PEACE SPOILERS AND PEACE SUPPORTERS:

HOW INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME AND DURATION OF CIVIL CONFLICTS

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Juliana Tappe Ortiz

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Vorsitzender: Jun.-Prof. Dr. Max Schaub

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Matthias Basedau

Zweitgutachterin: Prof. Dr. Merike Blofield

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List of abbreviations

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ANC	African National Congress
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
FMLN	Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional
FPL	Fuerzas Populares de Liberación Farabundo Martí
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICO	International Coffee Organization
IR	International Relations
LEAD	Leader Experience, Attribute, and Decision data set
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MPLA	Movimento Popular para Libertacão de Angola
NALU	National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
RLWC	Rebel Leaders in Civil War Dataset (RLCW)
ROLE	Rebel Organization Leaders Database
SDO	Social Dominance Orientation
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
US	United States
USA	United States of America

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1 Introduction

Battle-hardened rebel leader Benito Tiamzon remained a hardliner vis-à-vis peace talks with the Philippine government although structural conditions favoured peace. Mozambique's former president Joaquim Chissano, who participated in the first offensives of the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) in northern Mozambique in 1964, led negotiations with former rebels that ended 16 years of war in 1992. We are witnessing some leaders becoming peace supporters and others continuing with the armed struggle or even destroying peace attempts and becoming peace spoilers. Understanding how civil wars end in peace agreements has long been of interest to political scientists; however, little is known about the state and rebel leaders in civil conflicts.

This dissertation was inspired by a fascination for leadership as a concept that has been tossed around in academic and popular discussion, yet rarely studied by modern scholarship. Gaining a better understanding of the leaders involved in civil conflict is important, because it would provide explanations for the outcomes and duration of conflicts. Leaders have often been treated as unitary actors who should all sign peace agreements given the high costs of war. However, if we focus on the individual characteristics of leaders, we can open the 'black box' of leaders' decision-making and see that leaders differ on a variety of factors, and not all leaders sign agreements when the opportunity arises. Moreover, it is key to understand which individual characteristics can be either negative or rather productive for peaceful settlements. Additionally, most existing research on leaders themselves, though useful, focuses on either state or rebel leaders, rather than systematically evaluating the impact of their counterparts. Finally, leaders' individual characteristics are important to mediators and practitioners because they can provide an initial indication of the extent to which the leader might support or disrupt peace.

Understanding leaders in civil wars is an important step towards a scholarly research programme that considers the four levels of analysis – individual, group, state, and system (Gebhard, 2016) – to examine social and political outcomes of interest. I assert that leaders' individual characteristics are key to explaining successful and failing peace attempts. My study of leaders' individual characteristics is motivated by the desire to understand why some heads of state sign agreements that are risky even to their personal and political lives, and why others refuse to consider dialogue even when it would be beneficial to them.

In this thesis, I argue that prior to assuming a leadership position, individual characteristics such as particular experiences can affect leaders' core beliefs and values, and by extension their decision-making in civil wars. More specifically, I show that some individual characteristics are conducive to peace, while others are detrimental to the duration and outcome of the conflict. My research also indicates that individual characteristics can have opposite effects on state vis-à-vis rebel leaders because exposure to conflict creates disparate benefits and disadvantages for each.

This thesis contributes to four major literatures upon which my dissertation rests: the literature on the recent peace process in Colombia, on exposure to violence in peace referendums, on rebel governance and the duration of civil war, and on state leaders in international conflicts. In addition, this work contributes to understanding why Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos and Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono became peace supporters while Nicolás Bautista, the former leader of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN),was mostly a peace spoiler. It further helps to understand why many civilians became 'peace spoilers' in the 2016 Colombian peace referendum and why the leaders of the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) were reluctant to sign a peace agreement for more than 50 years.

In this thesis, the term 'individual characteristics' will be loosely used for experiences, such as exposure to violence, combat experience and military training, and social perceptions, such as Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). 'State leader' and 'rebel leader' will be used for those most responsible for exercising power in a government or a rebel organization, who by extension have the highest impact on civil conflicts. Throughout this thesis, I use the terms 'civil conflicts' and 'civil wars' interchangeably, defined as intrastate conflicts in which at least 25 battle-related deaths occurred within any given year of fighting (see Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) definitions). Finally, I use the term 'peace supporter' for individuals who support peace processes and 'peace spoiler' for individuals who reject or oppose peace initiatives. These terms are only used to link different dependent variables in the thesis. The key assumption of my thesis is that conflicts do not end based solely on suitable structural and institutional conditions – they interact with leaders' characteristics.

This thesis proceeds as follows: First, I identify the gaps in the literature on which I have based my research, then I explain the theoretical contribution, methodology and sequence of the thesis before presenting the four main sections. Finally, I close the dissertation with a set of conclusions for policy and academia.

1.1 Literature overview

Interest in individual leaders in politics has varied greatly over time. One of the earliest texts on leadership is probably Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532); however, in the last century, International Relations (IR) scholars such as Hans Morgenthau have highlighted the importance of leaders. As such, the profiling of political elites (Hermann, 1977; Leites, 1951) and US presidents (Barber, 1985) became very popular during the Cold War. However, most political scientist began to focus on the structure of the international system and domestic political institutions at the expense of a close examination of leaders. In their seminal article, Byman and Polack (2014) opined that research on political leaders should make a comeback in IR, while acknowledging there were some important contributions up to 2014 on leader selection (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005), leaders and conflict initiation (Renshon, 2006; Winter, 2004), leaders during conflict (Cohen, 2002), leaders and conflict settlement (Chiozza and Choi, 2003), leaders' characteristics (McDermott, 2008; Schafer and Walker, 2006), and women leaders (Bauer and Britton, 2006).

However, only in recent years have scholars reintroduced on a wider scale the leader level into their analyses on international conflicts (Horowitz et al., 2015; Krcmaric et al., 2020). This literature on leaders in conflict is often divided along the lines of the institutional leadership school and the leader attribute school – a conceptual framework suggested by Horowitz and Fuhrmann (2018). The first focuses on how leaders are driven by the international and domestic institutional environment. As such, a strong line of research in this vein emphasizes leadership changes, showing that transitions between leaders affect international conflict and foreign policy (Croco, 2015; Quiroz Flores, 2012). The latter argues that individual-level beliefs, attributes, and experiences shape political preferences and outcomes (Horowitz and Fuhrmann, 2018). As such, fear of loss of reputation (Dafoe et al., 2014; Wu and Wolford, 2018; Yarhi-Milo, 2018), (business) experience (Fuhrmann, 2020; Potter, 2007), military experience (Horowitz et al., 2018; Lupton,

2022), and resolve (Kertzer, 2016) have become more common explanations for interstate conflict initiation and continuation. Additionally, other characteristics such as age (Horowitz et al., 2005), gender (Dube and Harish, 2019; McDermott, 2015), and traits such as empathy and pragmatism (Holmes and Yarhi-Milo, 2016) have received more scholarly attention.

These approaches have not been fully translated into the literature on leaders in civil wars. However, in the vein of the institutional leadership school, there is a growing amount of research on leadership changes and the outcome of civil wars. This literature convincingly shows that leadership changes due to new elections or a leader's death can be fruitful for civil war termination (Ryckman and Braithwaite, 2020). Also, rebel leadership turnover positively affects the probability that under the leadership of the chosen new leader civil wars will end. New leaders augment the chances of the latter, while conflicts that are led by the founder(s) of a rebel group are less likely to come to an end under those leaders (Cunningham and Sawyer, 2019; Prorok, 2016, 2018; Tiernay, 2015).

On leader attributes in civil wars, the literature has found that experiences play a critical role in shaping the beliefs and behaviours of state leaders. Research on peace spoilers highlights that state leaders who depend economically or psychologically on the continuation of the conflict will not support a peace process because it might bring loss of status (Stedman, 1997). However, it does not elucidate what characteristics might cause this peace-spoiling behaviour. Qualitative contributions indicate that state leaders who have developed a reconciliation-oriented and pragmatic leadership are the ones who settle conflicts and lead transitions (see Aronoff, 2014). Other research suggests that state leaders who are perceived as tough are often the most successful ones in signing peace agreements (Mattes and Weeks, 2019; Schultz, 2005).

Less research has focused on rebel leaders' characteristics in civil wars. As such, research has shown that having previously studied abroad (Huang et al., 2021), trained with those themselves once successful rebels (Keels et al., 2020), or had political or military experience (Chaudhry et al., 2021; Doctor, 2020) are relevant factors for intrastate conflict dynamics. Other studies suggest that the experience of being a rebel not only hardens rebel leaders, but also makes them defend the status quo, which is often the continuation of a conflict (Haer, 2015; Hoover Green, 2018). Rebel leaders who choose peace are absent from the literature except for former rebels who became state leaders such as Nelson Mandela (Lieberfeld, 2009).

Hence, a growing body of research on leaders in civil wars shows that individual characteristics are critical to conflict dynamics. Yet much that we know about state leaders has not yet been translated to rebel leaders. A focus on peace would allow us to explore which individual characteristics of both state and rebel leaders not only influence dynamics but also increase the likelihood that civil wars end in peace.

1.2 Theoretical contribution

The theoretical contribution of this thesis is, of course, limited due to the article-based structure. Still, it increases the understanding of how civil wars end in peace agreements, which has long been of interest to political scientists. The field of peace negotiations and diplomacy has contributed to this interest primarily through institutionalist and strategic approaches, especially through the theory of ripeness and rational choice theory (Cox, 2000; Lebow, 2018; Zartman, 2001). This thesis shows that the leaders of governments and non-state rebel groups can prefer conflict continuation over termination and that the ripeness of a conflict for negotiations to end it is not self-fulfilling or self-implementing. It must be seized, either directly by the leaders in charge or through the intervention of a mediator, which is why not all ripe moments are seized and translated into negotiations.

The intuition behind the assumption that not all leaders support peace and behave rationally and interchangeably is simple: the individual characteristics of state and rebel leaders influence their decision-making in conflicts. This idea finds much resonance in the media and intelligence agencies, but less so in political science models. Little is known about leaders in international conflicts and even less about leaders who end or prolong civil wars. In this thesis, I argue that some leaders bring individual characteristics to the table that are conducive to peace, while others possess characteristics that are detrimental in terms of duration and outcome of the conflict.

A thesis on leaders depends on when they matter. A growing body of literature suggests leaders matter when political power is concentrated on one position, when the leader occupies this strategic position, when the institutions or rebel groups are in conflict, when the situation is new or when the situation is full of emotional and symbolic significance (Byman and Pollack, 2014). Of course, there may be circumstances in which constraints such as minority support or economic shocks limit a leader's choices, and there may be moments when the leader takes charge and has a relatively high degree of

autonomy. As such, authoritarian regimes are deemed to produce more powerful leaders who have a direct impact on initiating war (Horowitz et al. 2015); however, there are also works on political leaders' impact on war decisions in moments of crisis in democratic systems such as after 9/11 (McDermott, 2008).

In this thesis, I argue that individual characteristics interact with structural and institutional conditions. Hence, looking into the 'black box' of leaders' decision-making allows for the development of more precise expectations regarding the outcome of civil conflicts than relying exclusively on exogenous constraints and impulses. Simultaneously, I show that leaders become more relevant when leadership changes happen and when the structural factors are in crisis. In short, the individual characteristics of leaders always matter in civil wars because leaders have at least some degree of freedom of choice; however, not all leaders with certain characteristics lead to the same civil war outcomes. In this thesis, I outline the theoretical pathway for individual characteristics that may be relevant to the decision-making of state and rebel leaders in civil wars.

Individual characteristics shape a leader's conduct. Prior to assuming a leadership position, individual characteristics such as experiences can affect leaders' core beliefs and values, and by extension their decision-making. Personal characteristics can also influence the competence and skills of leaders, so that a former military leader may be more successful in making military decisions than someone who has no experience in warfare. In addition, individual characteristics can create particular incentives to pursue a particular policy. For example, rebel leaders who grew up in poor rural environments may tend to focus their attacks on the urban population rather than on their own identity group. Depending on ascriptive traits or experiences, a leader may also be perceived very differently by opponents and supporters.

In this thesis, I focus on the individual characteristics that reduce or increase the chances of reaching an agreement in a conflict. In doing so, choosing between experiences and ascriptive traits (such as gender and race) was a major challenge. This relates to the classic psychological debate of nature versus nurture, which describes the question of how much individual characteristics are formed by either innate biological factors (nature) or life experience more generally (nurture). Since most rebel and state leaders are men and other factors such as race and age are difficult to compare on a cross-national level, I decided to focus on 'nurture' characteristics. These characteristics can be created,

enhanced, or attenuated by various traits. However, traits are more difficult to operationalize than experiences and require further research, which has been difficult to conduct among leaders.

In the first article, I focused on the individual characteristics that make up a state leader who signed a peace agreement. This article is largely built on my research during my MPhil in Latin American studies at the University of Oxford. I extend my prior results by developing a typology of a political leadership for peace processes and by combining literature on conflict negotiation with leadership studies. I argue a leader who lands somewhere between hawk and dove by being pragmatic and open-minded can be most fruitful for peace processes (article 1).

Then I tried to understand what individual characteristics people in general have developed to support peace. In this context, I argue that an individual's view of inequality in society, called Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) is particularly relevant to their willingness to vote for peace in referendums and affects how their exposure to violence impacts their support for peace (article 2). I tested this in the Colombian setting, where four years earlier a referendum to confirm support for peace was narrowly defeated. Issues of inequality and exposure to violence were particularly important in explaining turnout.

Based on these two articles and personal interviews with state and rebel leaders, I was motivated to explore a specific experience relevant to leaders' decision-making in civil wars: military experience. This links my research on exposure to violence in article 2 to the observation that many leaders repeatedly refer to their socialisation process in the military or during military training. For example, Santos often mentions that his training in the navy was a key experience in his understanding that problems can be solved (Interview Santos, 2018). On the other hand, FARC leaders often spoke about the camaraderie they experienced in their groups (Interviews, 2022). Moreover, civil wars are, by their nature, armed conflicts between two or more parties, necessitating an examination of the effects of military socialization in these circumstances and of military (wo)men who are particularly susceptible to military decision-making.

Both rebel and state leaders could have had a military experience varying from having witnessed atrocities in combat, having served in the army, to having attended a military academy. Thus, not all military experience may lead to the same expectations about leaders' behaviour in civil wars, yet military experience informs leaders' preference for the use of force and shapes their beliefs about the nature of and possible solutions to the

conflict. Specifically, I argue that rebel leaders who have undergone military training in a non-state armed group before taking the lead are perseverant and unwilling to give up the fight. These rebel leaders are much more likely to fight long wars in which the government is unlikely to win than peers who have no military training or who received training in a state military (article 3).

Finally, I argue that prior combat experience of a leader is an important life experience with direct relevance for how leaders evaluate peace agreements (article 4). I expect that combat experience has the opposite effect on state vis-à-vis rebel leaders because exposure to conflict creates disparate benefits and disadvantages for each. Most importantly, combat experience can be a key driver in strengthening the ideological beliefs in the use of force as a just measure to achieve political aims. This final piece indicates that state leaders with combat experience benefit from their hawkish credentials (in this case from combat experience) when signing peace agreements.

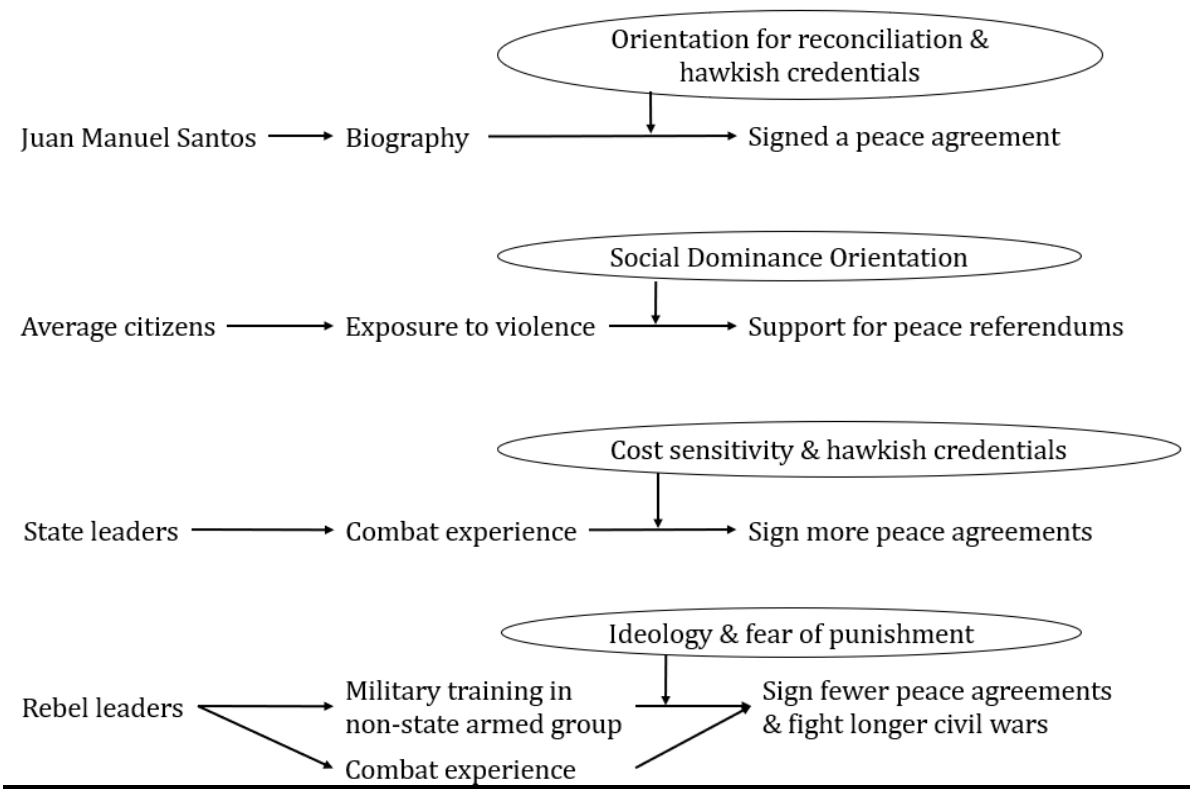
Of course, caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions that individual characteristics cause rebel and state leaders to behave similarly in fundamentally different institutional settings. By nature, rebel and state leaders' motivations, fears, and preferences for the use of force differ. First, rebel leaders are motivated by the desire to challenge the system, while state leaders have to defend the status quo. Rebel leaders in power might be more concerned about losing their life than state leaders, who worry about their political survival (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005). Second, rebel and state leaders exercise power in fundamentally different contexts, namely military hierarchies and political infrastructures, respectively (Arjona et al., 2015; Cohen, 2002). Within a political infrastructure, a state leader might desire to win a potential conflict definitively and quickly to minimize loss of lives and material. For rebel leaders, keeping the conflict simmering could be a strategy to achieve their long-term goals.

The following figure maps the theoretical contribution of the thesis (Figure 1). It shows that this work deals with four different types of actors, from a concrete individual to the ordinary public and then to state and rebel leaders. Then, different experiences reveal the origins of (non-)support for peace (biography, experience of violence, combat experience, and military training). These experiences are moderated by or influence beliefs, ideologies, perceptions of social inequality (SDO) and conflict costs, and fears of punishment or trust in hawkish credentials. Ultimately, these factors influence the willingness to

sign a peace agreement, support a peace referendum, or continue to fight. This thesis, therefore, explains the origins of peace spoilers and supporters and their consequences.

Figure 1 oversimplifies the dynamics of civil conflicts. It cannot map how structural conditions matter for individual support for peace agreements. In the main texts (in article 3 and 4) it becomes clear that, inter alia, factors such as conflict intensity, the reasons for the dispute (territorial versus governmental), GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita, the number of active dyads and of failed past negotiations are key for the likelihood of peace agreements and shorter conflicts. Additionally, the qualitative contribution on Santos describes in detail how changing structural conditions between 2002 and 2010 facilitated peace negotiations.

Figure 1: Overview of the theoretical contribution



The last article and the first article are connected by the hawk typology. Novel contributions on hawks and doves have theorized that a reputation for hawkishness facilitates the signing of peace agreements (Mattes and Weeks, 2019; Schultz, 2005). I show that this is partly true for Santos, who displayed a type of leadership somewhere between hawk and dove. Moreover, as the last article reveals, there is robust empirical support for the generalizability of this qualitative result in a cross-national dataset. I thus extend theoretical assumptions of hawks versus doves by showing that leaders with hawkish credentials do indeed sign more peace agreements, at least in the case of state leaders.

Finally, there are some theoretical limitations. This thesis discusses only individual characteristics, even though leaders operate within groups. Future contributions should find ways to replicate or observe actual group decision-making and how leaders manage group dynamics. In addition, it is important to consider that traits other than those examined here probably play a role, too. In article 2, I included the Big Five in the survey experiment without any significant results, which is why I did not discuss them further in the main text. Still, I could have paid more attention to characteristics belonging to the dark triad such as narcissism and Machiavellianism to advance our understanding of characteristics that are detrimental to peace. As I mentioned, I decided to focus on observable characteristics such as military experience to facilitate comparisons and data analyses in general. Moreover, I focused on characteristics for peace, although military training and combat experience also include elements that are detrimental to conflict resolution.

Another limitation is that more attention could have been given to ethical considerations to understand who actually benefits from this type of research and how it can be translated into real policy recommendations. It could be problematic that my thesis leads to generalizations along the lines that military regimes are better for peace. This is not the message this thesis seeks to convey, but that individuals bring different packages to their leadership roles that facilitate or hinder the end of civil conflict. In addition, although I closely followed the extensive literature on Colombia and other conflict-affected countries, I could have worked more with local knowledge about leadership and support for peace agreements. Future theoretical contributions could also include interviews with more rebel and state leaders to understand their personal reasoning for peace.

