
Rebel Group Emergence: Domestic Conflict and International Pressures

Outline

- Introduction
 - Research Question
 - Importance
 - Existing Answers
- Theory
 - Structural Conditions and International Forces
- Empirical Implications
- Current Progress

Research Question

- What explains the variance in the number of rebel groups in civil wars?

Rebel Count	Observations
1	1,451
2	241
3	71
4	9
5	4
6	1
7	7

Importance

- Number of rebel groups effects:
 - Outcomes
 - Intensity
 - Duration

Expectations

- A United Rebellion
 - Maximizes strength
 - Improves bargaining position
 - Blocks divide and conquer tactics
- Fractured Resistance
 - Goals not aligned
 - Internal conflicts
 - Credible commitment issues
- Random

Bapat and Bond (2012)

- Examines alliances between rebel groups
 - Assumes that rebels want to work together
 - Unable to because of credible commitment issues
 - Solved by foreign actors
- Do these assumptions represent reality?
 - No clear answer for when alliances would end
 - Their example is troublesome

Findley and Rudloff (2011)

- Rebel fractionalization
 - Occurs in waves at predictable times
 - Demonstrates importance of civil war dynamics
 - Challenges orthodoxy
- Is fractionalization the whole story?
 - Does not account for group emergence
 - Gives no conclusive theory on causes

My Theory

- Continue to expand bargaining theory of war
 - Information and commitment problems
 - Continuous process, doesn't end at onset
 - Complicated by N actor nature of civil war
 - Includes active rebels and latent groups
- Structural factors
- International Pressures

The Bargaining Theory of War

- War is costly, so why do states fight?
 - Information problems
 - Commitment problems
- Applied to civil war
 - Same mechanisms apply
 - Often assumes rebels as unitary actor
 - Usually not ongoing, only covers onset

Explanations for Onset

- Greed and Grievance
 - Potential rebels are financially motivated/constrained
 - When potential gains from rebellion are high enough, or opportunity costs low enough rebellion is more likely
 - Commodity prices often used as a measure

Concerns in the Field

- The data does not support the theory
 - Only works for natural resources which are generally controlled by the government
 - Depending on how the data is spliced all significant findings fall apart
 - State capacity is a better explanation

In C&H's Defence

- Data is the problem, not the theory
 - Commodities must be appropriate for a potential rebel
 - What is important differs regionally
 - Several case studies support the theory when regional differences are considered
 - State capacity is closely linked

Expansion to Ongoing Conflict

- Information problems seem unlikely
 - Battles have revealed resolve and capacity
- Potential sources of commitment shifts
 - Decisive or disastrous battles
 - Economic shocks
 - External intervention

Latent Groups

- While a rebel group is potentially unitary, one group can not act for all
- Latent Groups can be divided along many axes
 - Ethnic
 - Religious
 - Class
 - Tribal
 - Ideology
- They often overlap

Latent Groups Example



Emergence Game

- Three player bargaining game
 - Government(G), Rebels(R) and a Latent Group(L)
- At time t R has already rebelled
 - L has not
- G always makes an offer to L and can either make an offer to R or opt to fight
 - If given a choice, both L and R either accept the offer or fight

