ABSTRACT

Previous research has focused primarily on how ethnicity may trigger civil war, and its effect on conflict duration remains disputed. Rather than treating conflict as a direct consequence of ethnic cleavages, the authors argue that ethnicity per se does not affect civil war duration. Instead, its effect depends on its relationship to political institutions. They employ a dyadic approach that emphasizes the political context in which both government leaders and nonstate challengers can capitalize on the ascriptive nature of ethnicity. They show that although states can initially benefit from politicizing ethnic relations, once violent conflict breaks out, such policies may backfire on the government and make it difficult for incumbent governments to accept settlements that could terminate conflicts. Past policies of ethnic exclusion also benefit rebel organizations fighting the government, since the resulting grievances increase collective group solidarity and render individual fighters more cost tolerant. Using a new data set that codes the nexus between rebel organizations and ethnic groups, as well as information on ethnopolitical exclusion, the authors find considerable support for their propositions.

ETHNICITY, THE STATE, AND THE DURATION OF CIVIL WAR

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INTRODUCTION

A striking characteristic of civil wars is the immense variation in their duration, especially when compared with interstate wars. Whereas some civil wars terminate within a few days, others endure for decades, including cases like Myanmar or Palestine that are still unresolved. What accounts for these differences in duration? A key hypothesis in the literature points to the role of ethnicity, suggesting that ethnic conflicts last longer and are more difficult to settle than other civil wars. However, the theoretical and empirical support for this proposition remains disputed.

In this article we reconsider the debate on the impact of ethnicity on civil war duration. Shaped by an ethnic, rather than an ideological or economic agenda, ethnic civil wars are often argued to exhibit unique causes and dynamics,[1] including the hypothesis that ethnic civil wars last longer. The standard argument points to descent-based attributes of ethnicity that cannot be transcended, are reinforced through fighting, and thus create a unique sense of belonging that facilitates collective action. According to this view, ethnic conflicts quickly become intractable due to the rigid nature of ethnic identities, are inherently difficult to resolve, and thus tend to last longer.[2] An alternative view disputes the

[1] For an overview, see Sambanis 2001.

[2] Kaufmann 1996; Kaufmann 1998; Kaufman 2001; Kaufman 2006; Horowitz 1985.

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validity of the ethnic/nonethnic distinction either by suggesting that
ethnic identities merely provide a cover story for underlying economic
or private interests and do not affect the conflict dynamics[3] or by high-
lighting how ethnic identities can be—and frequently are—transcended
in civil wars.[4] From this perspective, ethnicity as such should not have a
clear or consistent effect on the dynamics of fighting. This more skepti-
cal view has far-reaching repercussions since it ultimately questions the
distinction between ethnic and nonethnic conflicts and challenges the
conceptualization of ethnic groups as meaningful actors in civil wars.
We argue that much of the controversy in the existing literature stems
from the untested assumption that ethnic identities primarily influence
conflict dynamics by facilitating collective action through common net-
works, language, and "sticky" markers. Indeed, most studies either fully
adopt or fully reject this assumption, without considering the possibility
of a more complex relationship between political processes and ethnic
identities.

We contribute to the current literature by stressing the political as-
pects of ethnicity. Rather than treating conflict as a direct consequence
of ethnic cleavages, we argue that ethnicity per se does not affect civil
war duration. Instead, whether ethnicity prolongs conflict depends on
its relationship to political institutions. We provide a dyadic approach
that emphasizes the *political* context in which both government lead-
ers and nonstate challengers can capitalize on the ascriptive nature of
ethnicity. We show that although states can benefit from politicizing
ethnic relations by *selectively* providing political or economic goods for
parts of the population while excluding others, once violent conflict
breaks out, such policies may backfire on the government and induce
severe consequences. In particular, past discriminatory policies make
it less likely that incumbent governments will be able or willing to ac-
cept settlements that could terminate conflicts. Past policies of ethnic
exclusion also operate to the benefit of rebel organizations fighting the
government, since members of politically excluded ethnic groups har-
bor grievances that increase collective group solidarity and render indi-
vidual fighters more cost tolerant. This, in turn, facilitates the durability
of rebel organizations.

Thus, rather than focusing exclusively on cognitive aspects of ethnic
identities—for example, information, trust, or common language—that
are assumed to help overcome collective action problems, our account

[3] Mueller 2004; King 2001; Gilley 2004.
[4] Kalyvas 2006.

emphasizes the effects of ethnicity in conjunction with politically in-duced grievances. In contrast to previous research, our explanation for conflict duration stresses the ethnopolitical context of civil wars. In short, we add causal depth to the link between ethnicity and conflict duration by focusing on state-induced ethnic policies.

We also test our theoretical arguments empirically by drawing on a new data set that systematically links rebel organizations to politically relevant ethnic groups, allowing us to capture the dyadic dynamics implied by our theory. Our analysis allows us to identify the conditions under which ethnicity prolongs civil wars and to distinguish between underlying ethnic identities and politicized grievances. We find that ethnicity matters primarily in situations of exclusionary ethnonational-ist state policies. Thus, contrary to what is assumed by many scholars, we find no evidence that ethnicity per se has inherent effects on conflict dynamics.

The article is organized as follows. We first provide a brief review of the relevant literature on civil war dynamics. We then introduce the logic of ethnopolitical exclusion that lies at the core of the argument. This allows us to articulate our theory of civil war duration. The follow-ing section introduces our data, followed by the main results, including a brief discussion of sensitivity analyses. The final section concludes.

EXISTING APPROACHES TO CIVIL WAR DURATION

Existing approaches to civil war duration fall largely into two catego-ries. First, many of the efforts to understand the dramatic upsurge of civil wars during the early 1990s suggested that these were conflicts fought between distinct ethnic groups. Much of this research referred to the conflicts in Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, Burundi, and Rwanda as paradigmatic cases. Drawing on international relations the-ory, Posen explains these conflicts as the result of an ethnic security dilemma caused by state breakdown and the absence of a functioning government.[5] According to this perspective, ethnic groups engage in preemptive violence in weak state environments because they fear for their own survival. It is argued that core determinants of the severity of the security dilemma are the particular history of intergroup relations, as well as the physical and ethnic geography that groups face.[6] The hypothesized dynamics of this approach have important implications

[5] Posen 1993.
[6] Posen 1993; Toft 2003; Snyder and Jervis 1999.

for the duration of such conflicts. Although not all civil wars are ethnic, civil wars fought between ethnic groups are held to evolve quickly into intractable conflicts and therefore endure much longer than nonethnic civil wars.[7] This perspective is based on the assumption that ethnic identities are fixed. According to Kaufmann:[8]

> Ethnic conflicts are disputes between communities which see themselves as having distinct heritages, over the power relationship between the communities, while ideological civil wars are contests between factions within the same community over how that community should be governed. The key difference is the flexibility of individual loyalties, which are quite fluid in ideological conflicts, but almost completely rigid in ethnic wars.

Moreover, battles, massacres, and other forms of violence are expected to harden these identities to the point where compromise is delegitimized.[9] As a consequence, continued fighting is characterized as nearly inevitable, leading to a "spiral of escalation" that renders these conflicts particularly difficult, if not impossible, to resolve without third-party intervention.[10] Indeed, proponents of this view go so far as to claim that partition is the only possible solution to such conflicts.[11]

The second, opposing view argues against the theoretical distinction between ethnic and nonethnic civil wars, since most quantitative studies indicate no significant relationship between conflict and common indicators of ethnic diversity such as ethnolinguistic fractionalization or ethnic polarization.[12] Rebel organizations, rather than ethnic groups, are deemed the appropriate unit of analysis.[13] Many scholars who subscribe to this approach highlight how fighting in civil war is driven by incentives to secure private gains. Such insurgencies are most likely to emerge and endure under conditions of state weakness, allowing rebel organizations to sustain successful operations similar to firms.[14] While some researchers opt for the more neutral "rebel organizations" label,[15]

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[7] Kaufmann 1996; Kaufmann 1998; Rose 2000; Kaufman 2001; Kaufman 2006; Horowitz 1985; van Evera 2001.

[8] Kaufmann 1996, 138.

[9] Kaufman 2006, 205.

[10] Kaufman 2006.

[11] Kaufmann 1996.

[12] Collier 2000; Fearon 2004; Cunningham 2006; Cunningham 2010; Brandt et al. 2008; Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009; although see Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom 2004; Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2010.

[13] Sinno 2008; Kalyvas 2008; Brubaker 2004. An important argument in favor of this view is that rebel organizations are always present in civil wars, whether they are linked to ethnic groups or not (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009).

[14] Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004.

