebel governance. The lion's share of rebel governance literature focuses on the causes of rebel governance (Loyle et al. 2023, 8). However, this literature has only just begun to probe the ways in which rebel governance operates as a "laboratory of the future" (Woldemariam 2018, 55). Wartime governance has varied institutional legacies, structuring rebel-to-party transition (Zaks 2017), postwar coercion (Liu 2022), and democratization (Huang 2016). This dissertation extends this line of research into the legacies of governance, identifying the effects of wartime governance on postwar state strength and regime durability.

Further literature ought to continue in this vein. Wartime institution-building leaves lingering legacies on postwar institutions. Future scholars should broaden the scope of inquiry to see how wartime institutions structure understudied postwar institutions, such as legislatures, cabinets and judiciaries, for example. Rebels often

attempt to create legal-esque frameworks, constitutions and codes of conduct during conflict, yet we know little about how these institutions fare in the postwar era. Additionally, the field would benefit from an increasingly dyadic perspective, addressing how rebel institutions interact with prewar state institutions after victory. Even victors do not have an altogether “clean slate", but must contend with the institutional remnants of prewar states. Examining the effects of rebel governance institutions in the contexts of military settlement, where prewar state institutions remain functional, will doubtless yield new insights. We know even less about the institutional legacies of rebel losers. Armed groups in Sri Lanka (LTTE) and Angola (UNITA), created veritable states-within-states before being militarily destroyed. The institutional footprints of rebel losers likely have implications for postwar democracy, party formation, and future conflict.

6.3 Implications for Policymakers

At base, the study of rebellion is a humanitarian one — rebellions are creative and destructive moments, carrying with them the potential for human emancipation and human suffering alike. Additionally, rebellion is always with us, with a civil war underway in at least one country around the world since we have begun collecting data on war. Rebel victory, a “rare" category of civil war outcome, occurs every 2.5 years on average. All of this is to say that rebellion and its legacies, for the foreseeable future, will remain endlessly topical for policymakers interested in human security and postwar order. To this end, I conclude with two takeaways for policy-makers.

First, policymakers should “raise the bar", of international recognition. The norm of “capital-city rule", creates incentives for rebels to sprint for the capital, to the detriment of wartime governance and postwar order. A recent literature has observed

that international recognition is a key driver of rebel groups' wartime statebuilding practices. Secessionist rebels, which particularly require the assent of international gatekeepers if they are to be recognized as states, tend to invest considerable time, effort and investment into building wartime institutions and thereby demonstrating a preparedness for rule. To the extent that such wartime institution-building reduces postwar suffering, there ought to be a "raising of the bar" for center-seeking rebels. The need to retain international goodwill does not adequately feature within the incentive structure for many center-seeking rebels, for whom recognition is simply a function of capital capture. Altering this norm, and requiring that rebel groups demonstrate "proof of concept" — a demonstrated ability to govern — as a pre-condition for international sponsorship, recognition, or aid, may help avert postwar suffering. Policymakers and international supporters of rebellion have often focused on the near-term demands of victory, with limited thought as to the post-victory consequences. Policymakers backing rebels are often eager to displace distasteful incumbents, as was the case in the DRC (1997) and Libya (2011). However, both of the postwar rebel regimes in these countries show the dangers of such an approach, with quick internationally-backed victories empowering weak and vulnerable regimes. Shrunken time horizons for policymakers and low bars for victor recognition are a recipe for postwar disorder. Policymakers often do not think clearly about how rebels might govern upon taking power, nor do they always have any useful priors that can guide them. This dissertation argues that to gauge rebel victors' postwar governing abilities, policymakers can not only look to rebels' wartime governance, but can go so far as to explicitly encourage rebel governance. On both strategic and ethical grounds, the commonplace international practice of sponsoring rebels should be calibrated not only towards ensuring victory, but post-war stability as well.