Parameters

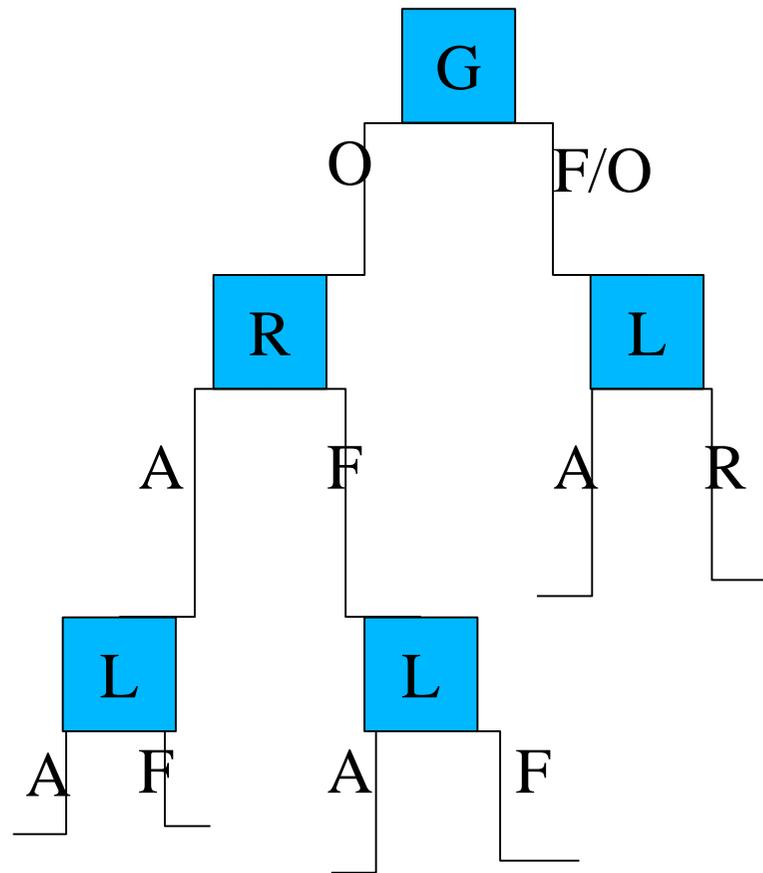


Parameter	Definition
G, R, L, S	Players- Government, Rebels, Latent Group, Sponsor
P_R	Probability the G defeats R $\in [0,1]$
P_L	Probability the G defeats L $\in [0,1]$
P_{RL}	Probability the G defeats R and L $\in [0,1]$
π_i	Offer made to R or L
C_i	Costs of fighting
β_i	Distribution of resources $\in [0,1]$

Parameters

- Costs include economic factors as well as destruction from battle
- P is a function of capability ratio
 - At time t both PR and PL are $> .5$
 - PRL can be $< .5$ but is not necessarily so
- Beta and P_i
 - Beta is the whole distribution of benefits
 - P_i is the proportion of this that G offers

Base Game



Payoffs

- (O,A,A)

- G: $1 - O_R - O_L$

- R: O_R

- L: O_L

- (O,A,F)

- G: $P_L(B_{GL}) - C_{GL} - O_R$

- R: O_R

- L: $(1-P_L)(B_{GL}) - C_L$

- (O,F,A)

- G: $P_R(B_{GR}) - C_{GR} - O_L$

- R: $(1-P_R)(B_{GR}) - C_R$

- L: O_L

- (O,F,F)

- G: $P_{RL}(B) - C_{GRL}$

- R: $(1-P_R)(B_{GR}) - C_R$

- L: $(1-P_L)(B_{GL}) - C_L$

Intuition From Base Game

- L will not rebel in time t
 - May rebel in $t + 1$ depending on battle outcomes
- If there is any cost involved with making offers to rebel groups, G will only offer when likely to be accepted

External Shock- Economic

- An exogenous downward shock in commodity prices will:
 - Decrease CL
 - Decrease either the offer G can make or G's capabilities
- If the shock is sufficiently large L will rebel

External Shock- Foreign Aid

- If given to government:
 - Increases resources, allows government to make sufficient offers more often
- If given to rebels:
 - Effect is dependent on aid type
 - Can have spillover effect from R to L, or L to R
 - Generally increases number of rebel groups

Empirical Implications

- Structural conditions may explain most variation
 - Population
 - Country Size
 - Latent Groups
 - Measurement issues
 - Conflict Length

International Pressures

- Commodity Price Shocks
 - Need to be appropriately measured
 - New data set forthcoming
 - May still not be appropriate
- Foreign Aid
 - Multiple versions of this data exist
 - Is often guess work