[15] For example, Kalyvas 2006.

others are more subjective—referring to the rebels as "greedy bandits"[16] or equating insurgents with "criminals," "thugs," or "warlord gangs."[17] The underlying nature of rebel organizations has important theoretical implications for how quickly conflicts can be resolved. Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom argue, for example, that the presence of looting opportunities prolongs conflicts, since they raise rebel revenues and lower recruitment costs.[18]

While approaches rooted in the logic of security dilemmas between fixed groups tend to claim that ethnic wars will last longer, little systematic evidence has been provided in support of this assertion. Indeed, the claim rests on the *untested* assumption that facilitating collective action is *the* causal mechanism through which ethnic identities can influence conflict. Although these conclusions have been bolstered by case studies of ethnic conflicts that appear consistent with this argument, they have also been challenged by more systematic quantitative research indicating no significant relationship between ethnic diversity and conflict. This article is motivated by the need to reconcile these divergent findings theoretically and empirically.

While both the group-based and the rebel-groups-as-firms perspectives have generated important insights, they are also united by a shared theoretical shortcoming: the alleged passivity or even the absence of the state as an actor.[19] Indeed, by emphasizing state breakdown and state weakness, in both explanations the state is largely absent *by assumption*.[20] We believe that such monadic approaches are problematic for at least two reasons. First, they stand in stark contrast to the underlying definition of civil war, since fighting in civil wars involves the state by necessity.[21] Second, as we will argue below, the omission is critical because it neglects the political context of many conflicts, including the state itself as an active actor pursuing a set of distinct objectives and motivations.

In sum, the theoretical effect of ethnicity is disputed and the subject of ongoing debate. Broadly speaking, many scholars either treat ethnic identities as irrelevant to conflict or assume that conflict occurs between fixed identities. We believe that the role of ethnicity is theoretically and empirically underspecified, mainly because the political context within which ethnic mobilization occurs is ignored. We address the crucial question of the specific causal mechanisms through which ethnicity may

[16] Collier and Hoeffler 2004.
[17] Mueller 2003.
[18] Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom 2004. See also Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala 2009; Fearon 2004.
[19] For exceptions, see Weiner 1978; Fearon 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2011.
[20] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.
[21] Sambanis 2004.

have an effect by highlighting how the combination of state-induced grievances and ascriptive ethnicity leads to longer conflicts. The combination arises from particular ethnopolitical configurations, which we outline in the next section. This allows us subsequently to develop a political and dyadic approach that theorizes both a nonstate challenger and the state in the context of ethnic politics.

THE LOGIC OF ETHNOPOLITICAL EXCLUSION

Before turning to our theory of civil war duration, we focus in this section on the political interactions at the core of our theory. We show how one particular political strategy that incumbent governments can pursue—ethnic exclusion—helps account for why states and rebel organizations engage in costly conflict in the first place. Clausewitz famously argued that "war is merely the continuation of politics by other means."[22] Along the same lines, we argue that underlying political aims provide the driving motivations of both governments and nonstate challengers in combat. We then proceed by showing how this interaction conditions the fighting behavior of both incumbent governments and challengers.

Ethnic exclusion is a political strategy enacted by those controlling the state. It aims to secure their political, cultural, and economic interests by selectively excluding parts of the population from access to valuable political and economic goods on ethnic grounds. But such exclusion comes at a substantial cost, as it often invites strong reactions from potential challengers, and those affected may even resort to violent challenges against the state. Unfortunately, little is known about the determinants of exclusion. Nevertheless, drawing on sparse existing literature, we discuss the costs and benefits of ethnic exclusion, both from the perspective of the state and from the perspective of rebel organizations. This enables us to show how the motivations, preferences, and constraints of these actors, and hence the duration of their violent struggles, are powerfully conditioned by state-induced patterns of ethnic exclusion.

Excluding particular ethnic groups from access to state power has symbolic, material, and political advantages for incumbent governments. First, the most obvious benefit is that exclusion facilitates the consolidation of state power, hence increasing the political power of included groups. Political representation and power status thus rein-

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[22] Clausewitz 1984 [1832], 87.

force the subjective worth of one's group vis-à-vis other groups and legitimize the group's striving for power and representation. Indeed, control over statehood ensures the ability to govern a "homeland" and the freedom to speak the group's preferred language and to practice its religion.

Second, in addition to cultural benefits, control over the state bureaucracy implies that coethnics can experience positive discrimination in material terms, through taxation or other forms of extraction and the (regional) allocation of public goods.[23] In this context, through its ascriptive marks, ethnicity imposes categorical, rather than fluid, boundaries. Thus, unlike ideology, ethnicity is "sticky" and cannot easily be transcended. This makes it an ideal criterion for the *selective* provision of goods.[24] Because of their relatively clear boundaries, ethnic groups are usually more serviceable groups than classes, an observation that has repercussions for war duration. Moreover, for elites, nepotism and clientelism can secure a strong base of support and thus the political survival of leaders. Such practices frequently extend to recruitment into sensitive state agencies like the police or armed forces; this in turn secures the group's survival over the long run.[25]

Third, exclusion can also originate from direct security concerns. Roessler argues that ethnic exclusion can act as a strategy of threat displacement when there is a high probability of leadership turnover from within the state.[26] In such situations, rulers attempt to safeguard their regimes against coups by excluding coconspirators. This can help avoid the commitment problem that arises when divided elites jointly control a state's coercive apparatus but cannot guarantee that corulers will refrain from resorting to violence. Finally, in democracies and semidemocracies, governing elites may feel tempted to secure their position through ethnic outbidding and diversionary war against a domestic minority.[27]

The state elites' main cost of ethnic exclusion arises from the risk that it may backfire against the regime. This can happen for a number of reasons. First, by its very nature, exclusion generates benefits for some at the expense of others. As a consequence, it is likely to generate grievances, with excluded groups likely to be a particularly fertile breeding ground for rebellion.[28] Violations of norms of justice and

[23] Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011.
[24] Rothchild 1981, 222; Fearon 1999; Tilly 2007.
[25] Rothchild 1981; Wimmer 2002.
[26] Roessler 2011.
[27] Tir and Jasinski 2008.
[28] Gurr 1993.

equality will typically arouse feelings of anger and resentment among members of the disadvantaged group.[29] Where exclusion is enduring and indiscriminate, it is likely to breed collective grievances and "reinforce the plausibility and justifiability of a radical political orientation or collective identity."[30] In the words of John F. Kennedy: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." With institutional channels for conflict resolution perceived to be blocked, this lack of meaningful access to state institutions gives rise to politically induced radicalization of grievance-based claims.[31] Previous research has demonstrated that such conditions are more likely to cause conflict onset.[32] Moreover, where exclusion is already in place, it tends to be taken for granted and legitimized by its beneficiaries. Rothchild states that "favored ethnic groups come to take a proprietary view of their traditional overrepresentation, or even monopoly position."[33] However, precisely because exclusion generates feelings of resentment and fosters radicalism, it raises the costs of turning the tables. A future loss of the benefits derived from exclusion implies a high price to pay, since groups that recently came to power are likely to seek revenge or otherwise exploit their newly acquired power. This commitment problem is likely to be particularly severe under minority rule. Even if governments try to acquiesce to the challenger, a further commitment problem arises if past experiences make challengers unlikely to consider such an offer credible. The case of Liberia is a powerful illustration of these dynamics, where the 1980 coup headed by Master Sergeant Doe put an end to 133 years of minority rule by the Americo-Liberians and resulted in the persecution of Americo-Liberian elites.[34] This period of active discrimination against Americo-Liberians lasted until Charles Taylor gained the presidency in 1997.

Second, compared with inclusive policies, exclusion publicly demonstrates a lack of willingness to compromise. By contrast, where political power is shared, the government has demonstrated at least minimal willingness to compromise, even if the actual arrangements are not always fully satisfactory in practice, as occurred in Burundi, where conflict occurred despite power sharing. Still, the mere fact that ethnic groups are not categorically excluded from public goods or even openly discriminated against demonstrates that compromise is possible and

[29] Petersen 2002; Williams 2003.
[30] Goodwin 1997, 16.
[31] Hafez 2003.
[32] Gurr 1993, 2000; Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.
[33] Rothchild 1981, 217.
[34] Ballah and Abrokwaa 2003.

"discourages the sense that the state is unreformable […] and needs to be fundamentally overhauled."[35]

Finally, due to concerns about reputation, ethnic groups that are in power and have implemented exclusionary policies may find themselves unable to grant partial concessions to challengers. Walter argues that governments have incentives to deny favorable settlements to early challengers in the presence of other potential challengers in order to avoid demonstration effects and to signal strength, since concessions could ultimately lead to state erosion.[36] In sum, ethnic exclusion is potentially very risky, and incumbent governments are, as a rule, aware of this. We therefore conclude that the benefits must be deemed to outweigh such costs when exclusion strategies are enacted. This simple analysis thereby provides leverage on the motivations and preferences of incumbent governments.