Finally, this thesis includes one article on Santos, one on a survey experiment conducted in Colombia, and quantitative articles containing two short qualitative discussions on both the FARC and the ELN.[1] This could be seen as a strong focus on Colombia, which has theoretical advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, studying the recent peace process in Colombia can have far-reaching implications for the study of peace negotiations, the feasibility of peace referendums, and the end of long-lasting civil wars. On the negative side, the focus on Colombia does not allow for broader generalizations, as it is difficult to compare the 'older' civil wars of the Cold War with more recent civil wars,

[1] I conducted the survey experiment in Germany, too. However, the results were not as expected, which is why I excluded them from the main text in article 2. In the last article, I did not plan to use another Colombian leader. It was unexpected that Nicolás Bautista became a suitable case based on the reduced residuals in the model.

most of which are taking place in Muslim-majority countries and are being waged by rebel groups with radical transnational Islamist goals and ideas in a new technological environment (Walter, 2017). However, the Colombian armed conflict has consistently been seen as intractable, and while not everything can be applied to other contexts, the agents of its conflict resolution should be examined.

1.3 Methodology

Studying leaders' characteristics has its methodological challenges apart from choosing between traits and experiences, as mentioned above. In both approaches, leaders are often difficult to access and the methods to understand leaders continue to be very diverse, with little disciplinary consensus. As such, political psychologists draw generalizations from experimental methods (Rathbun et al., 2017) while others use content analysis (e.g. Schafer and Lambert, 2022; Schafer and Walker, 2006).[2] Similarly, experiments with leaders are difficult to conduct, so I explore the theoretical avenues developed above using a variety of methods.

In the first article I use the rather novel personal biography approach, which seeks to systematize the angle from which to study single-case biographical data (Krcmaric et al., 2020). I relied on biographical data to explore the origins of Santos' beliefs and values, his competence and skills, and the way others perceived him. Based on intensive field work in Colombia conducted in 2018 and 2019, this article pays great attention to qualitative sources such as memoirs, biographies, interviews, journalistic accounts, newspaper archives and secondary academic literature. I use a form of process tracing to understand Santos' trajectory as an advocate for the peace process.

Then, the psychological foundations of support for the peace agreement are explored through a survey conducted in Colombia between October and December 2020. Beforehand, a pilot study in Germany (conducted in July 2020) did not reveal the expected results and the research design was reduced to the case of Colombia. Data are analysed using a model of moderation, in which exposure to violence is considered the predictor variable, support for the peace referendum the outcome variable, and SDO the moderator.

[2] I do not base my work on content analysis, because speech acts are not available for rebel leaders and because most leaders do not write their own speeches.

This allows me to explore how exposure to violence interacts with preferences for social hierarchies in contexts of civil conflicts.

In the third and fourth articles, I use quantitative analysis of all civil conflicts from 1989 to 2015. For these articles I merge the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset with datasets on state and rebel leaders. I rely on both the Leader Experience and Attribute Descriptions Dataset (LEAD), which provides data on heads of state (Ellis et al., 2015), and two datasets on rebel leaders, the Rebel Leaders in Civil War Dataset (RLCW) (Doctor, 2020) and the Rebel Organization Leaders (ROLE) Database (Acosta et al., 2021). Some state leaders are additionally identified using the ARCHIGOS dataset (Goemans et al., 2009). Leaders missing from these databases are identified through extensive research in multiple languages utilizing newspaper articles, genealogical databases, and military archives.

For the third article I first employ a Cox proportional hazard model and estimate the impact of military training on the duration of civil wars. Then, I use a competing risks model that allows for prediction of the relative risk of an event, in this case rebel victory, occurring versus another conflict outcome. Additionally, I add a qualitative discussion of the results by conducting in-depth interviews with rebel leaders of the FARC in January 2022.

In the fourth article I use a nested research design by first running a competing risks model analysis to estimate the relative 'risk' of peace agreement compared to a non-peace conflict outcome and then exploring two qualitative cases. This is in line with other quantitative scholars such as Horowitz et al. who take leaders' biographical data and correlate it with political outcomes (2015). I choose two typical cases with the same independent variable but different outcomes (peace agreement versus non-peace outcome). Here I focus on Indonesia's President Yudhoyono and Bautista, former commander of the ELN in Colombia and use official testimonies, interviews, and secondary sources to access how their combat experience matters.

There are a number of methodological limitations in this thesis which should receive consideration in future research projects. First, this thesis does not succeed in fully linking structural factors, and leaders' individual characteristics, as it is still unclear how exactly experiences shape personality (see Horowitz and Fuhrmann, 2018 for an overview). By extension, it remains unknown how exactly certain leaders become peace spoilers or

peace supporters. In addition, I often use different dependent variables, ranging from support for a peace referendum to the duration of the conflict to the actual signing of a peace agreement. Future projects could focus on a single dependent variable to allow for better comparisons and more precise implications.

The main caveats in detail are for the first article that single case studies often cannot produce attributes and experiences that have systematic and comparable effects. The second article was heavily constrained due to the global pandemic in 2020. Originally, the article was planned as a survey of policymakers, such as Colombian congresspeople, which would have broadened the understanding of the underlying individual characteristics for peace among actual leaders. Due to the controlled conditions with university students, the second study remains distant from real government foreign policy and mass opinion formation.

For the third and fourth articles, although the statistical analyses are useful for drawing out broad patterns across countries, more qualitative cases than the ones used are needed to specify the causal processes at work when correlating certain biographical experiences with political outcomes. A further limitation is that the dataset contains only the years 1989 to 2015. Another caveat is that I use conflict-years with 25 battle-related fatalities as unit of analysis, as suggested by the UCDP datasets. Consequently, this systematically overemphasizes years of active fighting by selecting these and underestimates the effect of leader variation and by extension the role of peacetime leaders. Yet, I remain confident about the results and rather expect these results to be even more pronounced when a different unit of analysis is chosen. The results of articles three and four should be replicated on an updated dataset when available. A minor caveat is that there are potential biases present in interviewing former FARC rebel leaders, which is why the interviews in the third article should only be seen as complementary to the quantitative work. Additionally, I did not find any interaction effects between rebel and state leaders' experiences, although signing peace agreements is an inherently dyadic phenomenon. Finding interactions between rebel and state leaders could be an avenue for future research.

Finally, there might be selection effects in the dataset and in the qualitative piece, meaning that certain experiences tend to make people leaders, which in turn can affect the propensity for peace. However, this network is difficult to 'unravel' and different conflict scholars have proved that endogeneity concerns are unnecessary when studying leaders. According to Horowitz et al. (2015), leader effects persist even after accounting

for the possibility of selection effects: Leaders are often selected based on age, gender, and economic promises and less so based on the experiences evaluated in this thesis. Different endogeneity tests from Tiernay (2015) and Ryckman and Braithwaite (2020), among others, indicate that leadership changes can be considered exogenous in civil wars.

1.4 Article overview

This article-based thesis consists of four contributions that focus mainly on the individual characteristics of state and rebel leaders in civil wars. The outline begins with a very specific case, which then became the motivation for understanding individuals and their support for a peace agreement in general. I then moved to the macro-level by focusing on experiences using cross-national datasets to understand conflict duration and outcomes.

In the first article I turn to the origins of supporting peace by tracing back how President Santos (2010–2018) developed a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership for peace processes. Then, I continue with the origins of supporting peace for non-elites by conducting a study on individual predictors of support for peace agreements in referendums. The aim is to explore whether individual differences in SDO moderate the effect of exposure to violence on support for the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC in 2016. These two articles on the micro-foundations of peace supporters indicate that attitudes towards peace are key to understanding who initiates and supports peace agreements.

Because psychological characteristics such as SDO and pragmatism are difficult to explore in large-N datasets, I focus on experiences, particularly military experiences, which allow me to examine the effects of individual characteristics on the dynamics of civil conflict between 1989 and 2015. Hence, in the third article, I show that civil wars last longer and are less likely to terminate in government-favourable outcomes when rebel leaders with military training are in charge, in contrast to leaders with no training or training in a state military. I add a qualitative discussion on the FARC in Colombia. Finally, I explore which leaders sign peace deals, showing that the state leaders most likely to sign peace agreements are those with combat experience. Case studies of leaders with combat experience in Indonesia and Colombia who either signed or rejected peace agreements are used to add more nuance to the findings.

This overview aims to provide a dynamic perspective on leadership in civil wars by addressing origins of peace spoilers and peace supporters, discussing consequences, and offering a nuanced understanding of the outcomes through specific cases, highlighting the case of Colombia.

2 Peace Spoilers and Peace Supporters

The following four articles will focus on different individual characteristics starting with an in-depth case study, continuing with a survey, and exploring two large-N studies on state and rebel leaders from 1989 to 2015 in civil conflicts. In this section, I first present the abstract, then the main text, references, and finally, the appendices of the articles.

2.1 Political Leadership for Peace Processes: Juan Manuel Santos – Between Hawk and Dove

Abstract: Many studies have explored Colombia's peace process with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – guerrilla group (2012–2016). Conflict negotiation literature indicates that the impact of leadership is particularly relevant to peace processes as leaders have to find a balance between war and peace. Still, little is known about the political leaders in charge. This study deals with the development of a political leader's leadership in peace initiatives. It uses an in-depth case study of Colombia's former President Juan Manuel Santos combining leadership and conflict negotiation literature to trace back the origins of his leadership. Santos, a controversial figure, represented a policy of reconciliation to negotiate with the opponents while also appearing tough in order to maintain his political base. Between hawk and dove, he initiated and signed the peace negotiation and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016. I adopt a personal biography approach using biographical data to explore the origins of Santos' beliefs and values, his competence and skills and the way others perceived him. Linking this leadership-centred argument with findings from the conflict negotiation suggests that a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership might be relevant to find solutions to protracted conflicts like the one in Colombia. Most importantly, it contributes to a significant claim: Leaders have at least some level of choice and their biographical factors are relevant for political outcomes.

> *"[…] you can in a way say [I am] an undercover dove with the head of a hawk, but [only] if you are defining a dove as someone who wants peace."*
> (Santos Calderón, 2018)

Much has been written about why leaders go to war (Fearon, 1995; Horowitz et al., 2015), but there is still a need to fully understand why they initiate peace processes. This is especially relevant for seemingly intractable conflicts like that of Colombia, a country that has been entangled in a bitter struggle between the government and different guerrilla movements for over half a century (Deas, 2015). Conflict negotiation literature indicates that in order to be capable of initiating a peace process, the political leaders in charge have

to represent a policy of recognition, and even reconciliation, to negotiate with the opponents; on the other side, they have to appear tough to maintain their political base who often struggles to accept that the government makes political concessions (Gormley-Heenan, 2001; Stedman, 1997; Zartman, 2001). Among other factors, the impact of leadership seems particularly relevant to peace processes because leaders have to find a balance between war and peace. It is key to ask: "Where does this type of leadership in which a political leader is capable of combining policies of recognition with a certain type of toughness to initiate a peace process come from?"

This article deals with the development of a political leader's capacity for leadership in peace initiatives. It uses an in-depth case study of a very controversial figure combining leadership and conflict negotiation literature to trace back the origins of leadership. The dependent variable is policy related to the initiation of peace negotiations; it does not analyse the eventual success or failure of such a policy. Political leaders often hesitate to initiate a peace process perceiving them as cost-intensive, ambiguous and risky (Ramsbotham et al., 2011: 159–163; Westlake, 2000). However, this has not been the Colombian experience, as all Colombian presidents since 1978 have sought peace with the guerrillas – and failed. In 2012, after months of secret talks, Colombia's president, Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) initiated a peace process with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), signing an agreement in 2016 and winning the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts (Pizarro Leongómez, 2017). This article adopts the recently developed personal biography approach (Krcmaric et al., 2020) to study Santos' biography, creating a new perspective on leadership for peace processes. It uses biographical data to demonstrate how Santos developed a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership, defined here as the bridging of toughness and reconciliation. Santos has often been called an opportunist – even though it is debatable whether any political leader can actually be successful without opportunism. For the present study, I prefer the term "pragmatic", understood as the capacity to maintain followers through appearing strong and making decisions which increase political power.

In this article, I aim to make two contributions: First, the analysis is important for understanding how a leadership for peace process may develop. For the Colombian peace process specifically, it is relevant to grasp how a controversial leader could successfully initiate a peace process being, inter alia, called a traitor, a hawk, a chess player, and a chameleon. Second, it has significant implications for Leadership Studies in general, as it aims

to explore leadership for the initiation of peace processes by looking at Santos' role. The analysis provides a better understanding of the extent to which political leaders may be able to improve the likeliness that peaceful solutions to armed conflicts are initiated. As suggested by scholars of International Relations, heads of states facing the prospect of peace in an armed conflict can endanger the process by misjudging and rejecting information or by not acting and reacting in an appropriate manner (Arnson, 2007; Aronoff, 2014; Jervis, 1976; Larson, 1997; Walch, 2016). Moreover, Leadership Studies benefit from an early application of a new research method to study leaders - the personal biography approach, which has not been used with qualitative sources. By looking at the development of Santos' leadership style, I build on a growing body of interest in the ways in which leaders' characteristics and experiences shape decisions about peace (Kertzer et al., 2020; Yarhi-Milo et al., 2018). Thus, this article contributes to a significant claim: Leaders have at least some level of choice and their biographical factors are relevant for political outcomes.

The article proceeds as follows: First, the article gives some background information on the Colombian armed conflict before it discusses the existing approaches for understanding the development of Santos' leadership. Then I discuss the personal biography approach and the methods to explore the link between Santos' biographical factors and political outcomes. In the core analysis, the personal biography approach will be combined with the literature on leadership in peace negotiations: The first step of the approach is to look at Santos' beliefs and values, then his competence and skills, and lastly, others' perceptions of his leadership. Ultimately, this study sheds light on the role of leadership for peace processes elsewhere through analysing Santos' biographical factors.

The Colombian armed conflict and its peace processes

For our understanding of Santos' leadership, as a man who was born in 1951, it is relevant to give an introduction into Colombia's internal armed conflict from 1948 to 2010. In 1948, the clash between the conservative and liberal parties sparked into a conflict known as La Violencia. Colombia also experienced a short period of military rule (1953–1957). Between 1958 and 1974 conservatives and liberals agreed to share power, alternating mandates every four years. During that period Colombia's leftist guerrilla groups emerged: The FARC, a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla rooted in peasant organisations, was founded in 1964. Their main aim was to carry out a socialist revolution influenced by

other countries like Cuba. In reaction to the left-wing insurgencies, paramilitary forces emerged in many parts of the country. Parallel to the conflict, the drug trade increased from the 1970s onwards, and by the early 1980s, there was a complex mosaic of actors, including the famous Medellín and Cali cartels. In the 1980s, drug cartels began to join forces with counterinsurgency groups, and the number of paramilitary groups also multiplied (Kalulambi Pongo, 2003; Romero et al., 2007). Both the guerrilla groups and the paramilitaries benefitted from the drug trade.

For this analysis, the last two governments before Santos are of particular importance because they laid the foundation for his peace process with the FARC: President Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) initiated a peace process with the FARC in 1999. Soon the so-called "Caguán peace process" turned into a political disaster for Pastrana as he was considered to have been naive, offering a ceasefire with almost no conditions on the FARC, believing they would cooperate while actually they were rearming and increasing their power (Pizarro Leongómez, 2017: 370). Still, Pastrana initiated and implemented Plan Colombia in 1999, a US-led foreign aid, military and diplomatic initiative aimed at ending the armed conflict by increasing funding and training of the army and reducing the cocaine trade through anti-drug trafficking operations. Plan Colombia significantly amplified the army's military capacity (Granada, 1999: 594–596; Palacios, 2012: 172–174). In comparison to Pastrana, who had desperately tried to make peace with the FARC, President Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) ran as an independent candidate who positioned himself as a strong leader, not going soft on the FARC (Bermúdez, 2010). During Uribe's administrations, the official position was that there was no internal armed conflict, but rather a 'terrorist threat'. By changing the discourse, Uribe created an atmosphere against human rights defenders and social movements (Kline, 2015). In the media, guerrilla fighters were depicted as terrorists which dramatically changed the perception of the conflict (Arnson, 2007). Uribe's popularity hinged on a hardline offensive promising to terminate the FARC militarily. However, even though they were weakened, the FARC continued to be active after 2010.

In 2002, it was estimated that the FARC had almost 20,000 members; in 2009 that number reduced to 11,500 (González Muñoz, 2014: 243–262). The FARC's power mainly began to weaken after 2007(Pécaut, 2008: 114). Not only was the FARC's manpower, including their military capacity, decreased. Their financial revenues, communication channels, and leadership structures were also weakened (Schreiber, 2010: 247). Many high

commanders died in military operations after 2007. Nevertheless, the FARC continued to attack on a broad scale. Until 2005, the number of armed confrontations did not decrease significantly (Pécaut, 2008: 125). Moreover, the number of extortions, collective homicides and kidnappings remained the same in 2008 and 2009 (Bermúdez Liévano, 2018; Fundación Seguridad y Democracia., 2009). After 2008, the FARC renewed its internal structures and strategies, as such creating a new blog in Guaviare and choosing new commanders to keep their hierarchical structures functioning (Chernick, 2017: 209–210; Schreiber, 2010: 249) Moreover, they learned to adapt to the state military pressure by attacking on smaller scales and using antipersonnel landmines (Kline, 2015; Restrepo and Aponte, 2009). The complicated geography made it difficult for the Colombian military to eliminate cocaine exports completely and to gain state control. In other words, the FARC continued to be financially independent while acting in a power vacuum (Montenegro, 2006: 109; Valencia, 2008; Richani, 2013: 85). Moreover, the social conditions of the rural population sustained the FARC's domination in certain regions and helped the guerrilla recruit new fighters (Chernick, 2017). The FARC thus did not have the capacity to take over the state, but it continued to be financially independent, flexible and perseverant.

Taking this into account, a political negotiation was the solution to the conflict. Structural factors influencing the initiation of peace processes were already present, among them international support, the state's relative military strength and a certain dead-end for the FARC. This was also recognized by Uribe who had tried to initiate dialogues with the FARC throughout his presidency since 2003 (Acosta Patiño, 2016: 36; Bermúdez, 2010: 284–287). In public Uribe continued his narrative of fighting to the end against the FARC, but the documentation of secret exchanges between the Uribe government and the FARC in 2009 and 2010 – which occurred without an agenda – clearly paints a different picture.[3] Uribe's peace talks failed after a year in April 2010 when he publicly gave a speech against the FARC. Before Santos was elected in June 2010, he was known as a hardline defence minister under Uribe (2006-2009), leading the heaviest attacks against the FARC in Colombian history. After his election in 2010, Santos announced that his key agenda was going to be peace-making with the FARC. Many Colombians did not expect that he would become a president with such a strong commitment to resolving the conflict via peace negotiations (Pachón and Hoskin, 2011: 17–22). Secret peace talks started

[3] Author's interview with Frank Pearl, High Commissioner for Peace, Bogotá, 22 Aug. 2018 and also see Appendix 2: Invitation letter to the FARC for an open meeting to discuss a possible negotiation in 2010.

shortly thereafter, and in 2012 it was made public that a peace process had started (later ending in an agreement in 2016).

State of the Art: Lessons from Leadership and Conflict Negotiation Studies

Leadership scholars have continuously claimed that leaders matter for political outcomes, and their work has found resonance in the profiling of political elites (Leites, 1951 and 1953) and US-American presidents (George, 1967; Greenstein, 1965). However, political science omitted this approach by concentrating on the structure of the international system (see Byman and Pollack, 2014), thus far overlooking many contributions seeking to understand political leadership (Barber, 1985; Hermann, 1977). It is only recently that studies on political leaders have experienced a renaissance, going beyond the general statement that leaders matter somehow. Rather, a recent article in the Annual Review of Political Science states that "personal attributes and life experiences of individual leaders affect important political outcomes in systematic, predictable ways" (Krcmaric et al., 2020, also see Jervis, 2017). Still, the methods to unpack the black box of political leaders continue to be very diverse, with little disciplinary consensus; political psychologists and scholars trained in psychology try to draw generalizations from human cognitive processes to make interferences about political leaders' behaviour using experimental methods (Mattes and Weeks, 2019; Rathbun et al., 2017). However, this approach falls short in understanding leader-specific attributes and experiences. Another line of research uses content analysis (e.g. Schafer and Walker, 2006) and in this process there is difficulty of finding access to original data, and country- and culture-specific differences in language make comparisons difficult. Quantitative scholars such as Horowitz et al. take leaders' biographical data and correlate it with political outcomes (2015), but questions remain about the actual causal mechanisms at work when correlating certain biographical experiences with political outcomes. Others use qualitative methods to analyse biographical data (Jervis, 2017; Saunders, 2011; Tuchman, 1984). Here, the problem lies in the fact that single case studies often cannot produce attributes and experiences that have systematic and comparable effects. However, new approaches, like the personal biography approach, seek to systematize the angle to study single case biographical data (Krcmaric et al., 2020).