Second, policymakers should be clear-eyed about the fact that rebel governance is

rarely a prequel to democratization. Many observers of countries where rebels seized power around the end of the Cold War have taken what may be called a recriminatory turn.[3] Having witnessed the rebel groups in these countries prior to victory, these observers were often convinced that these rebels' concern for civic welfare provision, establishing of popular governance structures, and lawyerly approach to restrained warfare, were proof positive of their democratic dispensation. In victory however, these rebel groups have delivered stability, but not democracy. Structures used to harness popular civilian support have been retooled into instruments of mass surveillance. Postwar social service provision operates as a patronage device with which to woo political opposition, its withholding as a means of punishing would-be defectors. The loyal and controlled post-insurgent army cooperates hand-in-glove with leaders to entrench authoritarian rule. To the bitter surprise of many observers, wartime governance practices that seemingly functioned as technologies of liberation have become an authoritarian cage for society.

The effectiveness of wartime institutions in consolidating postwar order helps explain the tragically authoritarian turn of the "new generation of African leadership". Many of these leaders, such as Rwanda's Paul Kagame, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, and Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki, are former rebels who waged successful wars of "liberation" against corrupt and illiberal regimes. Through their carefully crafted ideological platforms and conscientious governance practices, these rebels struck a Manichean contrast with the "neo-colonial" governments they fought. These rebels-turned-rulers were initially warmly regarded as democrats-in-waiting by many Western audiences. However, virtually all of these rebel rulers subsequently leveraged the wartime institutions to construct deeply authoritarian, albeit stable, regimes. Domestically,

3. See, for example, Connell 1997; Connell 2005; Longman 2017; Oloka-Onyango 2004; Wrong 2021.

wartime institutions have empowered these rulers to swallow and destroy both armed and unarmed opposition groups — taking political pluralism down with them. Internationally, these victors' success in creating islands of stability has led to Western subcontracting of regional security functions to rebel regimes. By casting themselves as regional security providers, diplomats, and partners in the Global War on Terror, Africa's long-lived rebel rulers have made themselves indispensable proxies of Western powers' security interests in exchange for a blind eye turned to their domestic indiscretions. Betwixt their formidable domestic powers and a friendly international environment, these regimes are unlikely to relax their authoritarian hold on power for the foreseeable future. Policymakers must grapple with the agonizing fact that postwar order often comes at the cost of postwar democracy. Figuring out how rebel regimes may eventually be brought towards democracy is a puzzle and a challenge. Policymakers and scholars alike must recognize this challenge, and, I hope, strive to meet it.

Appendix A | Rebel Victors, 1945—2014

Table A.1: **Rebel Victors, 1945—2014**

Victor	Country	Victory Year
AFDL	DRC	1997
ANC	South Africa	1994
CNDD-FDD	Burundi	2005
Cobras	Congo-Brazzaville	1997
EPLF	Eritrea	1993
FAN	Chad	1982
FAP	Chad	1979
FLN	Algeria	1962
FN	Côte d'Ivoire	2011
FRELIMO	Mozambique	1975
FSLN	Nicaragua	1979
FUNSK	Cambodia	1979
Forces of Ansumane Mané	Guinea Bissau	1999

Table A.1 (Continued): Rebel Victors, 1945—2014

Forces of Castillo Armas	Guatemala	1954
Forces of François Bozizé	CAR	2003
Forces of Figueres Ferrer	Costa Rica	1948
Jamiat i-Islami	Afghanistan	1992
Khmer Rough	Cambodia	1975
LURD	Liberia	2003
M-26-7	Cuba	1959
MNR	Bolivia	1952
MPLA	Angola	1975
MPS	Chad	1990
Mukhti Bahini	Bangladesh	1971
NLA	Libya	2011
NLF	South Yemen	1967
NPFL	Liberia	1997
NRA	Uganda	1986
PAIGC	Guinea Bissau	1974
PLA	China	1949
Pathet Lao	Laos	1975
Popular Revolutionary Movement	Bolivia	1946

Table A.1 (Continued): Rebel Victors, 1945—2014

RPF	Rwanda	1994
RUF/AFRC	Sierra Leone	1997
Rebel Factions of National Guard	Georgia	1992
SPLA/M	South Sudan	2011
SWAPO	Namibia	1990
Séléka	CAR	2013
TNI	Indonesia	1949
TPLF (EPRDF)	Ethiopia	1991
Taliban	Afghanistan	1996
UNLA	Uganda	1980
USC	Somalia	1991
Viet Minh	Vietnam	1954
Yugoslav Partisans	Yugoslavia	1945
ZANU	Zimbabwe	1980