Consequences for Civil War Duration

Having outlined the logic of ethnopolitical exclusion, we are now ready to theorize its effect on the duration of civil wars. Whereas existing theories tend to be monadic by considering merely the actions of nonstate challengers, our approach is explicit about the dyadic interaction between the state and the nonstate actors as the main protagonists, each of which is pursuing a distinct set of objectives. The logic we present is similar to a two-level game; incumbent governments and nonstate challengers also interact with their followers as they depend on the support of their respective bases. Our core argument is that the combination of ascriptive ethnicity and political exclusion makes it difficult both for rebel groups fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups and for incumbent governments to reach settlements that would allow for effective conflict resolution, thus leading to protracted conflicts.

Our theoretical rationale is based on a *per period logic* visualized in Figure 1. We conceptualize the dynamics of civil war as sequential rounds of bargaining and fighting. During each round, there are three possible "outcomes": (1) the belligerents can reach a mutually acceptable agreement that terminates the fighting, (2) either side capitulates and accepts defeat, resulting in winner and a loser, or (3) continued fighting if neither 1 nor 2 is possible. From our perspective, both 1 and 2 entail conflict settlements, although they obviously represent different distributions of the underlying incompatibility between the

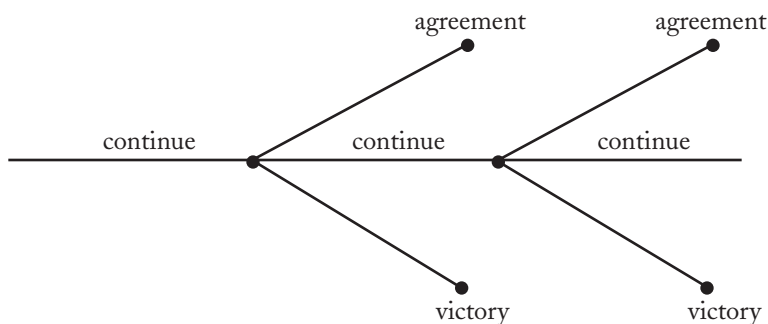[35] Goodwin 1997, 18.
[36] Walter 2009.

FIGURE 1
SEQUENTIAL FIGHTING IN CIVIL WARS

belligerents. We follow Wittman and Goemans, who argue that conflict termination—short of complete eradication of the opponent, which is extremely rare—necessarily requires *both* parties to agree on a settlement, including losses as implicit settlements, since the other party would otherwise continue to fight.[37] Following this logic, explaining duration thus amounts to accounting for what prevents the belligerents from reaching a settlement during each round. In other words, if both victories and agreements are less likely, there is implicitly a larger probability that conflict continues and long durations must follow.

Our approach focuses explicitly on the actors. In contrast to most existing work, we conceptualize the state as an active agent with distinct preferences and motivations. The primary interest of the state is to maintain, secure, and maximize power. Rather than focusing on *either* rebel organizations *or* ethnic groups as the challengers, we analyze their connection directly. Our theoretical point of departure follows Kalyvas's concern that the "relation [of rebel organizations] to underlying populations must be the object of systematic theoretical and empirical investigation as opposed to mere assumption."[38] Thus, whereas many authors simply assert the putative irrelevance of ethnicity based on the varying connection to ethnicity in rebel organizations, we take this concern seriously by focusing systematically on variation within the nexus between rebel organizations and ethnic groups and conflict duration. In brief, conceptualizing fighting in civil wars as violence between the state and nonstate actors, both of which may or may not be

[37] Wittman 1979; Goemans 2000.
[38] Kalyvas 2008, 1063.

characterized by an explicit link to ethnic groups, allows us to capture a broad range of actor constellations.

We assume that rebel organizations are political entrepreneurs seeking to mobilize and sustain sufficient capacity to overthrow the government and challenge the government's force monopoly, either in the entire country or locally in some limited territory.[39] Rebel organizations face two key challenges. First, they need to *recruit* a sufficient number of people to mount an effective challenge to the government.[40] But initial recruitment is insufficient to sustain armed conflict; rebel organizations must in equal measure create incentives to *retain* recruits for longer periods of time in order to fulfill the goals of the rebellion. In other words, rebel organizations need to find ways to ensure that fighters do not abandon the rebellion.

Our analysis builds on two mechanisms that contribute to retaining fighters: (1) greater cost tolerance and commitment and (2) increased group solidarity. These mechanisms are closely interrelated under the particular ethnopolitical configurations that we highlight. We first focus on mechanisms that emphasize the fact that mobilizing and retaining fighters requires individual-level compensation. Our argument is that variation in the reward structure—time horizons in particular—helps to explain why some organizations survive longer than others.[41] We extend this literature by emphasizing how this reward structure is shaped not only by economic opportunities or fixed social structures and networks[42] but also by state-imposed ethnopolitical power configurations. This approach increases the causal depth as compared with conventional approaches to war duration by identifying the *conditions under which* ethnicity matters and entails specific empirical implications.

In essence, we argue that state-induced ethnonationalist policies that exclude and discriminate against specific ethnic groups generate grievances within the affected groups. When rebel groups claim to operate on behalf of such ethnic groups, fighters are initially attracted by the prospects of political representation or better economic access once the government is defeated. However, unlike immediate material payoffs, such a reward structure is associated with a great deal of uncertainty because it is conditional on the *future* success of the rebel organization. If recruitment and sustained combat are linked to uncertain future

[39] Buhaug 2006.
[40] Gates 2002.
[41] Weinstein 2007.
[42] Cf. Weinstein 2007.

rewards, then conflicts should be more likely to be persistent when opportunity costs are low. More specifically, whereas conventional approaches champion arguments about opportunity structure and generally downplay the actors,[43] we argue that the socioeconomic and ethnopolitical context of potential recruits itself shapes individual and collective motivations to fight.[44] Due to greater cost tolerance, claims about uncertain future benefits resonate particularly well in the presence of grievances. Although such grievances can arise in many scenarios, we focus on the ethnonationalist policies of the state. Challengers who are blocked from access to state institutions seek to escape the rule of dominant ethnic groups by either seizing control of the government or seceding from the state.[45]

Ethnic groups excluded from state power are deprived of political representation and likely to be disadvantaged in access to government services. Such ethnic exclusion manifests itself in everyday life, and members of excluded groups are often subject to humiliation and treated as second-class citizens. There is a strong linkage between the individual and the collective, insofar as ethnic exclusion operates along categorical lines that are difficult to overcome at the level of the individual. "Wrongs" by dominant groups, such as the above-mentioned everyday humiliation and the systematic denial of state benefits—including being excluded from public goods and also injuries and human losses suffered by fellow group members—are likely to be perceived collectively by members of the group. Oberschall has coined this a "multiplier effect."[46] Such dynamics are likely to result in reinforced group solidarity and collective grievances, which in turn affect the level of grievances at the individual level. Fighters from excluded ethnic groups are therefore generally more cost tolerant and more committed. Moreover, precisely because ethnic exclusion operates along categorical boundaries, increased group solidarity is likely to raise the cost of free riding, as group policing gains legitimacy.[47] At the same time, these dynamics can also feed into the hands of extremists, who can exploit them to gain momentum and reinforce grievances.[48]

At a more systemic level, such variation in the reward structure also implies systematic differences in regard to the vulnerability to exogenous

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[43] For example, Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004.
[44] Horowitz 1985. In other words, aggrieved individuals are more likely to engage and sustain fighting, independently of opportunity structures.
[45] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.
[46] Oberschall 2007.
[47] Hechter and Okamoto 2001.
[48] Hafez 2003.

shocks.[49] Since rebel organizations composed of opportunistic fighters are heavily dependent on a steady cash flow, factors that negatively impact their financial sources are likely to undermine the rebellion. For example, where rebellion is financed through lootable resources, losing control over relevant sites such as diamond mines can have severe effects on the viability of the movement. By contrast, rebel organizations that rely on the hearts and minds of broader populations are less likely to be affected by such shocks.

In sum, members of excluded ethnic groups are more likely to continue fighting, which allows rebel organizations to endure, than are recruits who have not suffered from exclusion. Hence, it is no surprise that the efforts of the African National Congress (ANC) resonated with the nonwhite ethnic groups during the apartheid era in South Africa. By contrast, members of groups included in the political process enjoy political rights and the benefits of state provision. Moreover, since nonexcluded populations are not categorically disadvantaged, the grievance multiplier effect is less effective. As a consequence, organizations associated with ethnic groups in power are less inclined to endure very long periods of fighting, as are rebellions organized around classes or ideologies that do not benefit from categorical boundaries.

Thus far we have outlined why rebel organizations recruiting from excluded ethnic groups are better *able* to sustain long fighting. By itself, however, this is not a sufficient explanation for long duration, since it does not tell us why such organizations are less likely to reach any type of settlement that could end the fighting, whether an implicit settlement through victory or accepting defeat or an explicit one in the form of a negotiated agreement. In other words, we need to show why rebel organizations associated with excluded ethnic groups are associated with lower probabilities of incumbent and challenger victories, as well as lower probabilities of negotiated agreements. We will address these three options.