Conflict negotiation literature has often ignored the importance of leadership for the initiation of peace negotiations. However, there is a wealth of contributions on peace

spoilers, defined as actors who try to destroy peace attempts out of personal fears or interests (Newman and Richmond, 2006; Stedman, 1997). There are almost no works on political leaders who engage positively in peace processes (an exception is Lieberfeld, 2009). Peace and conflict scholars have often overlooked the importance of leadership and focused on 'the moment of ripeness' to explain the initiation of peace negotiations (Pruitt, 2011; Walch, 2016; Walter, 2002; Zartman, 2001). The concept of 'ripeness' assumes that both parties in conflict must suffer until the only situation is to initiate a peace process. The concept was often criticised (e.g. Kleiboer, 1994), but still only a few scholars took a turn to leadership, even if Zartman himself stated: "Ripeness is only one condition, necessary but not sufficient, for the initiation of negotiations. It is not self-fulfilling or self-implementing - it must be seized, either directly by the parties or, if not, through the persuasion of a mediator" (2001: 9). The scholars who recognized that the initiation of peace negotiations depends on the national executives still did not focus on the development of leadership (e.g. Kegley and Raymond, 1999: 19). However, some scholars contributed to the idea that leaders with certain psychological traits are more likely to engage in a peace process (Aquilar and Galluccio, 2008; Forgas et al., 2011; Suedfeld and Rank, 1976: 171)

Not much has been written on the actual leadership needed for a successful initiation of peace negotiations. The main contribution in Peace and Conflict Studies is that the political leaders in charge have to be ready to represent a policy of reconciliation to negotiate with the adversaries. However, they also have to remain careful to appear rather strong in order to keep the support of their political base (Gormley-Heenan, 2001; Stedman, 1997; Zartman, 2001). This stands in line with some political psychology contributions on a "hawk's advantage", meaning that decisions by hardliners are more accepted than by doves, when it comes to the implementation of unpopular and new policies (Kertzer et al., 2020; Mattes and Weeks, 2019). Thus, a leadership fruitful for negotiations has to appear strong for the public and respectful towards the opponents – a middle ground between hawk and dove.

Literature on Colombia's peace processes has also not focused on leadership by using changing regional and internal circumstances as the key variables to explain the trajectories of war and peace (Cepeda Ulloa, 2016; Chernick, 2017, p. 208; Jaramillo, 2017; Pizarro Leongómez, 2017: 383–385). These studies seem to disregard that leadership is important and functional in combination with other factors. The few contributions on

Santos' leadership are three non-academic biographies (Duzán, 2018; Granados Morales, 2016; Hernández, 2014).

Ultimately, conflict negotiation literature highlights that a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership is necessary to initiate peace negotiations successfully; however, it remains unclear how this leadership can be developed.

Methodology: A Biography Approach to Leadership for Peace Processes

The research design begins with the assumption that Juan Manuel Santos developed a leadership eligible for the successful outcome of Colombia's peace process. There are three reasons why this is less problematic than it seems: First, the main focus is the interaction between biographical factors and leadership. In this case, the observed behaviour is the initiation of a negotiation exploring Santos' biographical factors, which laid an important foundation for the successful initiation of the peace process.

Second, when it comes to negative cases, scholars have hesitated less to draw a connection between leadership and political outcomes (e.g. on Netanyahu in the Israel/Palestine conflict, see Aronoff, 2014). Jervis criticises that Leadership Studies focus on negative examples, calling for a more inclusive approach in which positive cases are comprehensively assessed and not treated as individual incomparable cases (2017: 6). Moreover, in line with other contributions in Leadership Studies (Lieberfeld, 2018), this article follows Greenstein by claiming that leadership matters when the "situation is novel, ambiguous, and with no formal rules" (1992: 110). During an internal armed conflict like the Colombian case, where there is significant intergroup violence, there is notable potential for the leader to make an impact. Moreover, it was a novel situation that the FARC was significantly weakened (Pizarro Leongómez, 2017).

Third, Santos' behaviour, even before the peace talks started officially in 2012, illustrates that it was Santos' leadership that initiated the process. After his election in 2010, Santos called Frank Pearl, Uribe's high commissioner for peace since 2009, asking him to inform him about Uribe's secret peace talks. Pearl concluded that the relationship between Uribe and Hugo Chávez, president of Venezuela, had largely made it impossible to achieve a fruitful dialogue (Interview Frank Pearl, 2018).[4] Chávez was a key figure for

[4] For a list of all interviews conducted for this research see Appendix. Some interviewees requested to stay anonymous.

Colombia's peace process as Venezuela's socialist project of Bolivarismo served as a point of reference for the guerrilla groups, and because Chávez provided shelter, arms and other supplies the guerrilla groups needed (Freeman, 2017: 203–216). Thus, Santos arranged a meeting with Chávez to gain his support despite many personal differences (see Santos' writings against Chávez, e.g. 2004b). This proactive move reveals that Santos' behaviour was key to facilitate the dynamics between the government and the FARC (Acosta Patiño, 2016: 48).

Studying political leaders from a distance is not an easy task (Hermann, 1977; Rhodes and 't Hart, 2014). This study therefore pays great attentiveness to qualitative sources drawn from memoirs, biographies, interviews, journalistic accounts, newsarticle archives and secondary academic literature. To explore the link between Santos' capacity to represent a leadership of pragmatism and recognition, I adopt the recently developed personal biography approach (Krcmaric et al., 2020) which differs fundamentally from other strands of leadership research as it actually unpacks the micro-foundations of political leadership. The idea is to take observable features gathered from Santos' biography, which explain his beliefs and values, competence and skills and the perceptions others have of him, to predict the positive outcome of the last peace process with the FARC. These three mechanisms are commonly invoked by scholars working in the political leadership vein; however, it is novel to combine these features in a rigorous manner. The personal biography approach can be linked to other Leadership Studies claiming that a leader's life-story is an important source for our understanding of political leadership (Shamir et al., 2005). Providing a rigorous analysis, this approach explores, step by step, each mechanism and its causal impact on Santos' leadership potential for peace processes. Coding is the main analytic process in this approach; I categorized segments of data with a code and used these codes to sort and develop an understanding of Santos' leadership. Santos' biographical factors have been carefully examined by taking a macro perspective considering secondary sources, a micro perspective looking at archival data and a personal perspective through interviews and autobiographies. In comparison to the "Krcmaric" approach, the analysis will not include a section on 'material interests' because for Santos the peace process was neither financially nor electorally rewarding. Coming from a very wealthy family, Santos did not have any financial gains to make by initiating a peace process. Also, electorally, he lost a large portion of his political capital during the peace process, as his plunging levels of popular approval show (Pizarro Leongómez, 2017).

According to the personal biography approach, beliefs and values "are shaped by ascriptive characteristics given at birth and/or socializing life experiences accrued prior to assuming office" (Krcmaric et al., 2020). This requires a close look at Santos' family, his education and his military service, and his career before he went into politics. To do so, I conducted in-depth interviews with family members and friends who were asked to describe their time with Santos, and with Santos himself who was asked to comment on his beliefs and values. Moreover, qualitative content analysis is used to examine Santos' past statements prior to his presidency. Since 1994, as both journalist and politician, Santos himself has written extensively on Colombia's conflict which is why his opinion pieces in the newsarticle El Tiempo and his books will be critically examined. I coded this material for the words: conflict, peace, guerrilla, FARC, defeat and negotiation to grasp the development of his beliefs and values.

Second, Santos' competence and skills focuses on Santos' qualities as a leader, which he developed since he entered politics in 1991 until his presidency in 2010. Biographical factors may affect a politician's competence and skills, as e.g. family connections facilitate the access to certain work opportunities (Krcmaric et al., 2020). Leaders pay more attention to specific policies when they have had personal and professional experiences in certain areas (Burden, 2007). Therefore, the focus lays on Santos' performance in the different ministries by examining media reports, military accounts and secondary sources on his competence and skills. To code skills, I looked at new policies and structures, publicly known problems or scandals, and public statements by Santos.

Finally, other peoples' perceptions of leaders are key for the development of peace process, in which actors have to believe their opponents and voters trust their representatives (Kupchan, 2010; Larson, 1997). The actors involved in the conflict, such as the insurgents and the military, have to support or at least recognize the political leader in charge. Biographical factors may affect how other actors perceive the executives because people make assumptions about their skills, interest and beliefs based on identifiable features from a leader's background. These perceptions, in turn, can indirectly shape leader behaviour (Krcmaric et al., 2020). Also, Leadership scholars have claimed that the self is constructed through the narrative others develop of the leader (Sparrowe, 2005). Santos' biographical factors may have affected how the FARC and the military saw him as a leader. Methodologically, primary data on their opinions is limited, but still it is possible to analyse statements from the FARC and the military through secondary sources. Moreover, it

is possible to explore how Santos believed to be seen by these two groups by taking his autobiography and his interview into account.

Yet, before going into the analysis of the three mechanisms at work to understand Santos' leadership, two important disclaimers need to be made: Santos' capacity to combine policies of recognition with a certain type of toughness to initiate a peace process heavily depends on the fact that he is a wealthy man who could easily personify strength and responsibility. Although it is empirically challenging to isolate the effect of male leadership on conflict resolution, it can be doubted that a woman would have been equally respected by the military and the FARC. Studies have shown that leaders' reconciliatory behaviour is publicly more accepted if the leader in charge was a hawk and a man (Schultz, 2005). Additionally, so far, no woman has been elected as president in Colombia. Concerning wealth, it can be assumed that the public relevance and economic power of the Santos family was a benefit, if not a prerequisite to unite and reconciliate many forces behind his back to become both, president and a peacemaker.

Santos' beliefs and values

First, I examine Santos' childhood and socialization prior to entering politics, in order to explore the origins of his leadership. This requires a close look at Santos' family, his education, military service and career before he went into politics in 1991. Most importantly, I examine the beliefs and values dominating his journalistic contributions from 1994-2006.[5]

Santos was born in 1951 into an influential family in Colombia. Their public relevance was most notable from 1913 when Eduardo Santos Montejo (President of Colombia from 1938 to 1942), Santos great-uncle, purchased El Tiempo, which in the next two decades became a leading national newspaper. With his three brothers, Santos grew up in a predominant liberal household in a wealthy neighbourhood of Bogotá (Santos Calderón, E 2018: 24). Santos' relationship with his father was very close (López Michelsen, 1993: 76–87) and he was portrayed as an ideal son who did not cause any problems (Interview

[5] Note that Santos did not publish any contributions in El Tiempo as minister of foreign trade under Gaviria (1991-1994), as minister of finance under Pastrana (2000-2003), and as Minister of defence under Uribe (2006-2009).

with Santos' step-cousin Enrique Santos Molano, 2018).[6] Santos' mother Clemencia believed strongly in liberal and Catholic values (Santos Calderón, E 2018: 22-23). At home, politics were discussed daily, and politicians walked in and out; however, no Santos family member was expected to enter politics based on the principles Eduardo Santos had established El Tiempo. This is a key aspect to consider because it shows that Santos became involved in politics against the family rule. His brother Enrique, who published his memoirs in 2018, describes the atmosphere at home: "The order of things was the country, the newsarticle and then the family" (Santos Calderón, E 2018: 35). Santos considered his family background as relevant to his governing behaviour because he developed the belief that Colombia's destiny mattered and needed to be changed (Interview Santos Calderón, 2018).[7]

Santos' first step towards a career in the public sector started with his decision to join the navy as a cadet when he was only 16 years old. In many speeches he mentioned that this was a key experience for his socialization, as he learned that problems can be solved (Abbott, 2018). In 1973, at only 22 years of age, he received his first job with the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia as the chief executive to the International Coffee Organization (ICO) in London, thanks to Arturo Gómez Jaramillo, the director of the federation (1958-1982) whom he called his second father (Santos Calderón, 1999e). According to Santos' life-long friend Osorio, a Colombian diplomat, who spent many years with Santos in London working for the ICO, their jobs taught them the arts of diplomacy (Interview Néstor Osorio Londoño, 2018).[8] Those years in London were of great importance for Santos' professional career as he strengthened connections with Colombian politicians and diplomats (Hernández, 2014: 81).

Back in Colombia, his next step was the family newspaper El Tiempo in 1982. In comparison to his brothers and cousins, Santos did not start working there in a low-level position. Instead his father directly nominated him as subdirector of the newspaper. Such a position of power at a young age within the family business influenced both Santos himself and his relationship with other family members (Santos Calderón, F 2013: 56-57). In 1986, he was already a close friend of Gabriel Silva Luján, a national security advisor of President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) working on a peace negotiation with the FARC. If

6 Author's interview with Enrique Santos Molano, Santos' stepcousin, Bogotá, 18 Aug. 2018.
7 Author's interview with Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, Oxford, 13 Nov. 2018.
8 Author's interview with Néstor Osorio Londoño, diplomat, London, 3 Dec. 2018.

Silva is to be believed, Santos had already begun developing an interest in peace negotiations in the 1980s.[9]

His professional career and his family background already give an insight into the development of Santos' beliefs and values. However, his writings (1994-2006) shed more light about his beliefs and values concerning war and peace. Between his adolescence and his election as president, he authored a significant number of books and opinion pieces for the press, which offer a unique source to explore the development of his thinking.

In 1994, Santos published, 'Colombia sin fronteras', a book, in which he elaborated the idea that achieving peace should be Colombia's main goal for its own development (1994: 363). Between 1996 and 1997 he established a political project under the banner Destino Colombia. Its content is relevant for the analysis of Santos' beliefs and values. It shows what Santos wanted to achieve: recognition of the constitution by all parties involved in the conflict, a mutual ceasefire, support from the international community, and the establishment of a demilitarized zone for starting the dialogues (Santos Calderón, 1997c, 1998; Fundación Buen Gobierno, 1997). In 1997, Santos also depicted the country as divided, in which every citizen had the duty to make his or her contribution to end the conflict as soon as possible (1997a). Santos went even further by stating that, if the conflict was finally to be solved, a new country needed to be constructed instead of only incorporating the insurgents into the political system (1998). He frequently repeated this view by claiming that Colombia needed an inclusive peace agreement which would transform society. Around that time much of his thinking developed around the "third way", a political position akin to centrism developed by sociologist Anthony Giddens. Santos was very fond of the idea and even wrote a book together with British Prime Minister Tony Blair about how to introduce this concept to Colombia (1999). Blair and Jonathan Powell, British diplomat, significantly influenced Santos' beliefs about conflict negotiation when they were working on the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland (Abbott, 2018).

In his writings, he also made specific references to the FARC: He stated that it was crucial to understand the other side and to see the conflict from different perspectives, which is why he tried to put himself in the position of "Marulanda", the main leader of the FARC (1999a). At the same time, it cannot be denied that Santos kept a very neutral and respectful tone when writing about the FARC and the ELN. Until 2005, he did not once use

[9] Author's interview with Gabriel Silva Luján, politician, Bogotá, 21 Aug. 2018.

the term "terrorists" to refer to them, and even during the Pastrana peace process he did not accuse the FARC of destroying the dialogues (2005b). Additionally, Santos considered South Africa's, Sri Lanka's and Northern Ireland's experiences and the importance of international advisors like Kahane (1996b). However, at the same time, he believed that "with force it is necessary to conquer peace" (1994: 365). Santos here recognized a political negotiation as the best path for Colombia, but that he also understood that the main condition for the success of a negotiation is that the plan B, meaning military defeat, is actually a threat for the guerrillas (1999c). For Santos, it would be impossible to negotiate with the guerrilla groups if they did not fear the state's power (1996b). Nevertheless, he clearly rejected a military defeat as a justified solution to the conflict and even called it a "perverse" suggestion considering that the exclusion of certain social groups had caused violence (1996c).

His aversion towards a non-negotiated solution was also made explicit when he wrote: "The country is confronted with a devilish paradox, in which to construct peace one turns to violence" (1999b). Thus, he expressed his firm commitment to a negotiated solution when Pastrana initiated his peace process (1999d). In 2003, he stated that, according to his conviction, a political negotiation should always be preferred (2003: 5). However, two years later, when the political climate was in favour of Uribe's national security policy, he stated that this path had to be continued because it was necessary and suitable for Colombia at that moment (2005d). Still, Santos continued to mention a political solution to the conflict in his articles, and in 2005, he invited experts like Shlomo Ben Ami, an Israeli politician, diplomat and peace negotiator, to Colombia (2005c).

This section showed how important Colombia's future was for Santos' leadership development; at home liberal values were transmitted, at work Santos focused on diplomacy and in his writings, it becomes apparent how Santos' values and beliefs formed around solving Colombia's internal conflict. Thus, it was predictable that he would become a reconciliation-oriented leader and it can be assumed that his success in the peace process depended on his deeply rooted belief that peace needed to be achieved.

Santos' competence and skills

The first section showed that even before entering politics, Santos' family connection gave him access to certain work opportunities. Santos belonged to a closely-knit and highly influential family and the name 'Santos' had a significant impact on Colombian politics. These biographical factors directly affected the formation of his competences and skills from 1991 to 2010 when he became president. Early on Santos had the chance to prove his expertise in different political projects and ministries. Mainly, his last position as Minister of Defence (2006-2009) gives an insight into his skills development.

President César Gaviria was the first one who had a positive opinion of young Santos offering him the position as minister of foreign trade from 1991 until 1994 in a newly founded ministry. In this position Santos worked effectively on expanding Colombia's international trade and opening up the economy. Paying attention to economic issues made sense given his experience in the coffee sector.

In 1995, when accusations became public that President Ernesto Samper's campaign had partially been funded with drug money, Santos soon became a strong opponent of the Samper government (1994-1998), demanding his resignation (1996a). During the scandal, Santos developed further political competence when he founded his already mentioned project Destino Colombia, a peace initiative to bring the Colombian conflict to an end putting together different sectors of Colombia's society from guerrilleros to paramilitaries, and from representatives of the church to businessmen. His diplomacy improved by organizing several meetings for Destino Colombia, and he even met with FARC commander "Raúl Reyes" in Costa Rica in 1997 to gain his support (Corral, 2016: 21–24; Hernández, 2014: 107–113). However, one aspect of the initiative was to call for a national constituent assembly without informing President Samper. Soon the government denounced the initiative as a conspiracy against Samper, as it seemed that Santos sought to negotiate a peace process under the condition that it would not materialize under the "illegitimate" Samper government. It was highly debated as to whether or not this was a condition imposed by Santos, the FARC or the paramilitaries (Aranguren Molina, 2001: 287). Santos was accused of doing this to promote his own presidency, which forced him to withdraw his pre-candidacy in 1998 while the peace initiative lost its drive and meaning (Santos Calderón, E 1997: 374). It is important to note that his election manifesto during this short campaign was to achieve a political negotiation with the FARC (El Tiempo, 2016). Conspiracy or not, it is clear that organizing these events without including the

president was an idea doomed to fail. This experience probably made Santos understand that he had to be more pragmatic by pronouncing his plans.

When Pastrana was elected in 1998, he asked Santos to form a commission aimed at establishing a demilitarized zone to negotiate a peace process with the FARC (León, 2018). However, Santos soon left the commission criticizing its lack of organization, structure and objectives through his foundation Buen Gobierno and in his opinion pieces in El Tiempo (1997b). In his view, any peace process needed a clear definition of what kind of peace was to be achieved (Señal Memoria RTVC, 1999). The FARC quickly lost interest in the peace process with Pastrana and abused his extreme concessions to actually strengthen their fighting capacities. This first-hand experience in a peace process introduced Santos to the challenges of making concessions. He learned that concessions had to be made, but with strength and caution to achieve a political agreement (Interview Santos Calderón, 2018).

In 2002, Uribe was elected as the new president. Santos did not support his candidacy and became a strong critic of Uribe's style of governing (Santos Calderón, 2004a). In 2004, Uribe nominated Santos as the leader of the governing party in congress. This can only be explained by the fact that Uribe needed Santos to strengthen his government. Santos had a name that the Bogotá elites and politicians respected, and he had the skills to organize and convince different sectors to work with Uribe. Santos' failure to become mayor of Bogotá in 2003, and Uribe's extremely high approval rates might explain why Santos engaged increasingly in Uribe's political agenda (Santos 2005a). Also, it must have inspired Santos that one of his ex-professors wrote a novel in 2003, in which Santos would be the president of Colombia in 2020 (Fuentes, 2003: 49). In 2005, Santos decided to support Uribe by founding the U Party (Partido Social de Unidad Nacional), which became the political platform on which basis Uribe got re-elected in 2006. Shortly after Uribe's re-election, Santos stepped down from his leading position of the party and became Minister of Defence. Minister of Defence was a key position since security was the flagship of Uribe's government and it was seen by many Colombians as the most important political position after the presidency. Santos' trajectory under Uribe needs to be seen as a strategic and pragmatic adaptation to the political circumstances of someone who understood that there was no political future without Uribe. In the past, he had learned that being too open about his preferences towards peace negotiations without the president's

knowledge was not effective, and in a political atmosphere that favoured Uribe's policies, Santos took the opportunities that Uribe offered him.

In Santos' last position before the presidency, as Defence Minister from July 2006 to May 2009, he gained further skills. First, he knew how to break up old structures in the military in order to improve them (Pécaut, 2008: 65; Valencia, 2008; Deas, 2015). This is a key leadership skill in protracted conflicts as it is often the military which cannot adapt to new agendas (Chernick 1999: 52). Another example is Santos' suggestion of Óscar Naranjo as new general director of the national police in 2007 which made the national police more effective, transparent and cooperative. Still, many problems of the security sector persisted (Grabendorff, 2009: 83).

Second, Santos learned how to deal with a highly sensible issue by blaming others, changing the discourse and escaping responsibility (La Silla Vacía 2010). Santos had a very controversial role in the case of the "false positives", which was a scandal evolving around extrajudicial killings of Colombian citizens by members of the military in 2008. The victims, mostly young, mentally challenged or poor men from the countryside, were registered as guerrillas killed in combat. Despite the scandal, Santos knew how to keep his position as minister, not stepping back, and becoming famous for some strong measurements against human rights violators. As such, twenty-seven military officials had to leave the army, including three generals (Fiscalía General de la Nación, 2009: 20).