Appendix B | Robustness Checks

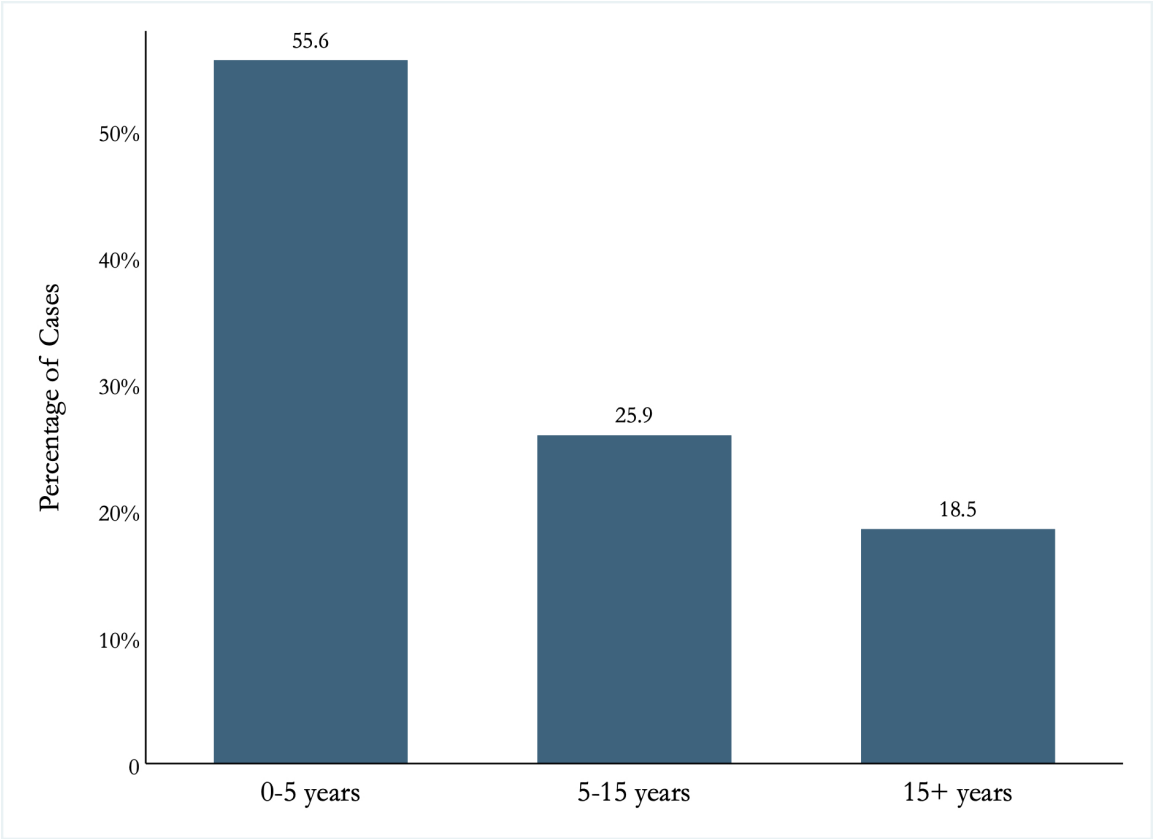

Figure B.1: **When Rebel Regimes Die, 1946—2014**

Table B.1: **Additional Controls**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.020***	-0.019***	-0.013**	-0.013**
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
High-Intensity Conflict	-0.003	0.001	-0.042	-0.043
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.029)	(0.026)
Social Revolution	0.020	0.018	0.021	0.017
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.013)
Secessionist Goals	-0.023	-0.003	0.002	0.007
		(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.025)
Post-Cold War	0.015	0.018	0.004	0.006
	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.029)
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$	-0.002	-0.008	-0.019**	-0.021*
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.011)
Population$_{(log)}$	-0.008	-0.004	-0.010	-0.013
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Territorial Control	0.029			-0.001
	(0.018)			(0.018)
Military Support		-0.014		-0.018
		(0.014)		(0.017)
Rebel Group Size			0.000	0.000
			(0.000)	(0.000)
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	830	830	643	643
R^2	0.072	0.069	0.073	0.075