We stipulate that the features that enable rebel organizations to recruit from excluded ethnic groups also render them harder for the government to defeat. Given the typically asymmetric nature of warfare in civil wars, there is often a possibility for violence by spoilers.[50] As we have already argued, ethnic exclusion sows the seeds of extremism and polarization. Moreover, deeply entrenched collective grievances and a steady supply of fighters from a large pool that is characterized by

[49] Cf. Fearon and Laitin 2007.
[50] Stedman 1997.

strong group solidarity and high cost tolerance can make it very diffi-
cult for the government to achieve decisive victory. For example, it took
the Sri Lankan military forces nearly twenty-six years to finally defeat
the Tamil Tigers in 2009, and conflicts in Palestine and Burma remain
ongoing. By contrast, rebel organizations that draw from included eth-
nic groups or do not recruit and justify their activities along ethnic
lines at all cannot benefit from the same levels of individual and col-
lective grievances, since they lack the categorical division and solidarity
that results from politicized ethnicity. To see this, consider the Eritrean
Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM), whose Muslim base is not excluded
from central power along categorical lines, or the various rebellions in
Latin America, such as El Salvador, Venezuela, or Colombia, where
conflicts involved mainly military factions that did not display explicit
ethnic linkages.

   Why are governments unable to reach peace agreements with their
challengers? As we have argued in the previous section, accepting some-
thing that will be perceived as a defeat is particularly risky in situations
of politically induced grievances. Resentment and other emotional leg-
acies[51] raise the costs of turning the tables, since those who were previ-
ously in power may become excluded and discriminated against in the
future. Ethnicity's ascriptive nature bolsters this argument, since mem-
bers of the former group in power are easily detected and hence may be
excluded. Thus, ethnicity's categorical dividing line provides a structure
that allows for efforts to seek ethnic exclusion in the first place. Such
arguments are generally less applicable in cases where exclusion occurs
on the grounds of class membership or ideology, since such definitions
of group memberships are less rigid and more difficult to establish.[52]

   More generally, as Walter has forcefully argued, governments may
face reputation costs when giving in to the challenger's demands, since
doing so would signal weakness and invite other potential challengers
to put forward similar demands.[53] Even where a rebel victory does not
imply a change in the central government but is confined to granting
territorial autonomy or secession, incumbent governments will have
strong reasons not to give in to a challenger's demands. Furthermore,
since members of ethnic groups in power frequently view their superior
power status as just and legitimate, concessions may be hard to justify
to the government's own constituency or ethnic group.[54]

[51] Petersen 2002.
[52] Rothchild 1981, 222; Fearon 1999; Tilly 1999; Tilly 2007.
[53] Walter 2009.
[54] Rothchild 1981.

Finally, we argue that negotiated agreements are less likely when states engage in ethnopolitical exclusion and rebel organizations recruit and claim to operate on behalf of ethnic groups. As argued above, not only is ethnic exclusion likely to breed polarization and extremism but it also powerfully reinforces the subjective value of power status, territory, and statehood among both incumbent governments and ethnonationalist challengers. The subjective characteristics of nationalist exclusion suggest then that the state is not easily shared under competing nationalist claims and is sometimes even rendered indivisible. In other words, exclusion leads to a small (or nonexistent) bargaining range that makes compromise difficult. Hasner, Toft, and Goddard present similar arguments about indivisible territory,[55] but the same logic also applies to issues of statehood, representation, and redistribution, to name but a few. In addition, Roessler argues that incumbent governments may fear power-sharing arrangements, since coconspirators may abuse their access to state forces in a coup d'état.[56] Thus, we argue that agreements are particularly difficult to achieve between governments and rebel organizations linked to ethnic groups that have been excluded.

In sum, we outline a dyadic approach to the duration of civil war that emphasizes the ethnonationalist context. By putting together the individual components, we can now derive the main proposition, namely, that rebel organizations fighting on behalf of excluded groups are less likely to see any type of settlement, including decisive victories and losses, as well as negotiated agreements. As they are more likely to continue fighting, conflicts with such rebel organizations will tend to be longer than conflicts fought by organizations associated with groups that do not face exclusion on the basis of ethnic identity:

> H1a. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups fight longer than rebel organizations without an explicit ethnic linkage.
> H1b. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups fight longer than rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of included ethnic groups.

Our argument implies, on the one hand, that governments which engage in risky exclusion find themselves trapped in a dilemma that makes it very difficult to grant concessions to the challenger. As a consequence, governments have strong reasons to defend their position in what becomes framed as all-or-nothing conflicts. On the other hand,

[55] Hassner 2003; Toft 2003; Goddard 2006.
[56] Roessler 2011.

rebel organizations can benefit from a pool of potential recruits with strong grievances, thus contributing to the organizations' durability. This combination of the government's inability to compromise and the challenger's ability to keep fighting explains why conflicts occurring in the name of excluded ethnic groups tend to be particularly enduring. The politics of ethnic exclusion thus imply that governments have incentives to keep particular conflicts from termination and instead to keep them alive and let them linger (possibly at low levels of intensity) in order to avoid any settlement at all. This theoretical argument yields additional testable implications. Before turning to the empirical section, we therefore formulate the following set of hypotheses:

> H2a. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to achieve victory than rebel organizations without an explicit ethnic linkage.
> H2b. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to achieve victory than rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of included ethnic groups.

> H3a. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to be defeated than rebel organizations without an explicit ethnic linkage.
> H3b. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to be defeated than rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of included ethnic groups.

> H4a. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to obtain negotiated agreements than rebel organizations without an explicit ethnic linkage.
> H4b. Rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are less likely to obtain negotiated agreements than rebel organizations recruiting from and fighting on behalf of included ethnic groups.

DATA AND EMPIRICAL STRATEGY

CODING THE GROUP-ORGANIZATION NEXUS

In order to test our propositions, we draw on a new data project that systematically codes the linkage between ethnic groups and rebel organizations. This project links two existing data sets: the Non-State Actor (NSA) data set,[57] which builds directly on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (ACD),[58] and the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) data set on

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[57] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.
[58] Gleditsch et al. 2002.

politically relevant ethnic groups worldwide.[59] Thus, we avoid some of the problems in previous subjective assessments of whether a given conflict is ethnic or not, by examining the explicit linkage between rebel organizations and ethnic groups. Figure 2 outlines the structure of the data set, which we label ACD2EPR. Focusing on rebel organizations rather than on ethnic groups as the unit of analysis has the advantage of seamlessly relating our theoretical considerations to the empirical analysis. Moreover, since some conflicts involve more than one rebel organization,[60] we are able to differentiate between organizations that pursue an ethnic agenda versus those that do not within the same conflict.

Drawing on information included in EPR, we further determine whether or not the ethnic groups within a rebel organization are subject to state-induced exclusionary policies. This then allows us to establish the ethnopolitical context of particular rebel organizations. Finally, note that the mapping is many-to-many, as a given rebel organization can share linkages with multiple ethnic groups and a single ethnic group can be connected to multiple rebel organizations (see Figure 2).

Based on our theory we focus on two necessary criteria with regard to the linkage between ethnic groups and rebel organizations. The first criterion assesses the ethnicity of the fighters. Put differently, we code from which ethnic groups, if any, a particular rebel organization recruits fighters. We require that a significant number of the group members actively participate in the organization's combat operations in order to assert such a linkage.[61] Recruitment along ethnic lines is by itself insufficient because it may merely be the result of local availability and not a deliberate strategy or related to an organization's actual agenda. Therefore our second necessary criterion is whether a given rebel organization publicly announces that it is operating on behalf of the relevant ethnic group, that is, whether it pursues an objective that is directly linked to the group's fate. We label this an exclusive claim, because the stated objective is to provide selective benefits for groups.[62] If recruitment and claim occur jointly, we code a rebel organization as "ethnic." To illustrate, consider the case of Liberia. Whereas rebel organizations fighting in the first Liberian civil war (1989–96)—for example, the National

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[59] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.

[60] Cunningham 2006; Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009; Metternich and Wucherpfennig 2010.

[61] We deliberately chose not to impose a fixed threshold because it is difficult to impossible to obtain reliable numbers of recruitment, especially for conflicts that are long past and not well documented. Nevertheless, in the absence of a "rebel census" the data constitute an imperfect yet reasonable attempt to capture the main patterns of recruitment.