Third, Santos knew how to model his reputation in the media. Most of Santos' fame as hardline defence minister comes from the fact that he was the one who announced the successful operations to the press. Moreover, Santos made it seem that he was responsible for authorizing the operations without Uribe's direct permission but with his unspoken consent (Semana, 2008). One major success was operation Jaque in July 2008, which resulted in the successful rescue of 15 hostages, including former presidential candidate Íngrid Betancourt (Torres Cuéllar, 2008: 28-32; Villamarin Pulido, 2009). The media reportage of operation Jaque made Colombia's public think that the FARC had significantly been weakened and that the army was gaining the upper hand thanks to Santos (Becerra Gómez and Burgos Suárez, 2018). Not only in the news, but also in his book, Jaque al terror, Santos presented himself as the strong decision maker through using an aggressive language against the FARC and by choosing pictures of him with rescued hostages, military generals and dead FARC members (2009: 42). At the same time, Santos was pragmatic enough not to humiliate the FARC in public speeches. Mostly, he congratulated the

national army without mentioning that the operation deceived the FARC nor by calling them terrorists. His presidential campaign was also characterized by pragmatism (Taylor, 2016: 184). In 2009, 57% of the electorate claimed they would re-re-elect Uribe if possible, whereas Santos himself only got a 4% approval rate (Ipsos Napoleón Franco, 2009: 35). Considering these approval rates, the only way to become president was through standing for a continuity of Uribe's policies. Therefore, nothing indicated that Santos would start a dialogue with the FARC before his actual election in June 2010.

This section showed that Santos developed very pragmatic skills from 1991 to 2010 with the competence to organize, solve constraints and represent himself in a positive light with different actors, keeping his doors open and gaining political support. Of course, Santos' pragmatism can be seen as a perfection of opportunism and as a lack of consistency. However, this does not change the fact that he embodied many leadership qualities needed to unite many different sectors of Colombia's society, a key pre-requisite for conflict resolution.

Others' perceptions of Santos

This last section explores the FARC's and the military's perceptions of Santos, which in turn, indirectly shaped Santos' behaviour. At the end of 2008, the FARC found itself in a new position: They were not only significantly weakened in terms of numbers, but the military pressure increased as leadership changes occurred in a new generation of FARC commanders. . This was a significant shift because the leadership changed from a top of old guerrilleros keeping hold of a decentralised organization to a group of leaders who envisioned a future in politics (Pizarro Leongómez, 2017: 370; Taylor, 2016: 183). How did the FARC view Santos at that time? Of course, data is very limited, but it can be assumed that they saw him as a possible negotiation partner based on the fact that "Alfonso Cano", commander of the FARC between 2008 and 2011, even produced a video one week before Santos' inauguration offering peace dialogues (Al-Jazeera, 2010). Based on his predisposition towards a political negotiation, Santos interpreted the FARC's actions as a chance for a fruitful dialogue (Interview Santos Calderón, 2018). Another political leader could have exploited their weaknesses, ignored their offer, or advocated for increasing military pressure. Moreover, the FARC had always maintained a positive opinion of Santos' brother Enrique, a rather leftist journalist (Santos Calderón, E 2014: 19-21). Addition-

ally, Santos' biographical factors (mainly the fact that someone from the highest Colombian elite had always tried to work on possible negotiations) caught their attention ("Timochenko" in El Colombiano, 2019). It is also reported that the FARC respected Santos as a military man because he had been an effective defence minister and had military training (Kline, 2015: 89; Santos Calderón, 2019: 164, 193). They were impressed by the efficacy of the attacks and valued the fact that he treated them as insurgents and not as terrorists (Acosta Patiño, 2016: 48).

Most army commanders highly respected Santos as defence minister, not only because he led the heaviest attacks against the FARC, but also because he made the military apparatus more transparent and efficient (Pizarro Leongómez, 2018; Torres Cuéllar, 2008; Villamarin Pulido, 2009). Furthermore, Santos' strong approach against the ones responsible for the "false positives" brought him notable recognition in the army ranks as a man who understood that this scandal was very bad for their reputation (Pizarro Leongómez, 2018). It might have also influenced the military's perception of Santos. He joined the navy as a cadet, when he was still a student, and most high-level politicians do not choose to join the army, (see Pastrana's and Uribe's biographies). The respect for Santos' leadership made it possible that Sergio Jaramillo, Santos' closest work partner and his vice-minister of defence, could develop a new way of thinking about conflict resolution, which was accepted by the military (Gómez Giraldo, 2016: 26). In past peace attempts, the military had feared that their political power would be reduced, as such President Belisario Betancur's (1982-1986) peace process failed due to resistance of the military and the traditional political elites (Martín Medem, 2016: 260; Pizarro Leongómez, 2018). Consequently, the fact that many generals saw a peace negotiation as the victory and not the end for the Colombian army was a decisive step for the outcome of any dialogue. Second, some military branches developed a new understanding of human rights and of the genesis of the conflict; although, there is no shared military version of the conflict (Pizarro Leongómez, 2018). Based on these observations, Santos could count on the military support for his plans to negotiate (Interview Santos Calderón, 2018).

Lastly, it is important to compare this to the FARC's and the military's perceptions of Pastrana and Uribe. Pastrana's peace process with the FARC (1999-2002) could never embark on suitable conditions, as the Colombian army did not have the military capacity to put some pressure on the FARC. Moreover, Pastrana's leadership seemed weak as he offered concessions to the guerrilla without expecting anything in return (Kline, 2007:

52). Pastrana's example shows that being reconciliation-oriented is not enough, as this can be interpreted as a weakness by the opponents. Additionally, the military did not see Pastrana as a strong leader and were sceptical about his decision towards establishing a demilitarized zone for starting the dialogues (Kline, 2007: 54; Martín Medem, 2016: 260; Pizarro Leongómez, 2018; Richani, 2013: 35–49). On the contrary, Uribe had much military support and many external conditions were eligible for negotiations. Mainly, the FARC's position had changed: As such in April 2010, before Santos came to power the FARC lamented in an open letter to Pearl that Uribe had decided to finish the talks with them before they even properly started, claiming that their doors would remain open (FARC-EP, 2010).

There are several reasons why Uribe missed the conditions for a peace process. First, Uribe might have still felt bitterness for the death of his father, who had been allegedly killed by the FARC in 1983 (Kline, 2015: 95–97). Second, the FARC did not see any coherence in Uribe's actions: On one side, he continued to attack them verbally, and on the other, he showed them his goodwill towards dialogue by releasing some FARC prisoners (Bermúdez Liévano, 2018: 31). Third, Uribe himself saw the fault clearly with the FARC who, according to him, had no genuine interest in negotiations and abused his concessions (Uribe Velez, 2012). Thus, scholars like Kline described Uribe's negotiation attempts in 2009 and 2010 as "paradoxical peace non-processes" (2015: 89). Fourth, personal animosities between Uribe and the presidents of Ecuador and Venezuela made any effective peace initiative in his two administration periods difficult. Thus, his leadership style was not suitable for the development of peace initiatives and his personal issues with the FARC and other presidents could not be combined with a convincing peace policy. Despite Uribe's popularity, it can be doubted that he could have personified a reconciliation-oriented leadership style.

This last section showed that the FARC perceived Santos as a strong leader who respected them and was ready to commit himself to ending the conflict. On the other side, Santos could count on the military's support because they saw him as a trustworthy and pragmatic military man who would not let himself be fooled by the FARC. Being and feeling accepted and respected by the two main actors of the conflict was a key factor for the initiation of a successful peace process.

Conclusions on Santos' political leadership

This article argues that Colombian President Santos developed a leadership between hawk and dove – and that this was possible due to crucial factors residing in his biography.[10] Linking this leadership-centred argument with findings from the conflict negotiation suggests that a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership might be relevant to find solutions to protracted conflicts like the one in Colombia.

Adopting the recently developed personal biography approach, I explored Colombian President Santos' beliefs and values, his competence and skills, and others' perceptions of him. Based on qualitative sources, it became obvious that the concept of reconciliation was both formative and central in Santos' belief system. His skills and competence were highly influenced by the fact that the name "Santos" gave him access to political power. However, he also adapted to the political climate under earlier President Uribe, which officially excluded a negotiated solution to the conflict and waited until he was elected as president to promote his ideals to resolve the conflict. In the meantime, he left the doors open, did not humiliate the FARC, and yet also gained respect from the military apparatus by leading the heaviest attacks against the FARC, presenting the successful operations as his achievement. Santos was perceived as a potential negotiator and simultaneously he treated others as potential negotiating partners and peace supporters.

Still, Santos remains a controversial figure and it needs to be clear that a leadership between hawk and dove might only be fruitful for the initiation of a peace process. Santos' leadership could not prevent that the implementation of the peace process faced many difficulties. Moreover, it is still debated if Santos' main motivation for initiating a peace process was his wish to "go down in history" as a peacemaker. Further studies need to explore if this was a unique Santos' feature or rather a common desire shared by all political leaders. More studies should broaden the link between structural factors, biographical factors and character traits, as it is still unclear how exactly experiences shape personality (Horowitz and Fuhrmann, 2018). It would also be interesting to find experimental evidence for pragmatism and orientation towards reconciliation as key variables for understanding decision-making in peace scenarios, contributing to recent studies on hawks' advantage to pursue rapprochement (Mattes and Weeks, 2019). Moreover, this

[10] For a contrary view claiming that Santos was more a hawk see McNeish, 2015.

study claims that a policy of reconciliation is not enough (contrarily to Lieberfeld, 2018), which invites further qualitative case comparisons of leaders in peace processes.

This analysis contributes to the idea that leaders' biographical factors are relevant for political developments. It shows that the explanatory power of 'ripeness', which has so often been used in conflict negotiation literature, is incomplete when leaders are left out. It also indicates that a distinction between hawks and doves is not fruitful for Peace and Conflict studies. As humans subject to change, leaders are not empty black boxes but have varying potentials to act according to certain biographical factors combined with other, often structural factors and process dynamics. Put differently, human subjectivity and leadership capacities are central to our understanding of peace and conflict decisions, which implies that studying the individuals involved in political processes should be seen as a counterweight, though not replacement, for institutional and structural theories.

2.2 Social Dominance Orientation and Exposure to Violence as Predictors of Support for the Colombian Peace Referendum in 2016

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore individual predictors of support for peace agreements during referendums. The aim is to test if individual differences in Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) moderate the effect of exposure to violence on support for peace referendums. One hundred and eighty participants completed measures surveying their SDO, exposure to violence and voting behaviour in the plebiscite held in Colombia in 2016. Results show that SDO correlated negatively with support for the peace agreement, while exposure to violence was positively correlated therewith. SDO was found to moderate the relationship between exposure to violence and support for peace agreements. Exposure to violence was related to more support for the referendum with moderate and low SDO scores but not with high levels of SDO. This was also examined in terms of socio-economic stratum. Implications for the interaction between SDO and exposure to violence are discussed.

After over half a century of bitter conflict between the Colombian government and the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) guerrilla group, a referendum in 2016 was meant to confirm that Colombians supported a peace agreement being concluded between the two. However, it failed – with 50.2 per cent voting against and only 49.8 per cent in favour of it. In the current article, it is argued that individuals' view of inequality in society is particularly relevant to their willingness to vote for peace in referendums and that it will affect how exposure to violence relates to peace support. Pulling together individual factors from studies on Colombia and psychological studies on perceptions of inequality, I aim to better understand the outcome of the peace referendum held in Colombia in 2016.

The Colombian peace referendum, often also called a plebiscite according to Colombian law since it was initiated by President Juan Manuel Santos, was supposed to legitimise the peace agreement with the FARC. After four years of official peace talks, Colombian voters went to the polls on 2 October 2016 to vote on the peace agreement negotiated by the FARC and the Colombian government. Despite projections of a "Yes" vote on the part of a comfortable 66 per cent of those polled, the "No" campaign led by former president Álvaro Uribe and his party was more successful in mobilising voters against the agreement. The outcome surprised electoral forecasters as well as the international media and the Colombian government, although the referendum literature (Bowler, 2015)

and also declining approval ratings for President Santos indicated early on that Colombians might vote against the peace agreement.

Referendums are relatively rare, and outcomes can depend on political and economic issues as well as the level of support for the incumbent government or opposition respectively. Yet, peace agreements have increasingly been put to a vote in countries such as Colombia, Northern Ireland and South Sudan, leading to growing practical and theoretical interest in the question of what factors influence public opinion vis-à-vis either supporting or rejecting them. Reasons for peace support include situational conditions, such as economic stability, military capacity or mutually hurting stalemates, or the design of related agreements, for example on transitional justice provisions (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). However, individuals might also support and reject peace referendums for reasons unconnected to the nature of state entities and political elites.

Despite the involvement of civil society actors in peace negotiations (Orjuela, 2003), the framing of campaign information (Masullo & Morisi, 2019) and concerns about the unemployment rate influencing individuals' preferences, studies of the Colombian case have described how support for the opposition party and the experience of victimisation were ultimately the most important factors determining voting patterns here (Dávalos et al., 2018). Indeed, the exposure to violence and living in war zones seem to explain much of the variation witnessed. As such, it was these circumstances that led to the surprising failure of the peace referendum in Colombia (Branton et al., 2019; Pechenkina & Gamboa, 2022; Tellez, 2019).

Colombians suffered in different ways from the conflict because violence against civilians was unevenly distributed across the national territory and therefore affected the population unequally (Kreiman & Masullo, 2020). The ongoing Colombian conflict dates back to the 1960s; over the past five decades, leftist guerrilla groups, right-wing paramilitary organisations and Colombian state forces have all been involved in violence against the civilian population. Among the various guerrilla groups operating in the country, the FARC quickly became the largest and most powerful, with a number of Colombian presidents attempting to conclude a peace agreement with them. The 2016 one was to provide for comprehensive rural reform, give permission for the FARC to participate in elections, offer a strategy to curb coca cultivation and stop drug trafficking, as well as bring truth and justice for victims. Addressing strong grievances and injustices was at the core of the peace agreement, sentiments very prevalent in a highly unequal society with a Gini index

that placed it as the most unequal country in Latin America in 2021 (Romero, 2022). Hence, unequal exposure to violence and existing inequalities were particularly relevant to the failure of Colombia's referendum.

Focusing on the exposure to violence, a burgeoning body of research has established that exposure to it has the power to shape individual preferences and behaviours in social and political contexts (Canetti et al., 2013; Kibris, 2011; Weintraub et al., 2015). However, although it is clear that exposure to violence transforms political and social preferences as well as behaviours it remains less so whether and how variations in experiences thereof translate into different attitudes towards peace. There are contradictory findings on the effects of exposure to violence on the latter. On the one hand, there is considerable evidence that previous violent victimisation increases the proportion of votes for peace, at least in the case of Colombia's 2016 referendum (Branton et al., 2019; Pechenkina & Gamboa, 2022; Tellez, 2019). An important aspect in connection with experiences of violence and support for peace processes seems to be the question of whether the perpetrators go unpunished or whether they become political actors, for example by founding a political party (Montoya, 2014). Moreover, many Colombians who had experienced violence were more supportive of the peace process if the perpetrators were the ones then involved in the related agreement (Esparza et al., 2020; Kreiman & Masullo, 2020).

On the other hand, many contributions from Psychology highlight that conflict exposure can have the effect that citizens feel a "hardening" against the perpetrator or enemy populations, as driven by grievances and hatred (Hirsch-Hoefler et al., 2016; Zeitzoff, 2014). This reduces their willingness to settle the conflict. In general, the exposure of violence is associated with a psychological stress that leads to a stronger perception of threat, which fosters political attitudes based on rejecting compromise and favouring militarism (Canetti et al., 2013). Also, studies on the effect of terrorism indicate that attacks nudge citizens towards more belligerent parties (Kibris, 2011). Hence, it appears that the exposure to violence is not directly related to support for peace processes – but in the case of Colombia it was.

Taking a closer look at the psychological underpinnings of the latter's failed referendum, I argue that the diverse effects of experiencing violence are mediated by attitudes towards inequality in society. Individuals differ in their views of such social disparities, and these are closely related to support or not for peace processes. This is in line with

studies suggesting that in situations characterised by conflict or institutional change, status quo-legitimising ideologies such as SDO should be explored (Sibley & Duckitt, 2010).

SDO, defined as the individual disposition to accept hierarchy and dominance among groups, is an important difference between persons regarding the extent to which they endorse a system that upholds injustice or not. Individuals high in SDO are accepting of inequality and are generally in favour of the idea that some groups should dominate others (Pratto et al., 1994). In addition, subjects with high SDO who show strong acceptance of their in-group classification display stronger related biases, implying they place more social value on that in-group (Sidanius et al., 1994). There is considerable evidence that SDO correlates with a range of different forms of prejudice, including racism (Sidanius et al., 1992), ableism (Vezzali et al., 2018), sexism (Pratto et al., 1994) and the stigmatisation of homeless people (Smith & Stathi, 2021). In addition to investigating how SDO relates to prejudice, some scholars have focussed on attitudes towards war and peace, too. Because SDO legitimises hierarchical power structures and inequality, it is especially fruitful to understand when individuals prefer to either challenge or maintain the status quo through peace agreements.

Early work in Psychology has strengthened the assumption that individuals have clear and stable attitudes about militarism or pacifism (Droba, 1931). Research in this vein has found that SDO correlates with attitudes towards war and peace (Bizumic et al., 2013; Blumberg et al., 2017; Heaven et al., 2006). Bizumic et al.'s (2013) scale on attitudes towards war and peace and its link to SDO has been validated for the Latin American context regarding a sample in Peru (Sirlopú & León, 2016). Indeed, there is evidence that people high in SDO tend to disapprove of dovelike and conciliatory attitudes when these challenge group-based hierarchies (Ho et al., 2015; Kleppestø et al., 2020).

Actors higher in SDO tend to be more supportive of violence (Cohrs et al., 2005); however, SDO is more an indicator of a preference for maintaining or reducing group-based hegemonies than of support for violence per se. In other words, those with higher levels of SDO should not support either war or peace for the sake of conflict but to maintain their social hierarchy (Henry et al., 2005; Lucas & Kteily, 2018). However, attitudes and actual behavioural preferences are not the same thing, and so SDO depends on the status of the perpetrator(s) and on the wider dynamics around the conflict (Henry et al., 2005; Porat et al., 2015).

Recent studies on SDO in Colombia indicate that it correlates with a set of political beliefs and attitudes among citizens that tolerate and indeed favour dishonest and corrupt actions on the part of political and economic decision-makers (Espinosa et al., 2022). The link between SDO and system justification is also relevant for peace referendums, as voters tend to support the status quo at the ballot box (LeDuc, 2003), which in this case may have led to rejection of the peace process. Moreover, SDO predicts conservative and authoritarian beliefs and right-wing voting (Hiel & Mervielde, 2002).

Colombian voters who claimed they generally prefer a military solution to the conflict with the guerrillas to a negotiated one were more likely to be right-wing and high in SDO than counterparts who supported the Santos government (García-Sánchez et al., 2022a; Muñoz & Pachón, 2021). Colombians with high levels of SDO also displayed more support for the conflict in general (García-Sánchez al., 2022b) as well as prejudices against FARC members, indicating that negative attitudes towards ex-combatants are related to perceptions of threat vis-à-vis social order or status (Ramírez, 2018).

The purpose of the present study is to explore the interaction between exposure to violence and perceptions of inequality, which may predict support or not for the Colombian peace referendum of 2016. Given that peace processes are closely related to a change of status quo, it is argued that SDO – as a validator of the system that legitimises inequality – will be negatively related to the willingness to support such processes. Exposure to violence is, meanwhile, expected to increase support for peace in the Colombian context. I expect that SDO has a moderating effect on experiences with violence, which could shed some light on the discrepancy in the results on the effects hereof in Colombia and elsewhere on support for peace processes. In line with contributions on attitudes in conflict, it is predicted that SDO will limit the effect of exposure to violence on an inclination towards peace. SDO is expected to hinder the positive effect hereof because the former undermines social change, thus legitimising the continuation of conflict. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time this twin hypothesis has been tested.

Method and materials

Participants and design: One-hundred and eighty Colombian students participated in this study between October and December 2020, with 98 identifying as female and 82 as male. Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 44 years old (M = 22.16, SD = 3.77). Students were

recruited from six universities in Bogotá and Medellín, respectively (Universidad Nacional, Universidad de los Andes, Universidad Externado; Universidad Nacional, Universidad de EAFIT, Universidad de Antioquia). They were from different regions in Colombia, so as to make sure that participants had lived both within and outside of a conflict zone. Participants' scores on scales measuring SDO and exposure to violence were tested as predictors of support for the 2016 peace referendum.

Materials: Social dominance orientation is measured with the SDO 8-item short scale (Ho et al., 2015), employing statements about social dominance and anti-egalitarianism (see full text in the Appendix). The statements reflect a preference for a group hierarchy (e.g. "group equality should not be our primary goal"). A 5-point Likert scale is used (1: strongly disagree; 5: strongly agree), yielding an internal reliability of $\alpha = .86$. Higher SDO scores indicate greater levels of support for intergroup status hierarchies.

Exposure to violence was measured by asking if the person had experienced a form of it due to the armed conflict, giving the opportunity for "Yes", "No" and "Prefer not to answer". Subjects could additionally describe the situation or make a general comment. Of the 21 participants who made a comment, 12 stated that they had experienced physical violence at the hands of unspecified armed actors, 6 suffered violence at the hands of guerrillas, 2 at the hands of paramilitaries and 1 at the hands of the police. In total, 71 participants reported no exposure to violence while 109 claimed to having experienced some form thereof. This was a high number but not unusual according to the survey firm, Cifras y Conceptos, which collected the data. Because participants were given the opportunity to self-identify as someone who has experienced violence according to their own definition thereof it appeared that they were more receptive to broader definitions of the phenomenon. Although not all experiences of violence are equally traumatic, the question was kept as open-ended as possible to allow more participants to identify themselves as having suffered it.

To allow participants to rate how much they supported the peace agreement with the FARC, I used a scale from 0 to 10 – where 0 means "I totally reject the peace agreement of 2016" and 10 that "I totally support the peace agreement of 2016". The scale specifically mentioned the year of the peace agreement to avoid participants who voted against the one negotiated by Santos claiming to support such agreements in general.