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table B.2: **Recoding Conflict Intensity and Social Revolution**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.019***	-0.019***	-0.020***	-0.018***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Secessionist Goals	-0.005	-0.011	-0.008	0.005
	(0.019)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.019)
Post-Cold War	-0.008	-0.008	0.017	0.016
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.035)	(0.036)
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$	-0.009	-0.011	-0.006	0.000
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.012)
Population$_{(log)}$	-0.005	-0.013*	-0.004	-0.003
	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Battle Deaths (Low)	0.000			
	(0.000)			
Battle Deaths (High)		0.000**		
		(0.000)		
High Intensity (Binary)			0.003	0.007
			(0.024)	(0.026)
Social Revolution	0.012	0.010		
	(0.013)	(0.012)		
Marxist Leninist			0.017	
			(0.013)	
Post-Victory War				0.027
				(0.019)
Observations	776	776	830	830
R^2	0.065	0.067	0.067	0.068

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table B.3: **Excluding Electoral Victors**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.020***	-0.021***	-0.021***	-0.022**
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
High-Intensity Conflict		0.005	0.002	0.008
		(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.027)
Social Revolution		0.024	0.025	0.034
		(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.021)
Secessionist Goals		0.000	0.000	-0.019
		(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.023)
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		-0.007	-0.007	-0.030*
		(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.017)
Population$_{(log)}$		-0.004	-0.004	-0.005
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)
Post-Cold War		0.015		
		(0.039)		
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	745	738	738	738
R^2	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table B.4: **Logistic Regression Models**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.544***	-0.528***	-0.552***	-0.521***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
High-Intensity Conflict		-0.008	-0.140	-0.093
		(0.432)	(0.488)	(0.574)
Social Revolution		0.570	0.655	0.259
		(0.422)	(0.553)	(0.794)
Secessionist Goals		0.455	0.536	-0.162
		(0.515)	(0.517)	(1.083)
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		-0.353	-0.330	-0.660
		(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.017)
Population$_{(log)}$		-0.352**	-0.349*	-0.564*
		(0.174)	(0.190)	(0.339)
Post-Cold War		0.169		
		(0.449)		
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	840	830	830	830
Psuedo R^2	0.187	0.21	0.22	0.242

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table B.5: **Event History Models**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.776***	-0.756***	-0.890***	-0.971***
	(0.116)	(0.189)	(0.205)	(0.243)
High-Intensity Conflict		-0.047	-0.593	-0.471
		(0.615)	(0.695)	(1.033)
Social Revolution		0.626	0.444	-0.155
		(0.516)	(0.993)	(1.388)
Secessionist Goals		0.504	-0.545	-5.260
		(1.339)	(1.166)	(5.746)
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		-1.038***	-1.091**	-1.370
		(0.398)	(0.534)	(0.993)
Population$_{(log)}$		-0.875**	-0.834**	-1.852
		(0.543)	(0.398)	(1.140)
Post-Cold War		0.436		
		(0.595)		
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	840	830	830	830
Psuedo R^2	0.187	0.210	0.220	0.242

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Table B.6: **Excluding Extreme Values of Wartime Institution-building**

	Dependent Variable: Regime Breakdown			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Wartime Institutions	-0.051***	-0.059***	-0.061***	-0.063**
	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.025)
High-Intensity Conflict		-0.016	-0.016	-0.011
		(0.020)	(0.024)	(0.030)
Social Revolution		0.026	0.034	0.026
		(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.020)
Secessionist Goals		-0.093**	-0.072	-0.102*
		(0.039)	(0.045)	(0.056)
Post-Cold War		0.031		
		(0.049)		
GDP per capita$_{(log)}$		0.001	-0.002	-0.002
		(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Population$_{(log)}$		-0.015	-0.016	-0.016
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Decade FE?	X	X	✓	✓
Regional FE?	X	X	X	✓
Observations	354	354	354	354
R^2	0.108	0.140	0.140	0.140

Note: All models cluster standard errors by country. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

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