[62] By contrast, inclusive claims would pertain to the country's entire population, as would be the case with incompatibilities over ideologies.
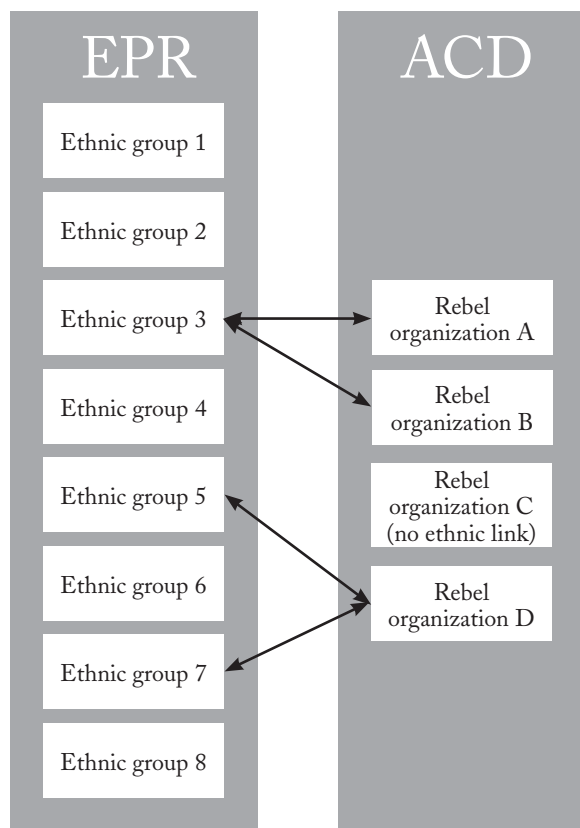
FIGURE 2
ACD2EPR: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS AND REBEL
ORGANIZATIONS

Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the Independent National Patri-
otic Front of Liberia (INPFL)—meet both criteria of ethnic recruitment
and claim involving the Gio, Mano, and other indigenous groups,[63] this
does not hold for the second Liberian civil war (2000–2003). Although
fighters by the LURD were predominantly recruited from the Mandingo
and Krahn (Guere) in the latter war, the organization's sole stated pur-
pose was to remove Charles Taylor from office. We therefore coded this
rebel organization as nonethnic.[64]

[63] Bøås 2001; Harris 2006.
[64] The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) is another example. Al-
though its fighters were predominantly from the Ovimbundu-Ovambu, the organization's stated goals
were explicitly multiethnic and encompassing and thus not exclusive.

CODING ETHNONATIONALIST POLITICS

Much of the current literature equates ethnicity in civil wars with rigid identities, while disregarding more variable political motivations and consequences linked to ethnonationalist policies. By contrast, we argue that ethnonationalist policies of ethnic exclusion signal particular motivations that governments may pursue when confronted with violent challengers. Moreover, as an externality, such policies are likely to systematically induce strong grievances among excluded ethnic groups.[65] Members of such groups are more likely to exhibit strong grievances than are other individuals. It is this macropolitical context that reinforces collective solidarity and alters the individual-level cost tolerance of the fighters in rebel organizations linked to ethnic groups.

The EPR data set contains information about the ethnopolitical power status of ethnic groups. Our ACD2EPR mapping allows us to integrate this information at the level of rebel organizations. Since our argument relates directly to issues of nationalism, such as ethnic representation and statehood, we limit the realm of politics to the set of policies under the direct influence of a country's executive branch. This can amount to control over the presidency, the cabinet, and senior posts in the administration, depending on a given country's power constellations. Thus, where an explicit ethnic linkage between an ethnic group and a rebel organization exists, we assess whether the group was excluded from or included in state power. More precisely, EPR indicates (1) whether representatives of an ethnic category are discriminated against, are powerless, or have merely regional or separatist autonomy, or (2) whether groups hold power in the domain of national politics, either fully or as part of a governing coalition between more than one ethnic group.[66] This allows us to differentiate between ethnic rebel organizations with and without mobilized fighters along ethnonationalist lines against a common baseline of rebel organizations with no ethnic linkage. Examples for the latter type of rebel organization include the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Prominent examples of rebel organizations drawing from included groups are the Palipehutu and Ubumwe of Burundi in the early 1990s, drawing from the Hutu population, as well as the Slovenes and the Croats in the former Yugoslavia, all of which were then represented within power-sharing arrangements. By contrast, the

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[65] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010.

[66] For example, Armenians, Azeri, and Russians had no noticeable influence on national executive politics between 1946 and 2005 in Tbilisi and are therefore coded as powerless, that is, excluded. Lebanon is an example for a shared power at the level of national politics, since cabinet positions are allocated across groups following precise constitutional guidelines.

Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Anya Nya in Sudan (linked to various southern Christian/animist groups) are examples of long-lasting rebel organizations with linkages to excluded ethnic groups.[67]

CONTROL VARIABLES

We also consider a set of control variables plausibly related to both exclusion and conflict duration. Much of the literature on civil war duration emphasizes the importance of lootable resources in the conflict zone for financing rebellion. We rely on data by Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala that indicate the presence of three types of resources in the area where the conflict takes place, namely, gemstones, petroleum and drugs, all coded as dummy variables.[68] The NSA data set provides a series of relevant variables on rebel organizations.[69] The variable *Territorial Control* indicates whether rebel organizations have actual territorial control over some area in the country. *Strong Central Command* is a variable that indicates whether a rebel organization has a coherent command structure. Additionally, we include a dummy variable for *Legal Political Wing* providing information about whether a potential rebel organization has a political wing and its legal status. *Territorial Conflict* codes whether the incompatibility was over territory, rather than the government.[70] At the country level we include a *Democracy* dummy indicating whether a country has a Polity score equal to or greater than 6. Furthermore, we control for the "usual suspects" *GDP per Capita* and *Population* of a country.[71] Other control variables are introduced below.

METHOD AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

To test our main hypotheses we estimate a series of semiparametric models for the hazard of conflict termination for specific rebel organizations. The dyadic data set includes 290 rebel organizations in 198 conflicts between 1946 and 2005.[72] We code information potentially down to the individual dyad-day. Our data include 637,585 dyad-days,

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[67] We emphasize that ethnic exclusion is relatively orthogonal to measures of democracy: the first order Pearson correlations with a measure of Polity and a binary democracy indicator are .10 and .09, respectively.

[68] Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala 2009.

[69] Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009.

[70] See Buhaug 2006.

[71] Hegre and Sambanis 2006.

[72] The NSA data build on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Data (Gleditsch et al. 2002), a twenty-five battle deaths per year threshold, and a conventional rule to ignore gaps in fighting of less than two years to determine whether a conflict is ongoing. Moreover, because EPR covers only independent states, wars of decolonization are excluded from the sample, as are periods of state collapse.

which we aggregate to 1941 unique spells that represent actual changes in any of the time-varying covariates. Out of the 290 rebel-government dyads 18 are right censored. The average fighting duration of a rebel organization is 2207 days (about 6 years) with the median duration being 758 days (about 2.1 years).

We estimate Cox proportional hazards models, since our theoretical considerations do not predict a specific functional form of the underlying baseline hazard. This leaves the duration dependence unspecified and focuses our empirical analysis on how the covariates shift the baseline hazard.[73] We estimate all models using clustered standard errors to account for possible interdependence between dyads within the same conflict. Preliminary analysis revealed that coups differ in their baseline hazard to other conflicts. To allow for different underlying baseline hazards of coups and noncoups, we stratify all models by coups.

We first estimate a series of Cox-proportional hazards models to test our main hypotheses (H1a and H1b) that rebel organizations which recruit from, and claim to operate on behalf of, excluded ethnic groups fight longer than rebel organizations linked to included ethnic groups or organizations without an explicit ethnic linkage. The estimation results can be found in Table 1. The coefficients show the (multiplicative) impact of the explanatory variables on the underlying baseline hazards. Positive coefficients imply an increase in the hazard of a conflict dyad ending, and thus shorter conflicts.

We begin with a standard model that includes characteristics of the rebel organization, resources in the conflict area, and country-level controls. Before turning to the main results we briefly discuss our findings in regard to the control variables. Model 1 suggests that rebel organizations with territorial control are able to fight longer, while strong central command structures and a legal political wing are associated with shorter conflict durations. Our findings related to the country-level controls are mostly in line with the expectations of the existing literature. Rebel organizations fighting in democratic countries tend to be enduring.[74] While this result is possibly driven by particular cases like Israel, India, and Indonesia,[75] we would also expect that democra-

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[73] We present the coefficients rather than the hazard ratios. We also tested all models and the included variables for a possible violation of the proportionality assumption. The tests suggest that the proportionality assumption is not violated in any of our models. We use the Efron method for ties.

[74] This result holds regardless of whether we include a dummy variable or a continuous Polity scale. Note that the endogeneity concerns about polity to conflict highlighted by Vreeland 2008 do not apply here, as we only look at polities in conflict.

[75] See Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009. We conducted a series of jackknife estimations where the models are reestimated omitting observations for individual countries. These tests did not suggest that any individual country is driving our results (see below).