Procedure and ethics: The study was first programmed online using Lime Survey and tested via a pilot in Germany. To boost participation, the study design was kept short and

simple – needing only 15 minutes to complete it. After the pilot study, the Colombian survey was pre-registered at the Centre for Open Science (https://osf.io/ka3vt). All measurements have been validated in Spanish versions. The data was collected, as noted, by the survey firm Cifras y Conceptos. The latter recruited participants who studied in Bogotá and Medellín but came from different regions of Colombia. Participants took the survey online in their own homes. The team administered the survey and made check-up calls to confirm that the survey was answered.

Participants were provided with information and consent forms prior to the study and a debrief afterwards. They were free to withdraw their data at any time during the study and up to a week afterwards. Each participant received 20,000 Colombian pesos for participating (around 5 British pounds). Participants were promised full anonymity. The proposed study underwent an ethical peer review prior to data-collection. The statistical procedure was designed first to investigate support for the 2016 peace referendum, then measures of SDO and finally descriptive statistics on exposure to violence, general opinions on the use of the latter as well as demographic statistics on age, gender, study subject, marital status, degree, military service and socio-economic stratum. The study protocol can be found in the Appendix.

Analysis: Data was analysed using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2013) to test the moderation model, in which exposure to violence was considered the predictor variable, support for the peace referendum the outcome variable and SDO the moderator.

Results

First, the two predictor variables were tested for correlation with support for the 2016 peace referendum. Table 1 illustrates the results of this analysis. The two predictors significantly correlated with support for the peace referendum in question. As expected, SDO correlated negatively and exposure to violence positively with support for peace agreements. The average support for the 2016 peace agreement was 4.97 (SD = 3.36), reflecting that backing for a peaceful resolution to the conflict ranged from 55 to 58 of 100 per cent between 2011 and 2016 (see Matanock & García-Sánchez, 2017).

Table 1: Correlation matrix for each predictor variable

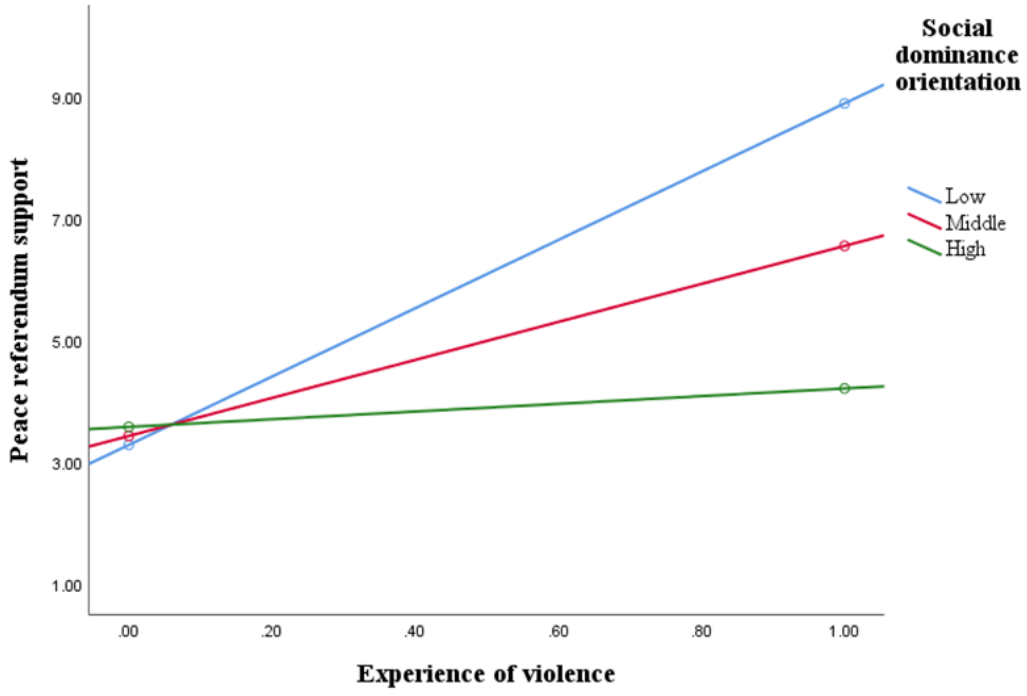
Variable	Mean (SD)	1	2	3
1. SDO	2.31 (0.98)	1		
2. Exposure of violence	0.56 (0.50)	0.17*	1	
3. Support peace referendum	4.97 (3.36)	-0.32**	0.41**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Exposure to violence: Then, the following model tested the effect of exposure to violence on support for the 2016 peace referendum with SDO as moderator of peace support, using Model 1 in PROCESS with 5,000 iterations with bootstrapping. The overall model was significant; F (3,176) = 59.59, $p < .001$ and accounted for 46 per cent of the variance (R^2 = 0.46). The main effects within this model were partially significant; exposure to violence significantly predicted support for peace referendums; b = 8.98, t (176) = 10.02, $p < .001$ confidence intervals between 7.21 and 10.75. SDO did not significantly predict support for the 2016 peace agreement; b = 0.15, t (176) = 0.59, p = .555.

Results show that SDO moderated the effect between exposure to violence and support for the peace referendum in question significantly; R^2 change = 0.13%, F(1,176) = 61.74, $p < .001$; for the interaction, b = -2.54, t (176) = -7.86, $p < .001$, confidence intervals between -3.18 and -1.90.

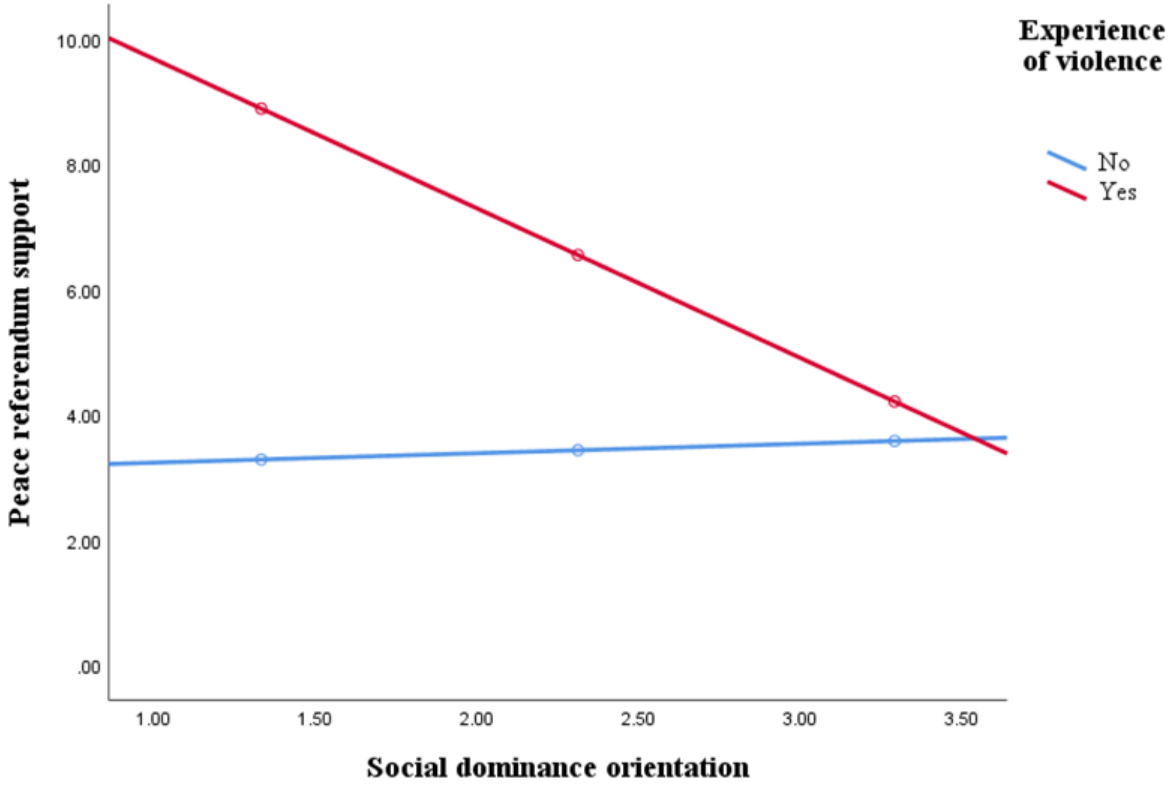
Figure 1: Slopes depicting the moderation of SDO on the effect of exposure of violence on support for the 2016 peace referendum



The simple slopes in Figure 1 illustrate the moderation effect of SDO on exposure violence and support for the peace referendum. They show how at low and medium levels of SDO, the exposure to violence led to greater support for peace agreements, while at high levels of SDO there was no effect on the exposure to violence– peace agreement relationship.

Figure 2 depicts the difference in moderation effect depending on whether one has experienced violence or not. It reveals that those individuals who suffered the latter and had low levels of SDO displayed more support for the peace referendum while those who did not experience violence were less in favour thereof. A summary table of bootstrap results for this model can be found in Table A1 in the Appendix. In Table A2 there, I also present bootstrap results for the model controlling for age, gender, military service and general attitudes towards violence. This portrays how the main results remain robust when controlling for other demographic and personal factors like general opinions on the use of violence and military service.

Figure 2: Slopes depicting the differences in exposure of violence moderated by SDO on support for the 2016 peace referendum

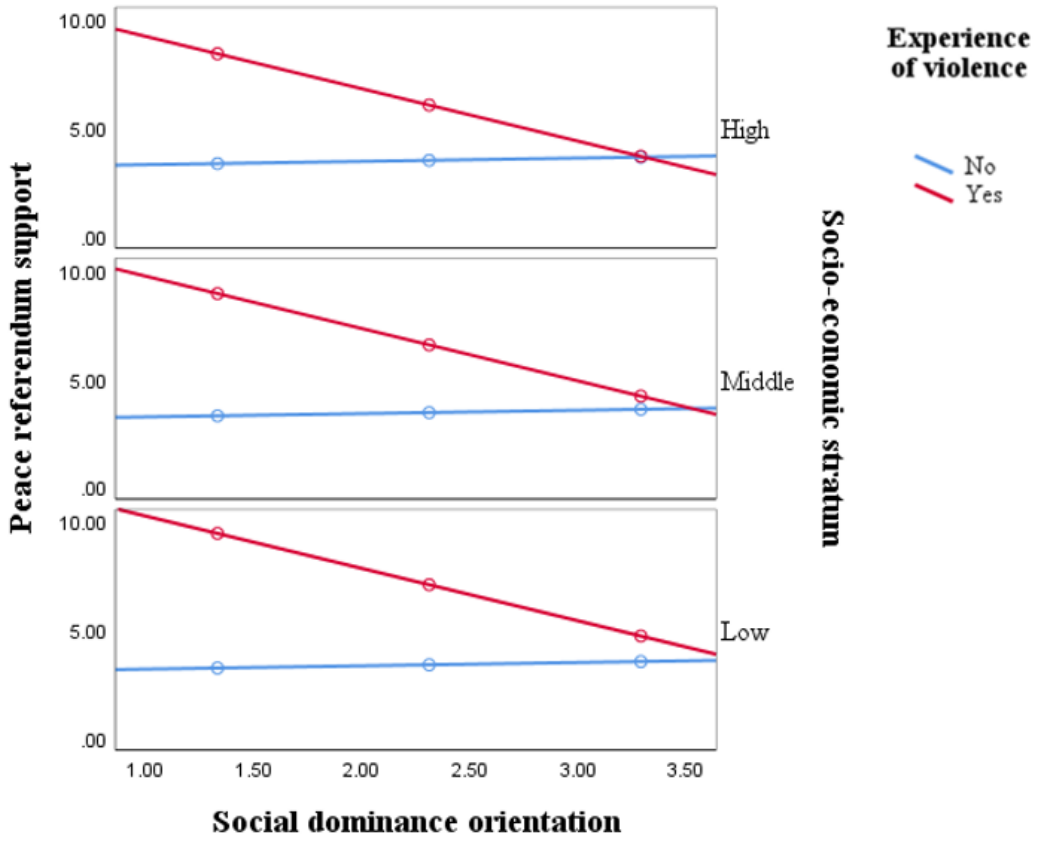


Socio-economic stratum: Since the main results show that an exposure of violence had almost no effect on support for the 2016 peace referendum at high levels of SDO, I further tested how this diverges when using the socio-economic strata of the participants as a

second moderator of such attitudes. There are six socio-economic strata in Colombia, ranging from 1 to 6 – with 1 being the lowest and six the highest. They are based on the conditions of the dwelling in which these groups of people live and the environment or geographic area in which it is located.

I used Model 2 in PROCESS with 5,000 iterations with bootstrapping and found that the overall model was significant when including socio-economic stratum; F (5,174) = 41.59, $p < .001$ and accounted for 47 per cent of the variance ($R^2 = 0.47$). The two interactions together were significant; R^2 change = 0.14%, F(2, 174) = 34.54, $p < .001$. Figure 3 depicts the difference in moderation effect when including socio-economic stratum.

Figure 3: Slopes depicting the differences in exposure of violence moderated by SDO and socio-economic stratum on support for the 2016 peace referendum



Individuals from lower socio-economic strata and with lower levels of SDO were more supportive of the 2016 peace referendum when having experienced violence than those from higher socio-economic strata with low SDO. This further shows that there is no effect of the exposure of violence on support for the peace referendum for people from higher socio-economic strata and with higher levels of SDO. In contrast, individuals from lower socio-economic strata and with higher levels of SDO who experienced violence were more supportive of the peace agreement in question.

Discussion

The aim of the current study is to explore individual predictors of support for peace referendums. I focus on the exposure of violence and the social-ideological variable related to legitimising group hierarchies: SDO. As predicted for the Colombian context, the was positively correlated with support for the 2016 peace referendum. In line with past research on SDO and attitudes towards peace, SDO was negatively correlated with support for this agreement. Exposure to violence serving to increase support for the 2016 peace referendum is consistent with Branton et al. (2019), Dávalos et al. (2018), Pechenkina and Gamboa (2022), and Tellez (2019). SDO negatively predicting support for this peace referendum is in line with the findings of Bizumic et al. (2013), Blumberg et al. (2017) and Heaven et al. (2006) on attitudes towards peace and SDO. This study thus adds to the burgeoning literature on socio-psychological barriers in civil conflicts (Porat et al., 2015; Zeitzoff, 2014).

The moderation analysis allowed a better understanding of how these factors interact with one another, revealing that SDO moderated the beneficial effect of exposure to violence. For those with low and medium levels of SDO, exposure of violence meant more support for the 2016 peace referendum, but such benefits were not apparent for those high in SDO. Following these dynamics, I examined whether such benefits are not evident for high SDO individuals from higher socio-economic strata by including such standing as a second moderator. This additional analysis revealed that exposure of violence had no effect on support for the 2016 peace referendum among individuals from higher socio-economic strata with higher SDO levels. This further contributes to the literature on socio-economic status and high levels of SDO negatively affecting attitudes towards social equality and the preference for reconciliation (Noor & Quek, 2022).

At this point, it is worth reflecting on the specifics of support for peace agreements. It can be argued that negative attitudes towards peace as a phenomenon are caused by social inequality, as many people take up arms when their social and economic grievances become intolerable. However, the biggest challenge in getting public (rather than combatant) support for peace agreements is selling people on deals that offer some concessions to those who took up arms. Most solutions to armed conflict depend on governments making such compromises, for example by offering pensions to former combatants and promising (them) pathways to social change and political participation. The sticking point here in terms of public support for peace agreements is often that these former combatants

receive some form of impunity regarding their past crimes as well as other social benefits from the government (McEvoy, 2018). More so, as these former combatants may show no remorse for their actions, reinforcing the impression that a peace agreement exempting them from facing the consequences thereof is not fair. Selling a peace agreement to the public is not an easy task and the leaders who choose peace are often perceived as weak for granting concessions. Thus, the political leaders who are perceived as tough are often the most successful ones in signing peace agreements (Mattes & Weeks, 2019; Schultz, 2005).

Another aspect of peace agreements is that they disrupt the status quo, regardless of the concessions and provisions they contain. People who are fearful and sceptical of social change may prefer the continuation of conflict rather than uncertain outcomes following a peace agreement being signed. In conflict-ridden societies, people often develop routines and an acceptance of the violent environment in which they live. Therefore, communities may defend the status quo as long as there is no safe and peaceful alternative to war. This dynamic may play out differently for individuals who have nothing to lose as compared to those at the top of society – who potentially fear their power and standing will be challenged by any change in the status quo.

In Colombia, the "No" campaign against the 2016 peace agreement succeeded in leveraging the fear of losing personal benefits such as pensions to the benefit of former combatants. Many Colombians considered the concessions to the FARC unfair, as people who have worked all their lives without taking up arms and committing crimes often do not receive pensions (Matanock & Garbiras-Díaz, 2018). Interestingly, the "No" campaign not only claimed that the concessions were unmerited but at the same time promoted the idea that a peace agreement with the FARC would turn Colombia into a communist state, which would not be fair to the people who had worked their way up the social ladder for years (Cardona Zuleta & Londoño Álvarez, 2018). At the centre of the debates for or against the peace agreement, hence, were ideas and fears about changing and challenging the status quo as well as perceptions of social justice.

Since peace agreements may be more legitimate for one group (the previously excluded one) than another (the previously dominant group), measures such as SDO are particularly pertinent in these contexts. Still, this study has its limitations: future studies could explore participants' reactions to policies that attempt to help former combatants through financial benefits. One might expect a movement towards income redistribution

as part of a peace deal to be perceived as a threat by those high in SDO. This would also enhance the initial results on socio-economic stratum, SDO and peace agreements, since they indicated that in particular individuals from high strata were less supportive of such agreements – even if they had experienced violence and identified themselves as having low levels of SDO.

The findings did further not support assertions by Hirsch-Hoefler et al. (2016) and Zeitzoff (2014) that exposure to violence may harden attitudes towards peace. These two contributions focussed on the Israel–Palestine conflict, which may involve specific social-psychological obstacles to peace not found in other civil conflicts (Porat et al., 2015). Further research is needed to explore how exposure to violence caused diverging expectations about individuals' support for peace agreements in Colombia and Israel respectively. It might also be fruitful to compare the Colombian sample with another country that voted for or against a peace deal, such as Cyprus, Guatemala, South Sudan or Timor-Leste. Furthermore, future studies could continue to explore dynamics around exposure to violence and social inequality in countries that might be set to sign peace agreements in the future, like Afghanistan or Ethiopia.

Apart from these avenues for future research, there were a number of limitations in the current study which scholars working in this area may consider addressing going forwards. The study was conducted with a modest size and student sample. The controlled conditions involving university students are obviously far removed from real-time government policymaking and of mass-opinion formation. This limits the generalisability of the findings, which require replication by future research. Studies should sample participants to reflect the diversity of experiences during the Colombian conflict by including those of different backgrounds. Another possibility is to replicate the study on a sample of current political leaders. Including a "political elites" sample could contribute to a better understanding of how support for peace processes hinges on who exactly is in power. Although elites are influenced by the public, they can also forgo offers of peace – so that negotiations depend on their willingness to choose settlement over conflict (Tappe Ortiz, 2020).

The dependent variable "support for the peace agreement" could also be improved in future studies. For example, a policy vignette could make it easier to separate personal resentment of the Santos government from actual low support for a peace agreement with

the FARC. In addition, an experimental design using a vignette could show how SDO affects support for violence or not and the view that continuing the conflict is justified, rather than focussing only on peace referendums. In an experimental study of United States adult participants, individuals with higher SDO scores were more likely to be in favour of terrorist attacks and more likely to say that they are justified (Leshem & Sagy, 2021).

The independent variable "experience of violence" could also be expanded to understand what types hereof elicit distinct preferences for peace among different individuals. As such, sexual violence and violence as part of military service might affect individuals in very distinct ways. Recent studies on exposure to violence in the military found that soldiers who experienced combat are more supportive of punitive peace in the context of foreign policy (Blair & Horowitz, 2021) and less so of negotiated settlements in general (Grossman et al., 2015). However, there are many ethical concerns associated with studying experiences of violence, and careful consideration should be given to ensuring that participants are not re-traumatised by surveys that include questions asking about such matters.

Exposure of violence might also depend on the strength of the attack undergone. As such, low and moderate levels of violence suffered induced Israelis to support concessions to Palestinians while high levels thereof reduced such sentiments (Gould & Klor, 2010). Similarly, Weintraub et al. (2015) find that in the 2014 Colombian elections President Santos performed better with his agenda for peace in communities afflicted by moderate levels of insurgent violence and poorly in those experiencing both very high and very low levels thereof. Future research should compare the results with data on the severity of attacks in the regions where each study participant lives/lived.

Another avenue could be investigating why women often account for the majority of civilian victims in conflict and often suffer from sexual violence that targets specifically their sexuality and bodies (Cohen & Nordås, 2014). As a consequence, women might mobilise for peace agreements as a response to the collective threat of victimisation (Shesterinina, 2016). Studies on gendered civilian agency are still nascent; however, there are some contributions on women's empowerment in Colombia indicating that the exposure of violence can indeed be a push factor for mobilisation (Kreft, 2018; Zulver, 2022). Future studies could take a closer look at how women's exposure of violence is moderated by SDO in situations of armed conflict.

The moderator "SDO" also has its limits, since there is a debate around which scores are "truly" low or high (Kleppestø et al., 2020). I acknowledge that related scores were quite low in this sample, although SDO is often skewed towards the lower end of the scale – raising questions about how to best categorise these scores. However, even if the majority of people reject strong intergroup inequality the variance between strong and more modest rejection of intergroup hierarchy, as captured by the SDO scale, has been shown to be one of the most robust predictors of intergroup phenomena in political psychology. Therefore, SDO is a robust predictor of support for peace agreements – even though it is not possible to describe with certainty which individuals exhibit low or high SDO.

Other potential moderators should also be considered. Research by Bizumic et al. (2013) has shown that a right-wing authoritarian (RWA) ideology is another crucial individual difference to be considered vis-à-vis attitudes towards war. RWA can also function as a system justifier in moderating the effect of the exposure of violence on support for peace agreements. It might also be fruitful to focus on other relevant personal characteristics here, such as a person's conceptual complexity and pragmatism (Lieberfeld, 1999).

