

Why fight – the logic of war – module 1

- Wars – number of deaths per year larger than 1000 is defined as a war.
- Post ww2 – total number of armed conflicts has increased steadily – however, intrastate wars has increased much more than interstate wars
- **Primary source of conflict post ww2 deaths is in civil wars**

Civil Wars

Civil wars are costly

- - They are **longer** (before WW2 civil wars last only 1.5 years (5 per year). After WW2 civil wars last **4 years on average** (20 per year)
 - Since WW2 – 25 million people killed in civil war (410,000 per year)
 - Most civil wars do not have a decisive ending
 - - decisive ending means massive movement of humans and heavy equipment from one side, Vietnam is one example.
 - Puzzle: if one has fought so long in a war why negotiate

Is fighting irrational?

- Scenario: Rebel vs. Government for diamond, oil, mineral, etc. resources.
- There are two way to solve this difference
- - Negotiate – agree on predetermined share of resource/area
 - Fight – the size of the share is dependent on which group wins, and how much they can win by
- If government is stronger than rebel group: 0-100
- - Negotiation – **take it or leave it offer** from government. Government can offer as little as possible, even up to 100% government control. Rebel ends up conceding, as they are weaker. The government may concede by granting immunity/amnesty from attack
 - Fighting – rebels end up losing (based solely on strength). Outcome: **government gets all.**
 - These outcomes are **theoretically identical**
- If their powers are balanced: 50-50
- - Negotiation – since they are balanced they divide the share by 50/50.
 - Fighting – no clear winner emerges – they control the piece of resource in proportion to their strength – still 50/50
 - Again, these outcomes are **theoretically identical.**
- In the end, **negotiation and conflict lead to the same division of the pie.**
- However, **conflict makes the pie smaller**, especially in a civil war – as the winner destroys some of their own share!

Phyrric victory

- Stands for “fire” victory – **one has won the battle, but lost more than the actual “winnings”.**

- **A winner's curse** – in order to win you must pay more than he expects of the value of the prize
- ◦ Action is similar to fighting: in an auction, the winner has to pay cost of good + cost of outbidding losers
- Why would losers compete in the first place? because one thinks they might win. – they lack information of their enemies

Rationality and logic of fighting

- if the information about competitors is **opaque** – lack of information about bargaining strength fuels fighting, fighting extracts information about bargaining strength
- Once information is **transparent** – winner's identity revealed, proceed to settlement.
- **Fighting in order to negotiate more effectively is more rational than fighting to win.**
- The mere **possibility of negotiation makes fighting more likely** – people want to enter negotiations with a higher bargaining strength
- ◦ trade union – union is likelier to go on strike when a company raises wages, rather than a final ruling by a court lowering – this is because they feel that they have more possibility of negotiations.
- ◦ Taliban's vicious fighting to raise bargaining strength
- ◦ NK missile testing: to demonstrate bargaining table and negotiate a better deal

Why do only a few countries “win” wars

- Most wars are negotiated to an end, even before there are clear winners. Some exceptions: Vietnam, Chechnya, Liberian civil war - these wars took very long time
- Once genuine information about strength is revealed, it is rational to stop fighting
- After this point – the mere threat of fighting is as credible as the action of fighting, actual fighting will contribute to the winners curse.

War from the rebel's perspective

- Why are rebels so different
- ◦ Shining Path and Huallega Rebel Committee in Peru. Both groups have philosophy, background – communist ethic/local focused
- ◦ Shining Path pitch itself as a political party, focus on targeting military, highlights violent rebellion.
- ◦ ▪ **disciplined**
- ◦ **HRC-corrupt, violence targeting general public**
- **Two strategies to recruit members**
- ◦ **pay or persuade**(ideology, political theory)
 - ◦ ▪ HRC is near Amazon rain-forest, has resources, it earns quick money doing drug trade. The shining path is from barren highland, turns to Marxist theory
 - ◦ economic endowment: instantaneous but short-term benefits - once resources are exhausted, there is nothing left. This attracts opportunistic low-commitment recruits (consumers).
 - ◦ ▪ bandits: mixed backgrounds. No shared beliefs, random violence
 - ◦ ideology, identity – delayed, long-term benefits. This attracts high-commitment recruits (investors).
 - ◦ ▪ rebels: shared belief, coordinated action
 - ◦ ▪ i.e. ISIS