TABLE 1
COX-PROPORTIONAL HAZARD ESTIMATES

			Model		
	1 Ethnic Conflict	2 Baseline Model	3 Sons-of-the-Soil	4 Ethnic Defection	5 Veto Players
Ethnic Linkage	−0.262*			0.222	
	(0.153)			(0.225)	
Ethnic Linkage with Included Group ($\beta1$)		0.307	0.319		0.324
		(0.215)	(0.215)		(0.224)
Ethnic Linkage with Excluded Group ($\beta2$)		−0.419**	−0.410**	−0.737***	−0.392**
		(0.170)	(0.172)	(0.249)	(0.176)
Territorial Conflict	0.014	0.061	0.076	0.028	−0.025
	(0.193)	(0.194)	(0.203)	(0.194)	(0.203)
Strong Central Command	0.409***	0.453***	0.444***	0.441***	0.456***
	(0.145)	(0.151)	(0.155)	(0.151)	(0.150)
Legal Political Wing	0.358*	0.356*	0.351*	0.386**	0.333*
	(0.199)	(0.183)	(0.183)	(0.183)	(0.183)
Territorial Control	−0.335**	−0.350**	−0.354**	−0.515**	−0.392**
	(0.166)	(0.170)	(0.170)	(0.239)	(0.170)
Democracy	−0.834***	−0.849***	−0.838***	−0.820***	−0.925***
	(0.195)	(0.196)	(0.202)	(0.194)	(0.211)
ln GDP p.c.	0.078	0.086	0.090	0.099	0.108
	(0.081)	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.079)	(0.082)
ln Population	−0.040	−0.044	−0.045	−0.044	−0.043
	(0.053)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.052)
Natural Resources	−0.382**	−0.354**	−0.350**	−0.366**	−0.343**
	(0.164)	(0.159)	(0.159)	(0.162)	(0.160)
Sons-of-the-Soil			−0.093		
			(0.257)		
Ethnic Linkage X Territorial Control				0.354	
				(0.291)	
Veto Players					−0.183*
					(0.110)
Wald test: Pr($\beta1 = \beta2$)		0.003***	0.003***		0.003***
N	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941
Days at Risk	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585
Number of Failures	272	272	272	272	272
Log-Likelihood	−1147	−1143	−1143	−1142	−1141

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$; robust standard errors in parentheses

cies are constrained from fighting as ruthlessly against insurgencies by domestic audiences. GDP per capita and population size do not significantly impact conflict dyad termination.[76] These results are consistent across all estimated models.

Turning to our main results, model 1 includes our first key independent variable, which indicates whether a rebel organization claims to fight on behalf of a politically relevant ethnic group and recruits from its members. Hence, in a first step we examine whether ethnic linkages as such increase conflict duration. The results indicate some support for the contention that rebel organizations linked to at least one politically relevant ethnic group fight longer than rebel organizations without such a link. The hazard of a conflict dyad ending decreases by 22 percent if a rebel organization is linked to a politically relevant ethnic group. However, in line with most previous studies, this general ethnic effect is only marginally significant and not robust when particular cases are excluded from the analysis (results not shown).

To test our core hypotheses (H1a and H1b), we focus on rebel organizations with an explicit ethnic linkage and differentiate between organizations linked to excluded and included politically relevant ethnic groups. The baseline category contains rebel organizations that do not have an ethnic link. Model 2 suggests strong support for our main hypothesis. While rebel organizations related to included ethnic groups are not associated with longer conflict durations, organizations that claim to fight on behalf of excluded ethnic groups and recruit from these fight notably longer. In comparison with the reference category, these rebel organizations decrease the underlying baseline hazard by 32 percent, thus significantly prolonging conflict dyad duration. This effect is even more pronounced when considering the difference between rebel organizations with different ethnic linkages. Rebel organizations with a linkage to excluded groups have a hazard rate that is on average 50 percent lower than that of organizations that are affiliated with included ethnic groups. A Wald test indicates that this difference is highly statistically significant. However, the negative, that is, the conflict-*shortening* effect for rebels linked to included ethnic groups, is not statistically significant at conventional levels. These findings suggest that the effect of ethnicity reported in model 1 is entirely driven by the subset of rebel organizations linked to excluded ethnic groups. The insight provides strong support for hypothesis 1b.

[76] See, for example, Fearon 2004.

Figure 3 provides a graphical interpretation of our main results. The left panel plots the predicted survival functions from model 1 for rebel organizations with and without an ethnic linkage.[77] The y-axis displays the predicted survival percentage at a given conflict day (x-axis). The solid line represents the predicted values for rebel organizations with an ethnic linkage, while the dashed line refers to rebel organizations not associated with an ethnic group. The left panel reiterates the previous insight that model 1 predicts longer conflicts for rebel organizations with an ethnic linkage. For example, model 1 predicts that 50 percent of rebel organizations without an ethnic linkage cease to fight after about 950 days (2.6 years), whereas 50 percent of rebel organizations that are affiliated with an ethnic group are expected to end their activities after 1300 days (3.6 years). However, even though the difference is quite substantial in absolute terms, it is only marginally significant at conventional levels.

The right panel in Figure 3 plots the predicted survival functions from model 2, which allows us to differentiate between rebel organizations that are linked to included (solid grey line) and excluded ethnic groups (solid black line). Recall that rebel organizations linked to excluded ethnic groups fight significantly longer than organizations linked to included groups or organizations without an ethnic relation. Model 2 predicts that 50 percent of rebel organizations with a link to excluded ethnic groups end their fighting efforts after 1650 days (4.5 years), while the half-life of organizations that are affiliated with included ethnic groups is 550 days (1.5 years). Again, rebel organizations without an ethnic linkage cease fighting after about 950 days (2.6 years).

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

An important question is whether alternative explanations may underlie our finding that rebel organizations linked to excluded ethnic groups are associated with longer conflicts. In particular, we consider two theoretical accounts that treat the state as an active party to the conflict,[78] as well as a theory that addresses the difficulty of reaching an agreement.[79] First, our empirical explanations could be driven by "sons of the soil" dynamics that Fearon identifies to explain civil war duration.[80] Following Weiner's original conceptualization, these are defined as conflicts between a peripheral geographically concentrated ethnic minority, that is, the sons of the soil, facing state-initiated migration

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[77] We hold all other variables at their mean, or mode for dichotomous variables.
[78] Fearon 2004; Kalyvas 2008.
[79] Cunningham 2006.
[80] Fearon 2004.
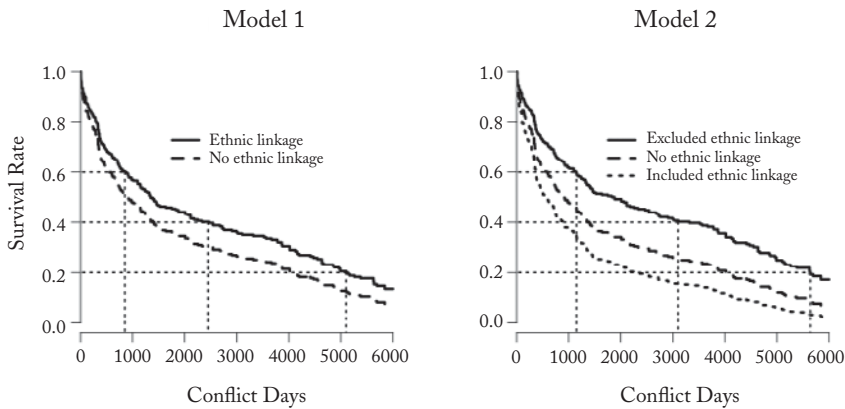
FIGURE 3
PREDICTED SURVIVAL FUNCTIONS FOR MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2

to the minority's perceived homelands by a dominant ethnic group from the center.[81] Scarce resources, such as land or jobs, result in strong grievances and local struggles. Importantly, these grievances are primarily state induced since the migration is assumed to be, at least partly, orchestrated by the government. They are likely to escalate in situations where the state sides with migrants to appease their support base. Because migration is path dependent and the government has an interest in maintaining such policies, it is unable to credibly commit to a peace agreement. Fearon and Laitin argue that this renders sons-of-the-soil conflicts especially difficult to end, thus prolonging the armed struggle.[82] Relying on Weiner's original definition we coded a binary indicator for such conflicts.[83] However, model 3 suggests that adding our measure for sons-of-the-soil dynamics does not noticeably change our main results. Moreover, in our models, the sons-of-the-soil variable does not significantly influence rebel organization duration. Given the definition of such wars as conflicts involving "disadvantaged minorities," such wars are in our view best seen as a subset of ethnic conflicts typically involving ethnic groups excluded from state power. Indeed, it turns out that *twenty-eight out of thirty dyads coded as sons-of-the-soil are linked to ethnic groups excluded from state power.*[84]

[81] Weiner 1978.
[82] Fearon 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2011.
[83] Weiner 1978.
[84] The only exceptions are the MFDC in Senegal, linked to the Diola, and the UFLA in India, linked to the Assamese.