In conclusion, this study provides further evidence of SDO undermining positive attitudes towards peace. This is the first such contribution on how the intersection of SDO and exposure to violence affects support for peace referendums. It was shown how SDO limited the positive effects of the exposure of violence regarding support for the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC. By focussing on the experience of violence, this research broadens the scope of this relationship whilst also underlining the importance of addressing existing social hierarchies if public support for negotiated solutions to conflict is going to increase – whether in Colombia or elsewhere.

2.3 Trained to Rebel: Rebel Leaders' Previous Military Experience and the Dynamics of Civil Conflicts

Abstract: Rebel leaders can prolong civil wars. While past research has examined how rebel groups shape civil wars, little attention has been paid to rebel leaders. I argue that civil wars last longer and are less likely to terminate in government-favourable outcomes when rebel leaders with military training in a non-state armed group are in charge, in contrast to leaders with no training or training in a state military. These propositions are tested with a quantitative analysis of all civil conflicts from 1989 to 2015, providing support for the hypothesis. I add a qualitative discussion on the FARC guerrilla in Colombia.

Andrew Kayiira, the rebel leader of the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM), openly competed with Yoweri Museveni, leader of the National Resistance Movement (NRM), against the Milton Obote and Tito Okello governments between 1980 and 1986. Both rebel leaders were highly educated yet did not have in common military experience. In 1967, Museveni trained with and received logistical support from the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) while Kayiira had no military background. Museveni's military tactic was to rally a lot of popular support while Kayiira used surgical strikes to attack military targets, such as the army barracks in Lubiri (Oloka-Onyango, 2004). Museveni's military training with FRELIMO might have played a key role in explaining the duration of the conflict and the later success of his rebellion in 1986.

Divergent levels of military experience on the part of the rebel leaders in charge present an interesting puzzle. While some are purely religious or political figures, other rebel leaders are known for their military expertise and warcraft. What influence do these experiences have, then, on civil conflicts? New research suggests that rebel leaders with significant prior international experience such as military training abroad receive more external support for their group (Huang et al., 2021). Others suggest that rebel leaders with military training undergo increased group fragmentation (Doctor, 2020). Building on these seemingly contradictory findings, I propose that one element of long-lasting insurgency is the leaders' military training: I argue that rebel leaders who have received military training are much more likely to fight long wars in which the government is unlikely to win than peers who have no military training or who received training in a state military. Assuming that military training comes with special challenges and a unique level of socialization, I maintain that rebel leaders who have undergone military training in a non-

state armed group before taking the lead are perseverant and unwilling to give up the fight.

To test these assertions, I quantitatively examine whether military experience of rebel leaders influences the duration and outcome of all intrastate conflicts from 1989 to 2015. For this, I combine the Rebel Leaders in Civil War Dataset (RLCW) (Doctor, 2020) and the Rebel Organization Leaders (ROLE) Database (Acosta et al., 2021). For the empirical discussion, I used a case study of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) to complement the quantitative analysis. Results demonstrate that civil wars last longer and are less likely to terminate with government-favourable outcomes when those with military training are in charge of a rebel group. FARC rebel leaders report that their military training made them perseverant, flexible, and committed to their group.

This article contributes to existing civil war scholarship on rebel leaders (Doctor, 2021; Huang et al., 2021; Keels et al., 2020). It demonstrates that focusing on rebel leaders not only identifies a novel factor influencing conflict duration but also adds nuance to existing explanations. This burgeoning research agenda is advanced by showing that variation in rebel leaders' military experience—not only leadership changes (Tiernay, 2015)—as well as their fear of punishment (Prorok, 2016, 2018) also influence conflict duration and outcome.

The article first briefly examines existing research on rebel leaders and civil wars. After, it presents a theory on rebel leaders' military experience and civil war duration. Then, the research design and empirical results are presented and discussed. These results are subsequently complemented with interviews with the FARC. Finally, I conclude by examining the project's implications for scholarship on civil war leaders.

Previous research

Despite a growing amount of research on rebel leaders in civil wars, the literature is somewhat mixed as to how leadership affects the probability that civil wars end. The institutional-leadership school has highlighted that leadership turnover positively affects the probability that civil wars end. New leaders increase the chances of the latter while conflicts that are led by the founder(s) of a rebel group are less likely to come to an end (Tiernay, 2015). Founders are known to cling to the existence of their rebel group and to

fear that they might be punished for inciting rebellion, decreasing the chances that conflicts end (Prorok, 2016, 2018). The presence of a new rebel leader who has come to power through a local selection process is an indication of group cohesion; such tightly knitted groups are more willing to enter into negotiations (Cunningham and Sawyer, 2019).

Another approach to examining the nature of rebel leaders' impact on the duration and outcome of civil wars is to focus on their prior experiences. A burgeoning literature emphasizes that the latter play a critical role in shaping the beliefs and behaviours of rebel leaders once in charge (Acosta et al., 2021; Haer, 2015: 177–179; Martin, 2021). As such, rebel leaders having previously studied abroad (Huang et al., 2021), trained with those themselves once successful rebels (Keels et al., 2020), or having political experience (Doctor, 2020, 2021) have become a more common explanation for intrastate conflict dynamics.

Works on interstate wars have consistently held that military experience with the use of force particularly influences the way state leaders evaluate the costs, benefits, and risks of armed conflict (Britt et al., 2006; Sechser, 2004). State leaders are most likely to initiate conflict when they served in the military but had no combat experience. This leads former rebels who become state leaders to be overly optimistic regarding instigating armed dispute (Horowitz et al., 2015).

The literature on rebel leaders tends to disagree on what types of military experience lead to which expectations vis-à-vis armed conflict. On the one side, rebel leaders who underwent military training abroad had the chance to form international networks that helped them to secure foreign-state support for their rebellion (Huang et al., 2021). In the same vein, rebels leaders with battlefield experience are best equipped to maintain group cohesion and those who served in the military are able to keep groups together for a longer period of time (Doctor, 2020). Rebel leaders who underwent military training outside of a national army are more likely to create specialized rebel operations (Doctor, 2021). On the other side, these rebel leaders experience more group fragmentation (Doctor, 2020).

On rebel groups' military experience and conflict outcomes, a recent study has shown that hostilities involving rebel groups who received military training from an external sponsor are more likely to end in rebel victories or negotiated settlements (Keels et al., 2020). In contrast, peace agreements do not become more likely when rebels with

military experience are integrated into the national army (Glassmyer and Sambanis, 2008). Rebels who served in the state military and then join an armed group might even fuel militarization (Baaz and Verweijen, 2013). Numerous previous studies suggest that military training not only hardens rebels but also socializes them, specifically by removing them from their previous social networks and teaching them the purpose of conflict (Haer, 2015; Hoover Green, 2018).

While military experience appears to be critical to conflict dynamics in civil wars, contradictory findings exist on whether rebel leaders with military training, service, or combat experience are beneficial or detrimental to ending armed conflict respectively.

Theory

Rebel leaders are the ones who mobilize and manage rebel groups. Per the findings of others (Acosta et al., 2021; Doctor, 2020; Prorok, 2018), the leader is the individual most responsible for exercising power in a rebel organization—and not just the operations commander or the political head. They must make strategic and tactical decisions to end or continue the conflict taking into account both external and organizational constraints (Heger et al., 2012; Lujala, 2010). A growing body of literature suggests that leaders' decisions are based, in part, on their own personal experiences (Bueno de Mesquita, 2013; Haer, 2015).

In many cases, the duration and outcome of a conflict depend on whether the leader prefers it to end or continue. These preferences are influenced by a number of factors, which include their own military experience. Although various life experiences are available to choose from, military training should be the first used to explain the duration and outcome of civil wars since these are by nature armed conflicts between two or more parties.

Military experience can vary from having witnessed atrocities in combat, having served in the army, to having attended a military academy. Thus, not all military experience may lead to the same expectations about rebel leaders' behavior in civil wars. Essentially, there are two distinct sorts of rebel military experience: one, as part of a regular military service and, as the other, as part of a paramilitary organization or a militant liberation movement. Such training is defined as formation in military strategy and tactics

in a non-state armed group, while military service is contrariwise formation in a state military. In both cases, those concerned may also have experienced direct combat.[11]

The key assumption is that military training in rebel groups provides unique challenges regarding survival and success in the course of armed insurrection against the incumbent government (Keels et al., 2020; Linebarger, 2016: 635). Of course, military training varies in its duration, quality, intensity, and methods, but it is associated with a lack of resources and a specific socialization process that is different from that in national armies (Hoover Green, 2017). I assume that military-trained individuals are perseverant and willing to continue the conflict because they have become accustomed to deprivation and strongly identify with the overarching goal(s) of the conflict. Therefore, it is to be expected that rebel leaders who have had this kind of experience will not give up and so cause prolonged conflicts.

Military training: Challenges and socialization

First, rebels have to make do with the fact that there are often not enough weapons to train well. For instance, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) had to pretend that large sticks painted black were their guns because there were not enough weapons (Berhe, 2009: 138). Harsh living conditions can also characterize military training. Rebels often lack proper clothing as well as access to water, food, medicine, and shelter during their military training. The latter often takes place not far from the war zone where continuous air raids and heavy artillery bombardments make it difficult to concentrate on the actual training sessions. Even in highly professionalized rebel groups like Hezbollah, training in Lebanon and Syria is often interrupted by Israeli airstrikes. The lack of resources also means that rebels are rarely paid and have to contend with what little the group can offer. Individuals who received training in a state military often did not have to endure the same level of resource scarcity and stress during these formative experiences.

Second, rebels who received military training are probably more perseverant than peers who received instruction in a state military because they have more experience with war. They are used to training in small units, as large groups are susceptible to leaking important information and are easier to attack. In these small groups, rebels are often

[11] Prior combat experience versus no combat experience is also an important binary variable to research. I reestimate the models including combat experience. Results can be found in the Appendix.

quickly introduced to actual combat or concrete military tactics. They are used to training under stress, as it takes place in war zones and in difficult terrain such as jungles or deserts. Thus, the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) quickly began sporadic acts of sabotage and trained its rebels to carry out attacks with devices made from stolen explosives, since they had no firearms. Conventional militaries tend to have a poor time when it comes to fostering rebellions (Keels et al., 2020) given their lack of experience with fighting in small units, in difficult terrain, and under much stress.

Third, during training rebels are also molded by combatant socialization. Individuals trained in rebel groups often receive constant instruction and political education on the purpose and goal(s) of war, whereas those who fight for an institution often do not realize the bigger picture to their training (Hoover Green, 2017). As such, Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) fighters reported that their training was strict and hard but perceived it as just and necessary regardless, while combatants in national armies recalled abuse and demotivation (Hoover Green, 2017: 694). Hence, military training often promotes long-term identification with group goals and the will to continue fighting for them.

In this vein, military training induces rebels to persevere even when the chances of success are low. Many rebel groups tend to lack the means to pose an immediate threat to the incumbent government. During training, rebels will be taught that the continuation of conflict is already a form of victory because it tends to signal a weakness on the part of the state (Linebarger, 2016). They will often learn that talking about the modest chances of victory is seen as treason. Refusal to use violence, willingness to give up weapons, or admitting defeat will be interpreted as weakness and often punished by the group or at least silenced (Hoover Green, 2018: 33). Military training will therefore teach them to prefer the status quo of their group rather than engage in politics with unknown future consequences. They will develop a strong will to persevere—simply not to lose—that can endure in the face of setbacks, and trust that it will be rewarded either with victory or with the continuation of the conflict.

Rebel leaders' military training

Leaders may mobilize, structure, and manage their rebel groups based on the challenges and lessons they experienced during their erstwhile training. Additionally, the particular

features of the latter, for example regarding resource scarcity and combatant socialization, may have made them perseverant and willing to continue the conflict. Military-trained rebel leaders will have formed a preference about whether and how to end or keep alive the conflict. I argue that conflicts with military-trained rebel leaders can last longer for the following reasons:

One, conflicts can last longer if military-trained rebel leaders are in charge, as they can build organizations with a higher degree of centralized command, discipline, and order—which all tend to be associated with rebel groups' greater strength (Hazen, 2013: 588–590). Rebels leaders with military training are also perseverant and flexible vis-à-vis quickly changing tactics and continuing to fight despite setbacks. In contrast, rebel leaders who were trained in national armies may not be able to use other methods and weapons to continue the conflict, and they may be less accustomed to enduring years of deprivation.

Two, rebel leaders' combatant socialization during military training often nurtures a deep sense of responsibility for their followers now and in the future. Those who received military training, therefore, will not risk the status quo of their group and will prefer continuation of the conflict over termination under unfavourable conditions. Additionally, they will believe that their group stands on higher moral grounds than national armies because they fight for the right and superior cause. In comparison, those who received training in a state military before becoming rebel leaders are likely to be less attached to their group and less convinced about its goals as they already switched sides away from the national army.

Three, rebel leaders with military training will be able to convince their followers of their respective ability to achieve objectives despite setbacks. A key aspect here from Political Sociology is that only rebels with a similar social identity or level of charisma can capture and maintain legitimacy within their own movements (Lidow, 2016: 32–52). If rebel leaders manage to convey to their followers that they have endured similar struggles, their insurgent orders remain stable (Brenner, 2017). Rebels will follow this leader and remain loyal even when they are not paid and suffer from hunger, disease, sleep deprivation, or face intense combat. In contrast, rebel leaders with service in the state military might be perceived as not wholly belonging to the group.

I therefore expect that the prior military training of rebel leaders in non-state armed groups generally contributes to the continuation of conflict because, first, having had that

experience helps them build strong and flexible insurgencies that are difficult to defeat. Second, their training leads them to identify with fellow rebels and believe in the social or political purposes of the struggle, making it less likely that these leaders will accept anything other than victory. Third, their followers have a high degree of confidence in their leadership qualities, which spurs the former to continue fighting.

> **Hypothesis 1a**: Civil wars are less likely to end when a rebel leader is in charge who received military training in a non-state armed group as compared with one who had no military training.
>
> **Hypothesis 1b:** Civil wars are less likely to end when a rebel leader is in charge who received military training in a non-state armed group as compared with one who received training in a state military.

In line with this, if the prior military training of rebel leaders leads to prolonged conflict then the chances of a successful insurgency defeating the incumbent government may also be higher. As mentioned, Museveni—who had received military training with the FRELIMO—used a military strategy that ultimately led to the success of his rebellion in 1986. As early as 1981, Museveni wrote an article about lessons taken from his time in Mozambique: namely that the strategy of pursuing a protracted people's war had been used with great success in other countries (Museveni, 1981). Rebel leaders with military training might struggle less with leading strong and flexible insurgencies in comparison with peers with no military experience. Additionally, they might benefit from higher levels of group cohesion and loyalty than those who trained in a state army, increasing their chances of leading a united group to victory.

Conversely, governments should expect that it will be difficult to win outright or force rebels to scale back their activities when the latter's leaders are used to hardship and convinced that they are fighting for the survival of their group and for a higher purpose. For instance, the head of Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), Hasan di Tiro, managed to create a rebel group that was prepared to fight indefinitely for the independence of Aceh from Indonesia. Rebel leaders who have received formal training can teach their followers where to hide and how to survive with few resources. Moreover, if the rebels have demonstrated that they are capable of conducting military operations over a large geographic area then the chances of government-favourable outcomes are rather slim (Greig et al., 2018). Hence, rebels leaders' military training should significantly reduce the chances

that governments triumph in intrastate conflicts. I formulate the expectations on conflict outcomes below:

> **Hypothesis 2a**: Civil wars are more likely to end in rebel victories when those in question have a leader in charge who underwent military training in a non-state armed group as compared to when they have one in charge who had no training or who trained in a state military.
>
> **Hypothesis 2b**: Civil wars are less likely to end in government-favourable outcomes when a rebel leader is in charge who underwent military training in a non-state armed group as compared with one who had no training or who trained in a state military.

A caveat here might be that military training could be endogenous to the leadership selection process, meaning that rebel leaders who prefer conflict are also the ones who choose movements or organizations in which they will have access to weapons and training. It is also likely that these individuals then become the leaders of their groups due to their toughness and combat expertise. However, studies on rebel socialization indicate there are no grounds to assume that combatants are inherently motivated by violence (Cantin, 2021). The potential role of military training should not be underestimated because rebel leaders who have undergone it will prolong a given conflict even when surrender or a peace agreement would be more feasible, due to the fact that they have been conditioned to persevere and socialized into continuing fighting.

Research design

To test the hypotheses developed above, I use data on rebel leaders in all instances of intrastate conflict termination between 1989 and 2015. The data hereon are drawn from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Conflict Termination Dataset (Kreutz, 2010). The UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset includes dyadic level data on the start dates, end dates, and outcomes of all intrastate conflicts in which at least 25 battle-related deaths occurred within a year of fighting. The unit of analysis is the civil conflict-year dyad meaning that each conflict between a state and a rebel group in a given year is coded separately.

To investigate whether the leaders' military experience influences the duration of conflict, I rely on the aforementioned RLCW Dataset (Doctor, 2020) and ROLE Database (Acosta et al., 2021). Both datasets do not include all rebel leaders until 2015. Missing

entries are identified through extensive research in multiple languages, utilizing newspaper articles, genealogical databases, and military archives. In most cases, identifying those who had the power to make decisions was uncomplicated. However, some coding decisions proved to be difficult when rebel groups split or merged. A full discussion of coding rules and sources is included in the Appendix. Based on this extensive research, 356 such rebel leaders were identified.[12]

To operationalize the primary independent variable, I define *military training* as that in a non-state armed group not part of a regular national military service. For example, the leader of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Uganda, known by his alias Jamil Mukulu, was trained by Al Qaeda in Sudan in the early 1990s and is coded as having had military training.[13] He joined the rebel movement National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) in 1995 before he became the leader of the ADF in 1996 (Prunier, 2004). In the coding process, rebel leaders' background had to be checked in detail because many call themselves "Colonel" or "General" without having actually ever served in a state military. Although military training is a constant variable, the frequency of leadership changes allows me to use it in a temporal way.[14]

To test H1a and H1b, I employ a Cox proportional hazard model and estimate the impact of military training on the duration of civil wars. Cox proportional hazard models were chosen for two reasons: first, given the hypotheses, the results must be interpreted relative to the baseline category (i.e. the war continues). Second, testing and correcting for nonproportionate hazards is straightforward in the Cox model (Brandt et al., 2008).

For H1a and H1b, two variables are created: a rebel leader's *military training* and *military service*. *Military training* takes a value of 1 if a rebel leader received training in military strategy and tactics from a non-state armed group and 0 otherwise. *Military service* is coded as 1 when the leader was trained in a state military first and 0 otherwise. Table 1 below shows that about 21–22 percent of the rebel leaders in question either received military training or underwent formation in a state military respectively. Some 57 percent of them did not receive any kind of military training. Most of the leaders without

[12] An overview of the rebel leaders with military training or with military service and descriptive statistics about the leaders without military training and about leaders with combat experience can be found in the Appendix. No female rebel leaders were found.

[13] All rebel leader names are aliases unless otherwise indicated.

[14] The number of leaders per rebel group indicates that under two-thirds of combatants experience no leadership change.

military training were, inter alia, activists, teachers, or politicians prior to becoming the heads of armed insurgencies (for detailed descriptive statistics, see the Appendix).

For H2a and H2b, I employ a competing risks model that allows for prediction of the relative risk of an event occurring versus a rival one. For the analyses, I first compete rebel victory and then government-favourable outcomes against other forms of conflict termination. Specifically, a conflict is coded as ending in a government-favourable outcome when the state defeats the rebel group through outright victory or when the insurgency ceases through a significant drop-off in activity (Greig et al., 2018; Keels et al., 2020). Ongoing conflicts past 2015 are censored.

Table 1. Rebel leaders between 1989 and 2015

Rebel leaders	N	Percentage of leaders
Military training	73	20.51
Military service	76	21.63
No military formation	201	56.46

Note: The military experience of six leaders could not be confirmed.

The analysis includes a battery of controls that have been shown to influence the duration of a conflict in the existing literature. First, I control for change in rebel leadership, as taken from Prorok (2018). *Leadership change* is coded as 1 if a handover of power indeed occurred in the year of the conflict. Research shows that leadership changes shorten the duration of conflict (Prorok, 2018; Tiernay, 2015). It is important to control for leadership change, furthermore, because a shift in level of military experience cannot occur without those with different biographical backgrounds taking the helm.[15] To isolate the effect of rebel leaders' military training, I control if the person in question is actually the top leader and does not share power with two or more individuals. *Rebel leader top leader* takes a value of 1 if power is shared and 0 otherwise (Acosta et al., 2021). Another control variable on the organizational level is *rebel group strength*. Consistent with previous research, I expect conflicts to end sooner when rebels are strong because those concerned are fighting a conventional war (Balcells and Kalyvas, 2014). I coded rebel group strength drawing on the Non-State Actors in a Civil War Dataset (Cunningham et al., 2013), with values ranging from 1 to 4 (rebels much weaker to rebels are much stronger relative to the government).

[15] Correlation matrix for Table 2 Model 2 is presented in the Appendix and indicates that the analyses are not affected by high collinearity among the independent variables.

Third, I control for the variable *external support*. This is coded as 1 if either side during the conflict receives explicit military support from a third-party state. These data are drawn from the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset. External support is expected to influence duration because it could either shorten the conflict by contributing to a stalemate or lengthen it by adding veto players to peace processes (Cunningham, 2010; Sawyer et al., 2017). Moreover, I also include a control for *conflict intensity* because conflicts with high mutually hurting stalemates are expected to end sooner (Zartman, 2001). Intensity takes a value of 1 when there are between 25 and 999 battle-related deaths and of 2 when there are at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in a given year.