- **Resource curse: rich regions most hospitable for revolution** → **payment(bandits). Poor** → **persuasion(rebels).**
- example: Tupac's mother joined Black Pather and renamed Tupac after the late Inca King. **Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement**, Japanese embassy hostage crisis.
- **Rebel behavior behind the frontline**
- ◦ Two examples of rebel occupation
 - ■ National Resistance Army in Uganda(NRA): **democratic, provides public goods.** A very successful transition from rebel to government
 - ■ Resistencia nacional in Mozambique(Renamo): **authoritarian, plundered public wealth.** Forced labour.
- **Resource Curse** – the NRA "27 young men", the Renamo had significant backing from South Africa(APARTHEID, FAR-RIGHT), USA(The Heritage Foundation)
- **Two conditions of good government**
- ■ leaders must be forward looking, rational to focus on production rather than plundering. Poor resource today→ greater focus on wealth tomorrow
- ■ Leaders must rely on taxation from civilians - rational to provide public goods, and extend democratic rights: encourage people to pay taxes i.e. no taxation without representation
- **Poor resource - reliance on tax (incentive to create good government)**

War from the government's perspective

- Some never back down e.g. Russia, Indonesia, Spain. Why?
- Some concede quickly e.g. Canada, Czechoslovak, Philippines. Why?
- **How does the government credibly demonstrate that it is strong rather than weak.** How do you show that you are not a lemon? How do you tell if they are bluffing.
- **Solution: take action costly enough that the lemons cannot mimic you.**
- ◦ I.e. government can launch a punitive attack as a "strong warning"
- **Signalling: A government's decision to fight to the end – Fighting signals bargaining strength. Concession signals weakness.** The benefit of strong reputation – deter others from challenging
- **More potential challengers**→** reputation more valuable. Few challengers – countries negotiate.**
- ◦ I.e Canada/Philippines/Czech republic conceded quickly since it's not worth it to fight
- However, Russia/Indonesia/Spain/China(Tibet, uyghurs) had many ethnic rebels so they had to fight.
- Leader's tenure in office – Indonesia(1967-1998, strong leader) to (1998-now, weaker short-term successors) became more oriented towards concession
- ◦ **Long-term leaders are more inclined to fight.** Many opportunities to build reputation, many challengers.
- Fewer challengers when there are short-term leaders. Establishing a tough reputation is difficult.

Is violence rational?

- Violence is often not an irrational burst of rage. Violence is often strategic to gain compliance from civilians.
- Violence is often selective rather than random

Indiscriminate violence is often counterproductive

- **Compliance has no benefit from civilians.** Indiscriminate violence implies that whether one is a target of violence or not is not contingent on behavior – less motivation of compliance
- ◦ The rational response from civilians is to **ignore the threat of violence**
- **Indiscriminate violence can often create reverse discrimination.** If there are supporters and defectors, the supporters stay and defectors leave/hide/armed. Violence **disproportionately hits the most loyal supporters and misses defectors.**

Violence in War

- ◦ When power is skewed: weaker side cannot offer counter-protection. The stronger side is able to engage in indiscriminate violence without much loss
- ◦ When power is even – each side can undermine the other side with counter-offer – both sides use selective violence.
- ◦ **War moves from indiscriminate to selective as the power moves from skewed to balanced.**

Why do wars of occupation end in civil wars?

- Examples: Chinese civil war after Japanese occupation
- **Occupiers rely on selective violence. Selective violence relies on locals collaborators because of lack of information. Drives a wedge amongst the native population** – which erupts into war civil after the occupiers leave.

Which conflict region is the deadliest?

- Remember: violence is selective and must rely on civilian collaboration. Collaborators face retaliation.
- **Frontline: control is fiercely contested.** Neither side is strong enough to prevent the other side from retaliating against collaborators -> there are **no willing collaborators**. Most peaceful for civilians
- ◦ i.e. Pakistan vs Bangladesh - fence sitting
- **The hinterland: complete control.** There is no need to use violence and engaged in normal state building. Many collaborators (usually false/for their own self-benefit), but they are ignored.
- **The interval: the control is dominant but incomplete.** Incomplete→ incumbent chooses to use violence. Dominant → Incumbent offer protection of retaliation→ more willing collaborators. **high violence.**
- Most violent when the front line **shift frequently**
- ◦ Vietnam and Sri Lanka both lasted 20 year, but Vietnam has a lot more civilian casualty due to shifting front line

Civilians and Violence

- Violence is a joint enterprise – need both civilians to offer information and combatants to offer the force. Violence only takes place when both sides are willing to offer.
- ◦ conventional understanding is civilians are victims. In reality, civilians are implicit in their violence
- Violence connect private and public life.
- ◦ Public: combatant's quest for victory
- ◦ Private life: civilians quest for personal revenge

- civilians help combatants win the war, combatants help civilians settle person scores

How to bribe? The logic of corruption – module 2

- Corruption: Perverting the course of public service to pursue personal gains
- Political Corruption: selling political favours for private benefits.
 - politicians sell political influence
 - citizens sell votes

Cronyism

South Korea vs philippines

- Similar geographical/economic history, widespread corruption, but highly different nowadays
- Philippines plundered the companies – Companies paid bribes out of coercion. Large bribe but small benefit -protection racket (they pay the oppressors not to harm them)
- South Korea “colluded” with the companies. Companies paid bribes through negotiations –roughly equal bargaining power. Small bribes were profitable to companies. Large benefit - business friendly policies.