Second, we assess whether our results may capture ethnic defection, which Kalyvas puts forward as the prime argument for why ethnic identities should be treated as fluid rather than fixed.[85] It is described as follows: "(a) the incumbent state is willing and able to recruit members of the rebellious ethnic minority, (b) a substantial number of individuals collaborate with a political actor explicitly opposed to their own ethnic group, and (c) fighters and sympathizers switch sides from ethnic rebels to the state."[86] Although the theory postulates a variable effect of ethnicity, this effect is not random but rather is a result of systematic state action. As Kalyvas explains, "the behavioral potential of ethnicity is empirically variable … [and] a key determinant … is the willingness of incumbent states facing ethnic rebellion to recruit ethnic defectors, which in turn depends on their resources."[87] Put differently, state strength, and in particular territorial control, is regarded as a systematic modifier of ethnic identities. In an attempt to partly operationalize this logic, ethnic defection should be less likely where rebel organizations enjoy territorial control, thus prolonging conflict. Therefore, the effect of ethnicity should be stronger when rebels exercise territorial control and weaker or absent in conflicts where the rebels do not control territory. To assess this implication we interact *Ethnic Linkage with Excluded Group* with *Territorial Control* (model 4). The results reveal no significant interaction effect, suggesting that the effect of ethnic nationalism is not an artifact of ethnic defection.[88]

Finally, since our theoretical explanation for why ethnic nationalism prolongs civil wars rests on the argument that such conflicts are more difficult to resolve, we also consider the effect of veto players. In an application of the veto player framework, Cunningham argues that the presence of multiple rebel organizations in the same conflict leads to narrower bargaining ranges, a higher risk of information asymmetries, last mover advantages, and shifting alliances.[89] As a consequence, the more veto players, the more difficult conflicts are to resolve and the longer they endure. In model 5 we therefore control for the number of veto players, which we measure as the count of the number of active rebel organizations at the start of the conflict. Although we find a negative effect for this variable, the coefficient is not statistically significant. Moreover, it does not affect our previous findings: rebel organizations

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[85] Kalyvas 2008.

[86] Kalyvas 2008, 1050.

[87] Kalyvas 2008, 1045.

[88] A more direct test of the defection mechanism would require more fine-grained data on territorial control.

[89] Cunningham 2006.

linked to excluded ethnic groups fight significantly longer than those linked to included groups, as well as those without an explicit ethnic linkage. In sum, we find substantial support for our core hypotheses 1a and 1b.

Having demonstrated strong empirical evidence that ethnic exclusion is related to longer conflicts, we turn to secondary evidence and extend the analysis by examining whether the effect of exclusion is conditional on the conflict outcome (hypotheses 2a–3b). In the theoretical section we argued that longer conflicts result from exclusive policies which (1) constrain the state's willingness to accept settlements and (2) increase the ability of rebel organizations to recruit from ethnic group members with strong grievances. We therefore estimate five further models that account for different conflict outcomes, namely, victories (by either party), government victories, rebel victories, agreements, and low activity. The results can be found in Table 2. Models 6 to 8 address decisive victories. We find some support for hypotheses 2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b as conflict dyads involving rebel organizations linked to excluded groups appear less likely to end in victories, both by the government and the rebels, as compared with rebel groups linked to included ethnic groups or those without an explicit ethnic linkage (albeit not always with statistical significance).[90] Model 9 shows that rebel organizations linked to included groups are more likely to obtain negotiated agreements (Wald test). However, we find no evidence that this also holds for nonethnic rebel organizations. One possible reason is that this category potentially conflates various types of conflicts, including ceasefires. For completeness, model 10 considers the residual category of conflicts that fade out. While there seems to be some indication that ethnicity makes this outcome less likely, there appears to be no difference in terms of political status. However, since there are only three cases of such infighting on behalf of included groups, this result must be taken with a grain of salt. In sum, we find that ethnic exclusion is significantly related to longer conflicts because parties cannot agree to a negotiated settlement, including victories as implicit settlements and negotiated agreements as more explicit settlements. This yields strong support for our theoretical conjecture that rebel organizations fighting on behalf of excluded ethnic groups are generally more willing to accept longer periods of fighting until a decisive outcome is reached, and that governments may be impeded in their ability to accept any type of

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[90] The lack of statistical significance can possibly be attributed to a low number of positive cases; for example, out of only fifteen rebel victories by rebel organizations, just four are achieved by those linked to excluded ethnic groups.

TABLE 2
COMPETING RISKS ESTIMATES

			Model		
	6	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
		Government	*Rebel*		*Low*
	Victories	*Victories*	*Victories*	*Agreements*	*Activity*
Ethnic Linkage with	−0.061	−0.133	0.073	1.210**	−0.523
Included Group ($\beta 1$)	(0.315)	(0.378)	(0.678)	(0.529)	(0.696)
Ethnic Linkage with	−0.713**	−0.794**	−0.680	0.172	−0.519
Excluded Group ($\beta 2$)	(0.283)	(0.367)	(0.452)	(0.316)	(0.361)
Territorial Conflict	−0.176	0.576	−2.090***	0.147	0.018
	(0.305)	(0.377)	(0.594)	(0.428)	(0.386)
Strong Central Command	1.069***	0.536*	1.571***	0.092	−0.275
	(0.205)	(0.295)	(0.361)	(0.322)	(0.414)
Legal Political Wing	0.492**	0.540*	0.421	−0.060	0.330
	(0.234)	(0.310)	(0.395)	(0.531)	(0.320)
Territorial Control	−0.313	−0.141	−0.282	0.137	−0.503
	(0.261)	(0.320)	(0.358)	(0.333)	(0.425)
Democracy	−1.099***	−0.827**	−1.598**	−0.853	−0.654*
	(0.352)	(0.393)	(0.686)	(0.521)	(0.353)
ln GDP p.c.	−0.077	0.083	−0.270	0.003	0.025
	(0.138)	(0.173)	(0.202)	(0.228)	(0.165)
ln Population	−0.092	−0.040	−0.178	−0.317**	0.210*
	(0.082)	(0.108)	(0.122)	(0.153)	(0.113)
Natural Resources	−0.361	−0.286	−0.482	−0.613	0.154
	(0.244)	(0.327)	(0.416)	(0.380)	(0.394)
Wald test: Pr($\beta 1 = \beta 2$)	0.094*	0.154	0.357	0.073*	0.995
N	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941
Days at Risk	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585
Number of Failures	115	67	48	56	68
Log-Likelihood	−447.7	−275.3	−165.1	−232.7	−296.7

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$; robust standard errors in parentheses

settlement. Thus, we have further disaggregated the theoretical mechanisms that link ethnopolitical exclusion to long durations.

ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

We estimated a number of alternative models to assess the robustness of our results. In principle, our results could be affected by problems of selection, since excluded ethnic groups are more likely to fight to begin with. However, in this case the selection mechanism is driven by

an *observable* factor—exclusion—for which we control in our analyses, thus avoiding omitted variable bias. However, such bias will arise if an omitted variable is correlated with both exclusion and duration.[91] In an attempt to address this problem, we briefly consider some possible candidates and perform a set of robustness checks.[92] The core specification is the same as model 2 in Table 1.

The robustness checks are presented in Table 3. Model 11 includes a set of geographic variables, the distance of the conflict zone to the capital and border locations, previously found to be associated with prolonged conflict.[93] If ethnic exclusion affects mainly peripheral groups, this could drive our results. The estimates demonstrate, however, that including variables measuring whether the conflict area intersects with state borders and measuring the distance to the capital does not change our main results.

As argued in the theoretical section, states may engage in exclusion to maximize resource extraction and in-group redistribution. While lootable resources are a prime candidate, they can also benefit rebel organizations if they manage to control the necessary territory. To further investigate the effect of natural resources, model 12 tests whether any particular resource type drives the compound effect of natural resources in the conflict area and whether disaggregating this variable has any effect on our main estimates. Although all three types yield negative coefficients, these are not significant and do not affect the magnitude or the significance of the coefficients for ethnopolitical linkages.

A further explanation attributes exclusion to capacity and strength, since it is less difficult and risky for states to exclude weak groups. We therefore test whether mobilization and fighting capacity (model 13) or the balance of power vis-à-vis the government (model 14) could diminish our findings related to ethnopolitical linkages. While the capacity variables do not significantly affect the length of conflict, compound measures of rebel strength show that weak rebel organizations (reference

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[91] As argued above, apart from the studies considered here, the determinants of exclusion are largely unknown.

[92] Two other strategies exist to tackle this problem. First, in principle, matching could provide a solution to the problem, but this is highly problematic here due to the small sample size of just 198 rebel organizations. Second, estimation techniques that address selection on *unobservables* require instrumental variables that are difficult to find, and that the units of observation can be observed in the selection processes. By definition, however, rebel organizations are observed only once they engage in conflict, and it is difficult to set up a super sample of "potential groups" to consider selection to conflict. To our knowledge there exists no global data set on political organizations of which rebel organizations would be a subset, and the only available estimator of which we are aware (Boehmke, Morey, and Shannon 2006) does not allow for time-varying covariates and is restricted to a correlation coefficient between -.25 and .25.

[93] Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala 2009.