Furthermore, drawing on the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset (Kreutz, 2010), I control for the topicality of the conflict—as such, whether it is a territorial dispute because these issues are known to last longer. *Territorial dispute* is coded as 1, conflicts about the government as 2, and conflicts in which both topicalities are present as 3. I also include a control for whether the conflict zone provides *access to lootable goods* (such as diamonds or drugs), coded as 1 if yes and 0 otherwise. It is expected that conflicts last longer when these resources can indeed be found in the conflict zone (Conrad et al., 2019). I also control for specific characteristics of the state, including *democracy* (Marshall et al., 2016), and *gross domestic product* per capita (Gleditsch, 2002). I assume that democracy and an increasing GDP both improve the likelihood of conflict termination (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009). Lastly, I include a control for the *number of ongoing conflicts in the state* (Kreutz, 2010). It can be expected that conflicts last longer when the state is confronted with multiple simultaneous insurgent groups (Akcinaroglu, 2012).[16]

While this statistical analysis is useful for elucidating broad patterns across countries, it has limited utility for specifying causal processes in more detail. With this latter aim in mind, and given the quantitative results are robust, I use the case of the FARC to complement the research design in a qualitative empirical discussion. The case study consists of interviews conducted therewith in December 2021, archival data, as well as secondary sources.[17]

[16] There are other control variables that could also be included in the analysis. As additional robustness checks, I ran models controlling for the effects of population size and army strength (troop size) as another proxy for government relative power and for the organizational size of the rebel group (Acosta, 2019). Results remain robust.

[17] Full transcripts of the interviews available on request.

Results and discussion

H1a and H1b are tested with a Cox model that estimates the time until an event's occurrence, in this case conflict termination, without assumptions about the shape of the baseline hazard. Hazard ratios are reported: values higher than 1 indicate that the variable increases the hazard of termination, whereas values lower than 1 indicate that the variable decreases the hazard of termination, meaning that conflicts tend to last longer when the risk of termination declines. Robust standard errors are clustered on the dyadic conflict episode. For this sample, the average duration of the intrastate conflict is roughly five years (5.6 years) with the maximum length 42 years. Violations of the proportional hazard assumption (PHA) were tested. No violations hereof were found in any of the models.[18]

I test H2a and H2b with a competing risks model that estimates the relative risk of an event occurring versus a rival outcome. Subhazard ratios are reported. If a rebel leader's military training increases group strength and cohesion, we should expect that a given civil war will not only be longer but also more likely to end in rebel victory and less so in government-favourable outcomes.

Results for Model 1 in Table 2 indicate that rebel leader's military training significantly increases the duration of civil wars (H1a). As predicted, conflicts involving a rebel leader who underwent military training being in power are less likely to terminate than those with people in charge who were not trained in this way at all. The hazard ratio of .670 indicates that moving from non-military trained rebel leaders to a military-trained leader decreases the likelihood of termination, on average, by about 33 percent relative to the baseline.

Model 2 tests if conflicts involving rebel leaders who were trained in a state military induce different expectations. As expected, the overall effect is motivated by rebels who received military training in a non-state armed group and not in a state military (H1b). Rebel leaders' military training significantly decreases the hazard of conflict termination, while their military service has no significant effect. This means that if someone who underwent non-state military training is in charge, civil wars tend to last around 1.7 years longer.

[18] Before testing the hypotheses, I used the Kaplan-Meier analysis to estimate the duration of conflict over time when rebel leaders with previous military training were in charge. Survival curves indicate that conflict termination becomes more probable when rebel leaders do not have military training (see the Appendix). The variable appears proportional.

Table 2. Cox proportional hazards results

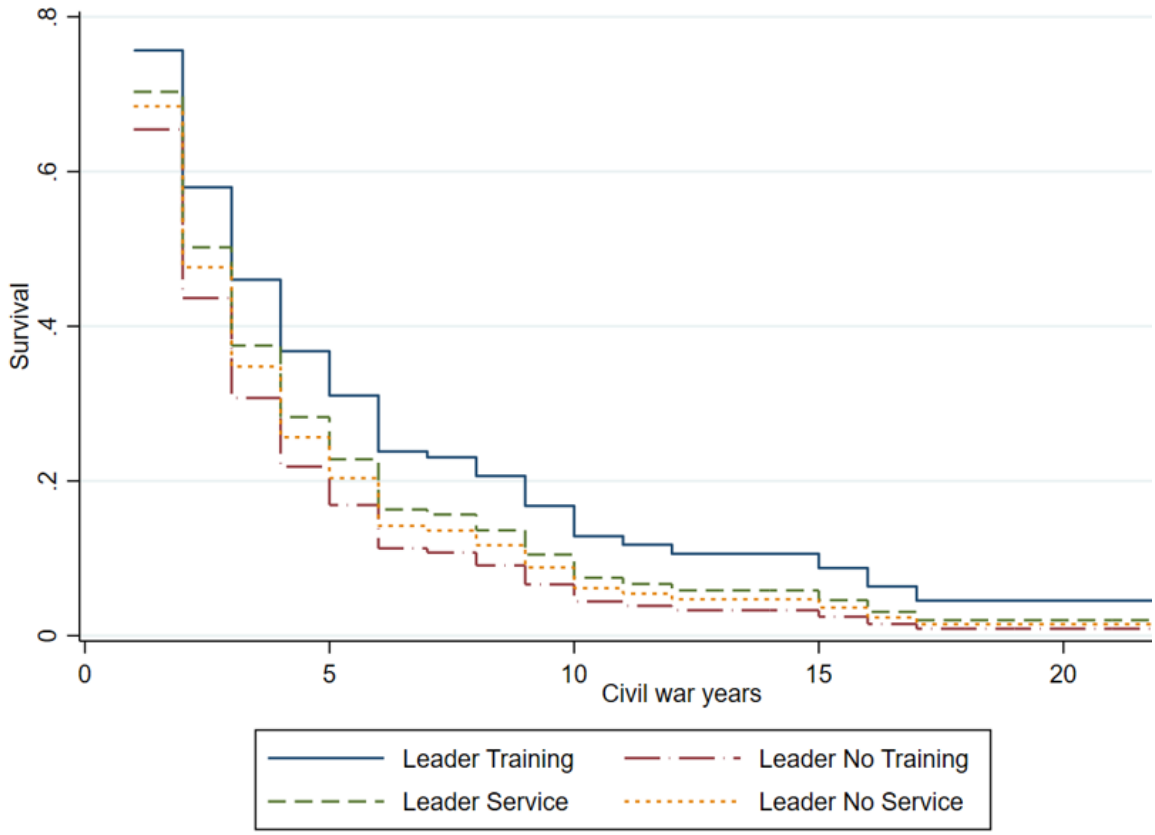
Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader military training	0.670*** (.10)	0.658*** (.10)
Rebel leader military service		0.929 (.15)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.566** (.29)	1.563** (.28)
Rebel leader top leader	1.256** (.12)	1.258** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.095 (.10)	1.100 (.11)
External support	1.308 (.23)	1.300 (.23)
Conflict intensity	0.487*** (.11)	0.488*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.402** (.23)	1.406** (.23)
Lootable goods	0.917 (.12)	0.916 (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.840*** (.04)	0.839*** (.04)
Democracy	1.263 (.26)	1.247 (.26)
Active dyads	1.131* (.07)	1.130* (.07)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-760.973	-769.910

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

To demonstrate the substantive impact of leaders' military training, Figure 1 graphs the predicted survival of civil wars in conflicts with leaders who underwent military training or received formation in a state army. This figure is based on Table 2, Model 2 above, and is calculated holding all control variables at mean. Steeper curves suggest a decreased civil war duration, indicating shorter conflicts. The survival curve illustrates the significant differences between the predicted continuance of civil wars when a rebel leader with military training or that in a national army and no such formation are in charge respectively. As suggested by the curve, conflicts seem to persist when the rebel leader underwent military training.

Results for the control variables largely confirm expectations. First, rebel leadership change indeed significantly increases the hazard of termination. If rebel leaders share power, the chances of conflict termination are also higher. Rebel group strength increases the hazard of termination as expected, though the effect is small and not statistically significant. External support significantly decreases conflict duration. Conflicts seeing many battle-related deaths significantly increase duration. The existence of lootable goods lengthens conflict, though not significantly. GDP per capita also significantly increases conflict duration. Finally, increasing the number of active conflict dyads in the country has a small positive effect on duration. Contrary to expectations, however, conflicts over territory end sooner than those involving no such disputes.

Figure 1. Risk of civil war termination



The second round of analysis uses competing risks models to estimate the relative risk of, one, rebel victory as compared to otherwise and, two, of government-favourable outcomes as opposed to the reverse. I calculate the subhazard ratio for *military training* to assess the marginal effects of the variables of interest. Similar to hazard ratios, values above 1 indicate a percentage increase in the predicted risk of an event occurring while values below 1 suggest a percentage decrease in the risk thereof.

The results for Table 3, Model 1 provide little support for H2a. Rather, they run contrary to the expectation that military-trained rebel leaders are more likely to lead successful armed insurgencies. An alternative explanation for this finding could be that military-trained rebel leaders are not necessarily more capable of organizing strong and flexible armed insurgencies with a high degree of group cohesion. However, they are overconfident in their ability to lead followers to victory regardless causing them to underestimate the enemy.

This could explain why Jonas Savimbi—the leader of União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), who was known as "Africa's most enduring bush

fighter"—was not capable of leading his group to victory.[19] Savimbi underestimated the regime's willingness to stay in power and failed to position UNITA as the natural political alternative to the Movimento Popular para Libertacão de Angola (MPLA). UNITA's relationship with the domestic population grew increasingly hostile, and victory became unattainable. Similar patterns could be observed for rebel leaders who received training in a state military. For example, Mobutu Sese Seko, President of Zaire from 1971 to 1997, took power in a coup d'état and was trained in the Force Publique in what is now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was convinced that his government would not be defeated by the Rwandan-backed rebels, despite early military losses.

Table 3. Competing risk models versus other termination types

Variable names	Model 1 Rebel victory outcome	Model 2 Government-favourable outcomes
Rebel leader military training	0.706 (.64)	0.557** (.15)
Rebel leader military service	0.490 (.51)	0.788 (.25)
Rebel leader leadership change	0.001*** (.01)	2.331** (.98)
Rebel leader top leader	0.852 (.64)	0.686* (.15)
Rebel strength	3.342 (3.27)	0.617** (.12)
External support	0.745 (.55)	1.137 (.41)
Conflict intensity	8.041*** (6.34)	0.169*** (.10)
Territorial dispute	0.333 (.36)	1.171 (.25)
Lootable goods	2.914 (3.52)	0.909 (.18)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.610** (.12)	0.951 (.06)
Democracy	3.740** (2.45)	0.952 (.26)
Active dyads	1.102 (.49)	0.913 (.09)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-34.683	-392.797

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

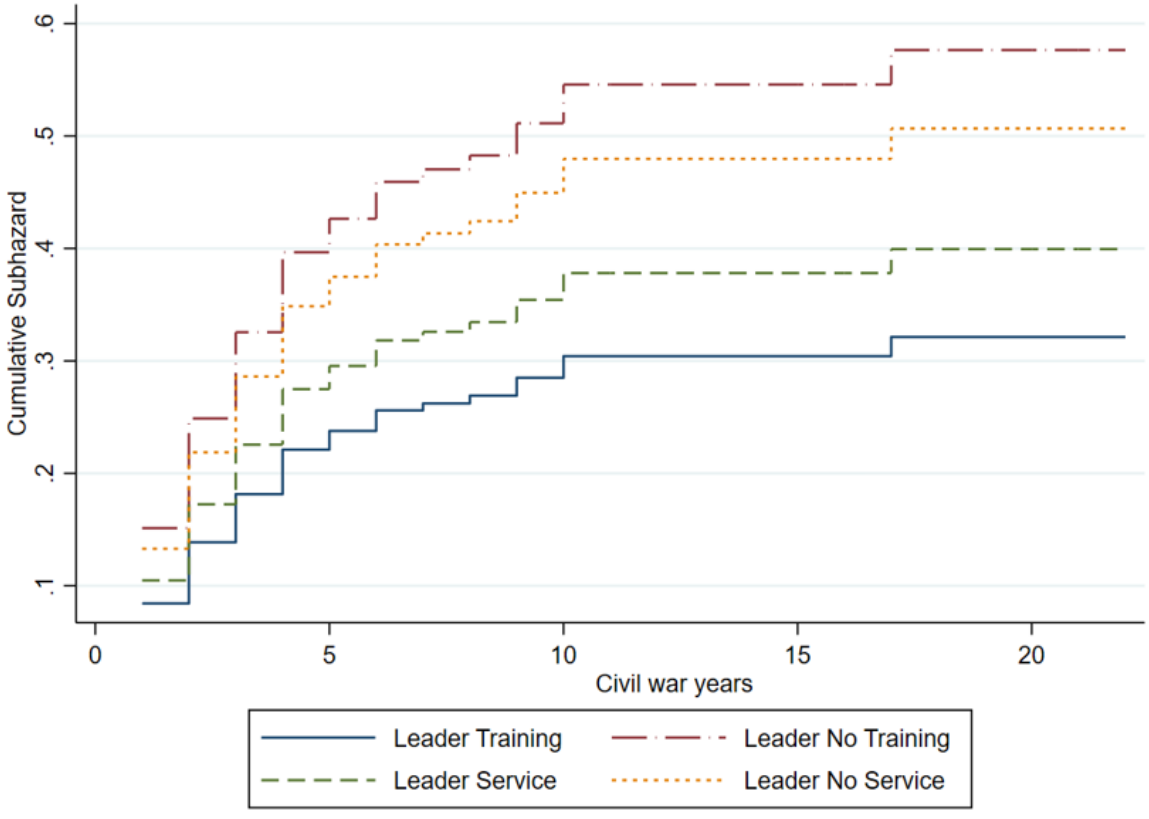
The results from Table 3, Model 2 above suggest that government-favourable outcomes are 45 percent less likely when rebel leaders who received military training are in charge as compared with ones who had no training or those who trained / did not train in a state military. To further illustrate this finding, Figure 2 below shows the cumulative hazard of government-favourable outcomes for each variable. Specifically, over time steeper curves suggest governments can expect victory or that the rebel group ceases to exist when the leader(s) in charge received no military training. When rebel leaders did receive such

[19] Christopher S. Wren, 30 September 1991, "Ex-Rebel Leader Returns to Luanda", The New York Times. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/1991/09/30/world/ex-rebel-leader-returns-to-luanda.html (accessed 8 August 2022).

training, government-favourable outcomes are unlikely. For instance, the Philippine government frequently tried to dismantle the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) but its leader, Hashim Salamat (1939–2003), had no interest in giving up unless a peace agreement was reached.

The control variables are also illustrative. Governments are less likely to win or to be able to force rebel groups to curtail their activities if the latter are particularly strong and/or the conflict is intense. There is also some support (although the effects are statistically weak) for the idea that government-favourable outcomes are less likely when the rebel leader in charge shares power with one or more other individuals. Interestingly, results indicate that a change in rebel leadership may be an opportunity to achieve an outcome favourable to the government.

Figure 2. Risk of government-favorable outcomes versus other termination outcomes



The results presented above provide strong initial support for Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 2b. Civil wars featuring rebel leaders who received military training in a non-state armed group are less likely to end. Chances are also lower here that a government either wins outright or forces the rebel group to scale back its actions.

Below, several robustness checks are discussed that provide additional support for the main findings. The results for these additional models are presented in the Appendix. First, it may be the case that rebel leaders' military experience is not randomly distributed through the sample of intrastate conflicts. In other words, the results may be biased by underlying selection effects. As such, rebel groups might prefer leaders with combat experience, and this is more frequently found among those who were trained in non-state armed groups. To address this possible shortcoming, I estimate an additional model accounting for any potential bias through the inclusion of leaders with combat experience. Military-trained rebel leaders with combat experience have a significant negative effect on conflict duration, while military-trained ones without such experience are not influential in this regard. However, combat experience alone has no impact on the duration of civil conflicts, and the effect of military-trained rebel leaders having such a history is not stronger than in the initial results.

There may also be other key factors that shape the effects of rebel leaders' training. For instance, if they were trained abroad, as highlighted in Huang et al. (2021), or whether they received military training from those themselves once successful rebels, as posited by Keels et al. (2020). I therefore run additional analyses where I include whether the rebel leader received military training abroad or if the group was trained by former successful rebels. Initial results remain the same if military training is specified. This may be the case because the dataset starts at the end of the Cold War, when many governments reduced the use of training as a foreign policy tool.

Rebel leaders' willingness to stay in a conflict may be significantly influenced by their agency within it. Hence, I replicate Prorok's (2018) results by including the rebel leaders responsible for a given conflict. The findings are consistent with the main analysis. Rebel leaders might also be influenced by their previous careers (teachers, religious leaders, politicians, and similar), as suggested by Huang et al. (2021). Results remain the same; however, future studies should examine further how military training interacts with prior occupations.

Leaders' military training may be driven, in part, by coups d'état (Thyne, 2017). To account for this, I ran an additional model excluding coups as their dynamics could be different to those of most civil wars. The results remain robust with this different model specification, suggesting the effects of leaders' military training are not conditional on coups dynamics.

Civil wars might be prolonged by both government and rebel leaders having received military training. I reestimate the model with the inclusion of government leaders and also explore possible cases with two military-trained adversaries going up against one another (e.g. José Eduardo Dos Santos, President of Angola, versus Savimbi).[20] Results suggest that state leaders receiving military training does not influence conflict duration. When military-trained leaders go head to head, this does not give either side an advantage when seeking to counter the actions of their rival and hence regarding premature victory.

As part of an additional analysis, I also reestimated the competing risk model of conflict outcome with regard to other dependent variables. Results show that military training does not affect the likelihood of rebel-favourable outcomes when operationalized as in Greig et al. (2018) and Keels et al. (2020). I also tested if government victory become less likely with military-trained rebel leaders in place. Taken together, these additional analyses and robustness checks provide substantial additional support for the main findings concerning rebel leaders' military training.

Empirical discussion: The case of the FARC leaders

The results above clearly show that civil wars last longer when the rebel leader(s) in charge received military training. I specify this causal process in more detail through a discussion of the FARC. This case is chosen because the conflict between the Colombian government and the FARC was one of the longest-lasting civil wars to date worldwide. The main objective is to describe the peculiarities of the military training FARC leaders received and to discuss how exactly this type of formation contributed to prolonging the conflict.

In general, training consisted of political and military formation of a month and a half or two months under the FARC's auspices. During the political formation, rebels had to learn the theoretical conceptions of war from the classics—from Clausewitz, Marx, Engels, Mao, to Bolívar. In particular, they analysed how guerrillas and partisans moved clandestinely during the Second World War. The military formation, meanwhile, consisted of

[20] This is based on the Leader Experience and Attribute Descriptions (LEAD) Dataset (Ellis et al., 2015). The state leadership change variable is taken from Prorok (2018).

basic related training; however, there was also special instruction for squadron commanders or training sessions focused on intelligence, explosives, as well as cartography (Pécaut, 2008).

The FARC's last commander-in-chief, Timochenko, was trained as a guard and nurse for Jacobo Arenas—who was the ideological figurehead of as well as an operations leader in the FARC. Timochenko also went through a mobile training school for leadership with Manuel Marulanda, founder of the FARC, which lasted about three or four years. In 2011, Timochenko became the FARC's main rebel leader because he had the longest track record, having received military leadership training from the group's founding fathers.

Taking a closer look at the training that Timoshenko received, it becomes clear that it taught him and those who preceded him how to build strong and flexible armed insurgencies. Timoshenko became known for his creativity in forming and leading the so-called Magdalena medio, which became one of the FARC's most successful insurgent blocs. In it, Timoshenko proposed to fight in very small units, then concentrate, act at once, before dispersing. These decisions gave Timoshenko the reputation of intelligent leadership and earned him the trust of fellow combatants.

His military training also had a strong impact on his perceptions and beliefs. He described how he was impressed by fellow combatants managing to endure hardship:

> In the middle of the mountain and in the midst of the difficulties we went through, we went hungry and [saw] the sacrifice, the physical effort, and everything for the group. That had a very big impact on me. (Interview, 2021)

Timoshenko emphasized that rebels had to contend with hunger, illness, injury, aerial bombardment, a lack of shelter, separation from their families, as well as harsh physical training.

Simultaneously, these hardships reinforced his attachment to the group. All FARC leaders were strong ideologues who had the political will and conviction that they were fighting for the right cause (Chernick, 2017; Pécaut, 2008: 67). As such, Pastor Alape, member of the Higher Command of the FARC, claimed that the training and living conditions encountered are what shaped his sense of belonging to the guerrilla group:

> We created a kind of closed community in which money did not circulate and other kinds of values were generated. In the midst of combat and the harshness of guerrilla life, camaraderie and comradeship emerged. (Interview, 2021)

These statements show that FARC leaders had developed strong levels of identification with the group they trained and fought with.

According to Timoshenko, the leaders who preceded him preferred the status quo—that is, the continuation of the conflict—rather than risk the future of their followers by entering into peace negotiations or capitulating. This might, inter alia, explain why every Colombian president from 1978 onward initiated a peace process with the FARC yet failed regardless. It is likely Timoshenko, too, would have continued the conflict because he was trained to persevere and socialized into continuing fighting. However, under President Álvaro Uribe (2002–2010) many circumstances around Colombia's conflict changed—most importantly the weakening of the FARC in combination with the strengthening of the national armed forces.

The turning point took place around 2008 when investment in military intelligence and the army proved its worth (Pécaut, 2008: 114). The FARC not only suffered from a decrease in manpower but also from reduced financial income. Additionally, their communication channels and leadership structures were debilitated. "Plan Colombia" fulfilled its main goal: reducing the FARC's strength via effective military strategy and by attacking its main source of revenue, the cocaine industry. By 2008, coca cultivation had decreased significantly as a result of aerial eradication (Chernick, 2017: 209–210). These circumstances left the FARC with little choice but to disarm and later sign a peace agreement in 2016.