Why do countries differ in corruption

- **It is better to be on the short side** – the long side has to compete for your business. You have greater bargaining power, You earn more profits from the corrupt exchange. A theory of short-side power
- **Authoritarian government + fragmented businesses = government has short-side power**
 - they can blackmail businesses, large bribes for small favour
 - Corruption will be rampant - **state predation**
- **Democratic government and concentrated business – business has short-side power**
 - blackmail business, earn large political favor with small bribes
 - rampant corruption - **state capture** (i.e early 20th century USA with huge companies ford, imperial oil, gm).
- **Democratic + fragmented businesses** = neither side has short-side power.
- - Competition among politicians **drive down amount of bribery demanded.**
 - Competition among business **drive down the favours demanded.**
 - **Neither side will find corruption to be profitable** = little corruption.
 - implication: democracy reduces corruption
- **Authoritarian government and concentrated business** – neither side has short-side power.
 - Mutual hostage, each side is too big to fail and can extract concession from the other
 - **state collusion – could be good for economic growth.** This is a **duopoly - Taiwan, China, Japan**
 - both government and business wield significant bargaining power
 - **Firms borrow heavily** to hold government “hostage” – government never cuts off credit, long-term credit enables firms to invest deeply - **investment effect**
 - Bribes are relatively large, **only lowest cost firms can afford corruption** = these companies are greatly productive and create economic growth -**selection effect**
- **Balanced:**

- - many politicians vs many companies = low corruption
 - few politicians facing few companies = median corruption/collusion
- Not balanced: one side is concentrated and the other is fragmented = more corruption (state predation or state capture)

Is corruption good for the political system?

Do bribes attract the most incompetent politicians?

- In a world without bribes – bright politicians would not choose to enter public service due to less wages than the private sector.
 - Clean politics attracts the dumbest, deters the brightest
- if bribes exist in politics - Politics becomes more profitable, bright people are enticed out of private sector, large bribes attract more competent politicians

Alternative to bribes: threats

1. physical violence: i.e. escobar
2. media attacks
3. legal harassment

Do threats crowd out corruption?

- Threats drive down the cost of bribes, making it more profitable for companies to bribe. Corruption becomes more prevalent

How do threats affect the quality of politicians?

- without bribes, politics attract the dumb, large bribes attract more competent politicians. **Threats reduce bribes, thus reducing the quality of politicians**

Should politicians get legal immunity?

– the benefit of immunity is to prevent legal harassment, but has side effect of letting bribe-takers off the hook.

- Immunity should be granted when it is necessary (**judicial system is weak**) and its side effect is small (i.e. **bribes less common than threats**). It should not be granted if judicial system is strong and bribery is more common than violence

Clientelism

Not all vote-buying is corruption.

- Government promising public goods (i.e. roads, water, defence) -> accountability.
- Private goods (money, jobs, favours) → corruption

Characteristics of Clientelism

Politicians act contingently

they only deliver goods if citizens deliver the vote.

- Contingent delivery of goods
 - goods must be excludable
 - vote must be monitored
 - - directly violating vote secrecy i.e stand-up voting, non-secret vote
 - indirectly inferring the vote (group-based monitoring)
 - Turnout monitoring - no need to know the vote. target goods at strong supporters for showing up
 - Vote buying – swing voters are targeted.
 - Turnout buying – loyalists are targeted

Voters act predictably

citizens always vote for the goods-delivering politician, no defects

Defection must be costly

- voters must have few “outside” options.
- one strike and out. Other parties refuse to accept defectors → defectors become outcasts.

To do this

- there must be few competing sources of public service. **control over public policy must be highly concentrated.** when control is contested, politicians cannot buy votes
- economic benefits of clientelism have to be nontrivial. **voters are dependent on the government/voters are poor**

Why is clientelism often ethnic-based

- Example: growth of ethnic federal states in Nigeria
- why does ethnic politics linger despite economic modernization?

Voters perspective

an individual vote has little difference. Single voter has minimum bargaining power. Voters try to sell off their votes in groups. Thus politician would not be interested in bribing individuals

Politicians perspective

one vote makes little difference. Politicians target bribes to groups.

Clientelism is group-based retail

- Thus, voters negotiate as groups in order for them to gain more influence with politician
- They evaluate past patterns of **group favouritism** before voting. Information about group favouritism is hidden and indirect.
- When Information is scarce, voters infer favoritism using the most visible group label/ People can hide their income, ideology, but they can't hide their ethnic identity. Politicians respond by targeting ethnicity.
- I.e the Irish Americans generally vote for the Democrats due to vote buying.
- When ethnic-based clientelism becomes rampant, ethnic labels eclipse all other criteria for success in society. Economic progress becomes trapped in ethnic divisions. “