TABLE 3
ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

	11	12	13	14	15	16	Model 17	18	19	20	21
	Location	Resources	Capacity	Strength	Cold War	Polity	Conflict Frailty	Country Frailty	Conflict Jackknife	Country Jackknife	Bootstrap
Ethnic Linkage with Included Group (β1)	0.325 (0.217)	0.317 (0.217)	0.316 (0.208)	0.344* (0.197)	0.068 (0.214)	0.354* (0.212)	0.392 (0.309)	0.374 (0.271)	0.308 (0.241)	0.346 (0.270)	0.325 (0.252)
Ethnic Linkage with Excluded Group (β2)	-0.408** (0.165)	-0.447*** (0.164)	-0.429** (0.169)	-0.414** (0.173)	-0.453*** (0.162)	-0.422*** (0.161)	-0.605*** (0.219)	-0.537*** (0.188)	-0.417** (0.197)	-0.417** (0.172)	-0.429** (0.202)
Territorial Conflict	0.090 (0.192)	-0.034 (0.204)	0.079 (0.196)	0.095 (0.194)	0.031 (0.185)	-0.084 (0.199)	-0.386 (0.265)	-0.209 (0.215)	0.084 (0.228)	0.087 (0.190)	0.055 (0.225)
Strong Central Command	0.439*** (0.149)	0.467*** (0.146)	0.372** (0.163)	0.351** (0.150)	0.432*** (0.152)	0.460*** (0.155)	0.609*** (0.206)	0.540*** (0.183)	0.445*** (0.172)	0.455** (0.179)	0.462** (0.194)
Legal Political Wing	0.358* (0.183)	0.317* (0.190)	0.364** (0.185)	0.416** (0.187)	0.333* (0.176)	0.242 (0.182)	0.182 (0.214)	0.256 (0.187)	0.370* (0.208)	0.366* (0.213)	0.359* (0.209)
Territorial Control	-0.354** (0.178)	-0.328* (0.174)	-0.352** (0.172)	-0.444** (0.179)	-0.323* (0.169)	-0.326* (0.170)	-0.723*** (0.193)	-0.741*** (0.174)	-0.370* (0.191)	-0.384 (0.218)	-0.359* (0.197)
Democracy	-0.832*** (0.193)	-0.806*** (0.194)	-0.811*** (0.202)	-0.825*** (0.197)	-0.806*** (0.195)		-0.849*** (0.256)	-0.789*** (0.253)	-0.845*** (0.231)	-0.811*** (0.232)	-0.851*** (0.214)
ln GDP p.c.	0.077 (0.079)	0.065 (0.084)	0.081 (0.080)	0.090 (0.081)	0.054 (0.080)	0.074 (0.079)	0.250** (0.118)	0.172 (0.117)	0.077 (0.093)	0.089 (0.113)	0.098 (0.096)
ln Population	-0.058 (0.062)	-0.043 (0.054)	-0.053 (0.052)	-0.029 (0.050)	-0.048 (0.052)	-0.064 (0.053)	-0.030 (0.072)	-0.007 (0.076)	-0.049 (0.060)	-0.04 (0.074)	-0.051 (0.060)
Natural Resources	-0.321* (0.173)		-0.328** (0.157)	-0.315** (0.149)	-0.411*** (0.148)	-0.193** (0.081)	-0.703*** (0.211)	-0.759*** (0.188)	-0.339** (0.180)	-0.324* (0.193)	-0.351** (0.180)
log Conflict-Capital Distance	-0.024 (0.066)										

Conflict Zone at Border	−0.246 (0.200)										
Narcotics		−0.196 (0.239)									
Oil		−0.178 (0.167)									
Gemstones		−0.207 (0.189)									
Mobilization Capacity			0.217 (0.248)								
Fighting Capacity			0.375 (0.313)								
Rebels stronger than Government				0.972*** (0.288)							
Rebels at Parity with Government				0.415* (0.213)							
Post Cold War					0.572*** (0.174)						
Polity						−0.035*** (0.011)					
theta							0.549*** (0.197)	0.367*** (0.136)			
Wald test: Pr(β1 = β2)	0.003***	0.002***	0.002***	0.001***	0.037**	0.001***	0.002***	0.001***	0.009***	0.019***	0.010***
N	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941	1,941
Days at Risk	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585	637585
Number of Failures	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272
Log-Likelihood	−1142	−1143	−1142	−1137	−1134	−1149	−1235	−1233	−1149	−1143	−1143

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; robust standard errors in parentheses

category in model 14) fight the longest. Additionally, we estimate a
model controlling for whether the conflict takes place after the end of
the cold war, that is, post 1989 (model 15). Kalyvas and Balcells argue
that the international system "shapes the military dimension of civil
wars through its impact on the relative power of the contestants."[94]
In particular, the cold war period is characterized by "robust rebellion"
that benefits rebel organizations; it in turn is associated with long dura-
tions.[95] Our results suggest that rebel organizations are associated with
shorter conflict durations during the post–cold war period. Most im-
portantly, our main finding that rebel organizations which are associ-
ated with politically excluded ethnic groups fight the longest is robust
to the inclusion of capacity, strength, and post–cold war controls.

Model 16 considers the effect of democratic institutions, this time
employing the full polity scale. Since inclusiveness is a core principle
of democracy, we would expect lower levels of exclusion in democra-
cies, while responsiveness (domestic audiences) and other democratic
norms, such as concerns for human rights, may impose restrictions on
governments' ability to fight rebel organizations. Again we find a nega-
tive effect, suggesting that democratic governments tend to fight longer,
but this does not affect the results associated with ethnic exclusion.

We also examine the effect of potential unobserved heterogeneity,
both between conflicts and countries (models 17 and 18). In other
words, we check whether our results are an artifact of unmeasured
country- or conflict-constant variation. In order to do this within a
Cox-proportional hazards framework, we include a gamma frailty term
as a random effect.[96] Although the variance for this term is statisti-
cally significant in both cases, it does not attenuate our core results.
On the contrary, across all model specifications the frailty models yield
the largest coefficients for rebel organizations linked to excluded ethnic
groups.

In addition, we check whether our results are robust with respect
to alternative estimation approaches by estimating several parametric
hazards models (Weibull, log-normal, and log-logistic), all of which
yielded similar and significant results (not shown). To assess whether
our findings are driven by particular conflicts or countries, we reesti-
mate model 3 with groupwise jackknifing of our sample by (1) conflicts
and (2) countries; we also bootstrap (models 19–21). Our estimated
coefficients do not change and the standard errors stay small. Finally,

[94] Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, 416.
[95] See also Hironaka 2005.
[96] See Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004, chap. 9.

we also estimate variance inflation factors to check for potential (higher order) multicollinearity, but find them to be well below critical thresholds for all the independent variables.

Conclusion

This article examines the role of ethnicity in the context of civil war duration. Focusing on actors and agency in civil wars, it presents a theoretical account that links rebel organizations and ethnic groups and also includes the state as an active actor. In particular, our main argument is that exclusionary policies enacted by the state are likely to influence the salience of ethnonationalist grievances. More specifically, exclusionary politics not only reveal state preferences that impact heavily on the ability and willingness of incumbent governments to accept settlements, but also lead members of ethnic groups that are systematically excluded from state power to develop stronger group solidarity and to become more cost tolerant. Such rebel organizations are therefore more likely to fight longer conflicts. It is these grievances that allow rebel organizations to recruit and fight on behalf of such groups and to maintain their fighting base for longer periods of time.

Thus, contrary to what is assumed by many scholars, we find that ethnic conflicts do not last longer because ethnic loyalties are rigid and difficult to transcend; nor do they last longer because ethnic identities per se help overcome collective action problems among the rebels. Rather, it is the unique combination of ascriptive ethnicity and state-enacted exclusion along such categorical lines that impacts conflict duration. Hence, conflicts last longer when ethnicity is charged with ethnonationalist grievances. Our results thus point directly to institutions and policies that make such conflicts less likely to begin with and also help them come to an end, namely, ethnic power sharing through inclusion. In contrast to the essentialist view that deeply held ethnic identities drive such violence, we argue that grievances are by no means fixed. Indeed our analysis shows that they depend on policies of ethnonationalist exclusion. Although the literature on power sharing highlights a number of pitfalls in such arrangements,[97] representation at the political center could therefore at least in principle be a powerful tool to alleviate grievances and thereby shorten armed conflicts.

We believe that our approach is more complete, since it covers a more extensive set of actors and also offers more causal depth. By theoretically

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[97] For example, Rothchild and Roeder 2005.

and empirically disaggregating the political effect of ethnicity, it goes beyond the current literature by explaining variation in the level of grievances as the result of state action. Our empirical results provide strong support for the argument that ethnicity affects conflict duration where states exclude large parts of the population along categorical lines. If rebel organizations are linked to these excluded ethnic groups, they fight significantly longer. Therefore, it is not ethnicity as such but rather ethnonationalist policies that drive conflict duration.

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