The case of the FARC highlights how important structural conditions are for conflict termination. However, leadership factors are equally relevant. While the FARC was strong its leaders were the ones who perpetuated the conflict, because they simply did not want to surrender. Therefore, one should not underestimate how the socialization of rebel leaders and the difficulties experienced during military training influence their subsequent decision-making.

Conclusion

This article has argued that military training significantly affects rebel leaders' attitudes towards terminating or continuing an ongoing conflict. For instance, structural conditions were in favour of conflict termination during the Eritrean War of Independence, yet Mengistu Mariam, who had received military training in Ethiopia, rejected negotiations with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) (Keller, 2011). By contrast, it was the suc-

cessor regime of Meles Zenawi, a politician with no military training, who signed the armistice with the EPLF and subsequently organized an independence referendum for Eritrea.

The empirical analyses provided strong support for rebel leaders with military training prolonging the duration of civil wars in contrast to the impact of those with no training or that in a state military. Additionally, government-favourable outcomes are less likely when rebel leaders who received military training are in charge as compared with those who had no military training (of whatever kind) or ones who trained in a state military. The results are robust to alternative measures for military training as well as structural conditions. In a qualitative section on FARC leaders and their military training, I discussed how military training makes rebel leaders more perseverant, leading to longer conflict duration.

This research carries a number of implications. It demonstrates that theories of civil war dynamics should consider rebel leaders' military past as a factor in conflict duration. Future studies on civil war outcomes should include leaders as independent actors who can prolong or shorten a conflict in ways different to those predicted by existing structural theories. Policymakers can also gain from the insights generated here. When seeking to better understand conflicts and contemplating how to solve them, mediators and politicians should take rebel leaders' profiles and backgrounds more seriously.

Future studies could explore whether the relevance of military training changes over time. Whether the length and quality of the military training that rebel leaders received are important also deserves further study. Future contributions should also seek to investigate how rebel leaders' other experiences – that is, nonmilitary ones – affect conflict duration: for example, which previous occupations in combination with military experience trigger certain behaviours during wartime. It might also be interesting to take a closer look at rebel leaders who switched sides from a national army to a non-state armed group, and the effects thereof. The influence of rebel leaders may also depend on more collective elements of leadership that could be given due consideration in future studies. Extending these endeavours to the dyadic level (military training aside) could reveal how the life histories of rebels and leaders interact, how they view each other through the lens of those formative experiences, as well as how they subsequently assess their adversaries as a result.

On the effect of leaders' military training, more work is needed to understand how previous experiences cause certain perceptions and beliefs (Horowitz and Fuhrmann, 2018). It is, for example, currently not known whether military training increases the propensity for violence. Whether such training actually produces a form of hubris that causes rebel leaders to continue fighting even when they are much weaker than the enemy also remains a research lacuna.

Ultimately, this article has suggested that the trajectory of civil war is not only affected by factors such as the strength of combatants and economic conditions but is also significantly influenced by the past military experience of the rebel leaders involved.

2.4 How Leaders' Prior Combat Experience Influences the Likelihood of Peace Agreements in Civil Conflicts

Abstract: In civil wars, leaders, not states, sign peace agreements. I theorize that the prior combat experience of a leader is an important life experience with direct relevance for how leaders evaluate peace agreements. Using a nested research design, I run a competing risks model analysis of the outcome of all intrastate conflicts from 1989 to 2015 to estimate whether the relative 'risk' of peace agreement compared to a non-peace conflict outcome is influenced by leaders' prior combat experience. I supplement these with qualitative case studies of leaders with combat experience in Indonesia and Colombia who either signed or rejected peace agreements. Results show that the state leaders most likely to sign peace agreements are those with combat experience. The statistical results were not entirely robust to rebel leaders' combat experience, but the case study showed how combat experience can be a key driver in strengthening the ideological beliefs in the use of force as a just measure to achieve political aims.

After more than 30 years of conflict, the Indonesian government and the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) signed a peace agreement in 2005. The two leaders involved recognized that an agreement was the most viable solution to the conflict's stalemate. Both leaders had experienced combat: GAM's leader Hasan di Tiro was severely injured during an attack in 1977, and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was an army general directly involved in the occupation of Timor-Leste. In a series of interviews, Yudhoyono explicitly suggested that his combat experience gave him wisdom to understand that ending the conflict in Aceh, not military operations, was the objective.

In research within psychology and sociology, it is a key assumption that combat experience shapes an individual's future behaviours. However, most studies in peace and conflict have sought to explain why some conflicts are solved and others remain intractable by focusing on institutions and commitment barriers (Fearon, 2004; Thyne, 2012). Despite stalemates and institutional support, we witness that some leaders do not sign a peace agreement. This article focuses on a particularly salient life experience (Lupton, 2022) combat experience of rebel and state leaders—to explain the likelihood of these leaders signing peace agreements.

Seminal work suggests that state leaders' combat exposure reduces motivation to initiate international conflicts but also engenders a resolve to preserve the status quo once conflict occurs (Horowitz, Stam & Ellis, 2015; Blair & Horowitz, 2021). At the same time, combat-experienced state leaders might face fewer domestic punishment than

doves when they want to reconcile with international adversaries (Schultz, 2005; Mattes & Weeks, 2019). For ex-combatants, combat experience seems to reduce support for negotiated compromise (Grossman, Manekin & Miodownik, 2015). Among civilians, exposure to violence increases support for peace agreements (Tellez, 2019). Both rebel leaders and ex-combatants with prior combat experience have high organizational skills (Jha & Wilkinson, 2012; Doctor, 2021) but much heterogeneity exists in terms of whether combat experience fosters hawkishness and aggression and reduces intentions and behavior toward peace.

Building on these seemingly contradictory findings on leaders, civilians, and ex-combatants, I propose that one element of facilitating and hampering peace agreements is leaders' former combat experience: I theorize that the most peace-prone state leaders should be those with combat experience, because they are sensitive to human and economic losses and know that the public will punish leaders for those losses, two, they anticipate less rejection from their followers for their peace endeavours because of their reputation as battle-hardened.[21]

In contrast, rebel leaders' combat experience should be detrimental to peace agreements, assuming the following: First, battle-hardened rebel leaders are also sensitive to human losses, but this rather causes them to develop stronger beliefs in the use of force as a result of the fighting and their combatant socialization. Second, peace agreements are not beneficial for rebel leaders who were involved in actual fighting because they anticipate more punishment from external audiences for the atrocities of war. Compared to state leaders, the public is unlikely to view a rebel leaders' combat experience as a virtue and is more likely to punish them for being active in combat.

To test these assertions, I use a nested research design. First, I employ a competing risks model of the outcome of all intrastate conflicts from 1989 to 2015 to estimate whether the relative likelihood of a peace agreement compared to a non-peace conflict outcome is influenced by leaders' combat experience. The results suggest that state leaders with prior combat experience are more likely than other leaders to end conflicts via peace agreements. By contrast, rebel leaders with combat experience are less likely to sign peace agreements. To understand why combat experience has contrasting effects

[21] Still, state leaders with combat experience are not exempt from risks when engaging in peace negotiations. As such, battle-hardened Israeli president Yitzhak Rabin, who was able to negotiate a (not lasting) peace agreement, was assassinated by an extremist who opposed the Oslo Accords.

among rebel and state leaders, I complement the findings with two qualitative case studies on two battle-hardened leaders with peace versus non-peace outcome: President Yudhoyono, who signed a peace agreement in 2005, and former rebel commander Nicolás Bautista, who rejected several peace attempts by the Colombian government.

This article contributes to a burgeoning research agenda that explores leaders' military experience but that has paid less attention to peace agreements. Counterintuitively, it underscores that combat experience can be both negative and rather productive for peaceful settlements. Additionally, most research on leaders, though useful, focuses on either state or rebel leaders, rather than systematically testing the impact of the counterparts across space and time. The focus on peace agreements allows for a deeper exploration of the risks leaders face when signing peace deals confirming empirically that state leaders benefit from their hawkish credentials when it comes to pursuing reconciliation. This has important policy implications for civil war peace processes, as mediators could be made aware that hawkish state leaders are suitable for negotiations.

Research on leaders and peace agreements

Understanding how civil wars end in peace agreements has long been of interest to political scientists. One of the key insights to emerge from the literature on negotiations is that civil wars can persist even if favourable conditions for peace exist (Walter, 2002; Powell, 2012; Thyne, 2012). However, research provides little insight into whether, and how, rebel and state leaders influence peace agreements, because it often treats leaders as unitary actors. From this perspective, all leaders should sign peace agreements when mutually detrimental stalemates or high costs of war exist (Zartman, 2001; Walch, 2016).

Literature that accounts for the influence of leaders on conflict outcomes often explores external factors and their effect on leadership tenure or survival. This literature convincingly shows that leadership changes due to new elections or a leader's death can be fruitful for civil war termination (Tiernay, 2015; Ryckman & Braithwaite, 2020). Similarly, leadership survival in post-conflict governments may be particularly buoyant (Meyer, 2021). Other quantitative studies have demonstrated that rebel and state leaders who are culpable for the conflict have high incentives to avoid punishment and, hence, prefer to prolong ongoing conflicts (Croco, 2015; Prorok, 2018).

As noted by Horowitz and Fuhrmann (2018), a focus on leader turnover tends to undervalue the specific role of individual leaders in creating and resolving conflict. Most individuals have had experiences that caused them to develop personal preferences or display characteristics that either oppose or favour accepting negotiated outcomes (Porat, Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2015). Hence, not all leaders bring to the table the same potential for peace agreements. Leaders who benefit economically from the conflict can be peace spoilers and will not sign peace agreements (Stedman, 1997; Svensson, 2007). Leaders can also be strong advocates for peace based on biographical experiences (Tappe Ortiz, 2020), traits, or attitudes (Lieberfeld, 2018; Arana Araya, 2020).

Taking leaders' preferences and characteristics into consideration, an increasing number of scholars has worked with leader-level factors to understand why state leaders might engage in militarized behavior instead of choosing talks (Saunders, 2016; Horowitz et al., 2018; Chaudhry, Karim & Scroggs, 2021). This literature consistently holds that particularly combat experience influences the way leaders evaluate the costs, benefits, and risks of armed conflict (Miller, 2020; Lupton, 2022).[22] There is also a burgeoning literature on rebel leaders' characteristics (Acosta, Huang & Silverman, online first) indicating that rebel leaders with experience abroad obtain more foreign support during conflict (Huang, Silverman & Acosta, 2021).

The literature on leaders' combat experience tends to disagree on what it leads to what expectations vis-à-vis armed conflict. The combat experience among Israeli soldiers reduced their support for peace (Grossman, Manekin & Miodownik, 2015), along with hardening attitudes in support of military action and increasing support for a punitive peace (Blair & Horowitz, 2021). Veterans who were exposed to severe combat trauma also express low levels of political trust (Usry, 2019), a key impediment to successful peace negotiations, and higher levels of revenge and anger (Holowka et al., 2012). Independent of actual exposure to combat, former or current members of the military are consistently more hawkish than civilians (Jost, Meshkin & Schub, 2022).

On the other hand, combat experience could make leaders more knowledgeable about the realities of military personnel, capacities, and armaments (Janowitz, 1960; Smith, 2006). Combat experience might lead to conservatism about the use of force; this might manifest in a desire for more arms and preparedness but not for actual conflict.

[22] Trauma and other mental health problems caused by exposure to combat should not be underestimated but are beyond the scope of this article.

Moreover, combat-experienced leaders might be more sensitive to the costs of conflict and its atrocities. Horowitz et al. (2015) show that leaders with combat experience initiated militarized disputes the least often. Additionally, state leaders with a reputation for hawkishness are better positioned domestically to initiate reconciliation than doves (Schultz, 2005; Mattes & Weeks, 2019). Also, civilians in conflict zones exhibit greater support for peace processes and are more willing to grant political concessions to armed groups (Tellez, 2019). Thus, combat experience could cause leaders to be more inclined towards peace agreements.

Studies specifically on rebel leaders have shown that their combat experience shapes their behavior in civil war dynamics, affecting how they arrange their groups into specialized military wings (Doctor, 2021), how they attempt to achieve their objectives (Doctor, 2020), and how they identify with their group (Hoover Green, 2018). However, there is much heterogeneity in how combat exposure causes violent attitudes and behavior, and how it affects the likelihood of peace agreements remains a salient question. While combat experience appears to be critical to conflict dynamics in civil wars, there have been contradictory findings on whether leaders with exposure to combat are beneficial or detrimental to peace agreements.

Combat experience and peace agreements

Sociological and psychological contributions strengthen the idea that individuals evaluate strategies and potential costs and benefits of their decisions based on lessons drawn from prior experiences (Caspi, Roberts & Shiner, 2005). Rebel and state leaders have had life experiences that have significant and persistent effects on their willingness to take risks and on their perceptions about their own efficacy, meaning their ability to achieve their goals (Horowitz, Stam & Ellis, 2015; Huang, Silverman & Acosta, 2021). If leaders underwent an impactful prior experience, they would believe they possessed a high level of expertise in that terrain, and this would reduce their self-doubt when deciding on the best course of action.

Of the many life experiences, one could choose from, there are several reasons why leaders' combat experience might matter for the likelihood of peace agreements. First, combat experience is known to have a direct influence on an individual's willingness to take risks (Britt, Adler & Castro, 2006). Peace agreements are often a risky endeavour to

end a conflict because leaders can lose their followers or even be physically threatened and punished for offering concessions. Second, someone who has fought a war and potentially experienced trauma as a result of combat might be the most suitable person to understand the atrocities of war and the necessity of ending conflict. Third, someone with combat experience might have the knowledge and expertise of military units, weapons, and attacks to rationally understand when a stalemate has been reached and political solutions should be sought. Fourth, a recent study reveals that the effects of military experience are not uniform— they are strongest for individuals who experienced combat meaning that combat experience is a crucial socializing experience (Lupton, 2022). Fifth, combat experience is biographical information that combatants almost certainly know about each other at the outset of leadership change (Miller, 2020). This knowledge could facilitate a state leader's prior assessment about a rebel leader's resolve and either reduce fears of being preyed upon in moments of uncertainty or increase concern about possible conflict escalation. For instance, battle-hardened state leaders might perceive, judge, and even trust rebel leaders in a different way than would state leaders who have had no direct experience with violence, simply because they share an experience of violence.

Combat experience means that leaders have witnessed comrades and enemy soldiers being wounded or even dying, and may have been wounded themselves. In the context of combat experience leaders have also witnessed, or been party to, hard and fast decisions. This could make them more confident and risk-accepting when faced with difficult decisions later in life (Killgore et al., 2008). Decisions for peace agreements are often risky because the outcomes are not certain. They also know how many weapons and other resources are needed to keep fighting. Given these high costs of war, these leaders may better understand that peace agreements are the best way to reduce human and material costs. Not just an awareness but a lived experience of the costs of conflict could make leaders cautious about making demands and open to offering concessions, which are key skills for successful peace offers (Horowitz, Stam & Ellis, 2015. However, combat experience also means that ex-combatants have learned through intense combatant socialization why enemies must be defeated by force. Conflictual intergroup contact could harden attitudes toward enemies and reduce support for peace agreements (Grossman, Manekin & Miodownik, 2015).

A theory that accounts for leaders' combat experience should consider that rebel and state leaders are very different. They might have experienced combat in similar ways;

however, they operate in fundamentally different institutional settings whether they rule in a political infrastructure or a military hierarchy (Clausewitz, 1832; Cohen, 2002). It is not easy for either side to sell peace agreements to their internal audiences, as peace initiatives are often seen as an admission of military weakness or incompetence in the context of war-related norms of masculinity (Duriesmith, 2016). I further assume that both are rationally interested in avoiding punishment from internal and external audiences (Croco, 2015; Prorok, 2018). Punishment can be loss of political power, but also exile, assassination, or imprisonment. Moreover, for both types of leaders it holds that their interests often differ from those of the groups they represent.

If state and rebel leaders want to avoid punishment, they will carefully weigh the costs and benefits of signing a peace agreement. A rebel leader's decision to engage in a peace agreement comes with greater risks than it does for heads of state, as rebel leaders are, on average, more vulnerable to punishment in a civil war than are state leaders (Prorok, 2018). Unlike state leaders, rebel leaders cannot rely upon laws to protect them from their fellow combatants, their opponents, or the public after signing a peace agreement. They may face tangible repercussions when they give up their arms and try to integrate into society. Peace agreements often include elements of transitional justice that might Despite the agreements, rebel leaders may be punished for their peace efforts not only with the loss of their political power, but also with their lives. Hence, a theory on combat experience should carefully distinguish between the two types of combatants.

State leaders' combat experience

I argue that conflicts with state leaders who experienced combat are more likely to end in peace agreements because they developed a cost sensitivity and hawkish credentials. I define cost sensitivity as a preference to avoid economic and human losses while a hawkish reputation is the credential that a leader earned in the public through prior combat experience.

First, combat-experienced state leaders are sensitive to losses and prefer to sign a peace agreement rather than defeat the enemy because they have experienced battles themselves and know how painful the loss of comrades-in-arms is, and second, because voters punish political leaders for losses, especially human losses, in military operations (Gelpi, Feaver & Reifler, 2006). State leaders with combat experience have a dual reason

to reduce casualties quickly, and peace agreements are one way to immediately reduce loss of life. Additionally, peace agreements might be a cheaper option than military victories. State leaders with combat experience are more aware of limited budgets and the economic consequences of war, and may worry that their political survival depends on their performance in the area of economic growth (Brender & Drazen, 2008). This could lead them to focus more on the cost of conflict than on the enemy per se in their attempts to sell peace agreements to their constituents. By comparison, state leaders without combat experience might not understand how costly conflict is because they do not feel a double sensitivity to casualties and do not understand the economic costs of conflict.

Second, state leaders are often aware that signing peace agreements comes with the loss of supporters, because domestic audiences often perceive peace deals as a defeat (Schultz, 2005). Heads of state with combat experience can rely on more public support for their peace efforts than dovish leaders, as voters prefer the judgment of battle-hardened military leaders to lead the country in times of conflict, such as Churchill and De Gaulle in World War II (Mattes & Weeks, 2019). Hence, combat-experienced state leaders can anticipate less public rejection for their decisions. By contrast, state leaders without combat experience will not risk engaging in a peace policy with an unknown outcome out of fear of public punishment.

I therefore expect that combat-experienced state leaders are more likely to sign peace agreements. First, having had that experience makes them more aware of human and economic losses and public punishment for these losses. Second, their combat experience makes them less vulnerable to public judgment, which allows them to anticipate more support for peace endeavours. Letting the conflict fizzle out is less attractive to battle-hardened state leaders because they do not fear the commitment problems attached to signing peace agreements and they will prefer to reduce economic and human costs as quickly as possible to secure public approval.

> **Hypothesis 1**: A state leader with combat experience should be more likely to sign peace agreements than one without combat experience.

Rebel leaders' combat experience

I argue that conflicts with rebel leaders who experienced combat are less likely to end in peace agreements because they developed a cost sensitivity that strengthened their ideological convictions to fight for victory or at least the continuation of conflict. In comparison to state leaders, their hawkish credentials give them less confidence that followers and the public will accept their peace endeavours.

First, combat-experienced rebel leaders develop a casualty sensitivity similar to that of state leaders. However, this experience causes them to fight for victory or the continuation of conflict because their combat experience is likely accompanied by intense combatant socialization characterized by harsh living and fighting conditions that creates a high identification with the group (Linebarger, 2016; Hoover Green, 2018). Shared suffering during combat and fighting in small units with fewer hierarchies and few or no codes of conduct reinforces this group identification and their ideological conviction that victory is the only acceptable goal. As such, battle-hardened rebel leader Benito Tiamzon is still a hardliner vis-à-vis peace talks with the Philippine government. Additionally, rebel leaders' combat experience in non-state armed groups often entails a specific dynamic: rebels fight the government, while governments are usually attacked. Rebels are probably painfully aware of who the enemies are and why the use of force is the right means to defeat them. It remains doubtful that rebel leaders who believe that the use of force is just and that their group must fight the adversary will risk signing peace agreements. In comparison, rebel leaders with no combat experience or rebels who experienced combat as part of the state military have a less salient combatant socialization.

Second, rebel leaders with combat experience risk more punishment from external audiences, meaning outside of their rebel group, because leaders who actually engaged in fighting are held more accountable by the public than rebel leaders who mostly delegated. For battle-hardened rebel leaders, peace agreements are not necessarily the most viable option, as rebel leaders anticipate public rejection for their combat activities, which might lead to their assassination or at least imprisonment. For instance, FARC leaders had a very bad reputation in Colombian society. After signing the Uribe Accords with the Colombian government in 1985, many FARC leaders were disappeared and assassinated by the Colombian army, right-wing paramilitaries, and drug gangs. By contrast, rebel leaders with

combat experience in a state military can expect less punishment from external audiences, as they used legitimate violence as part of state monopoly.[23]

I therefore theorize that rebel leaders' combat experience lessens the likelihood that a peace agreement will be signed for the following three reasons: one, their combat experience makes them more aware of human losses but since this experience is connected with an intense combatant socialization, they become more convinced that victory is the only path to be taken, two, because external audiences punish rebel leaders with combat experience more than rebel leaders with "cleaner" records.

> **Hypothesis 2**: A rebel leader with combat experience should be less likely to sign peace agreements than one without combat experience.

A caveat here is that combat experience could be endogenous to the leadership selection process, meaning that individuals who have combat experience are also the ones who will become leaders in civil wars due to their perceived toughness. However, studies on rebel leader selection indicate that rebel groups mostly choose the rebel who founded the group or select among those with the most years in the group (Cunningham & Sawyer, 2019). Studies on state leaders show that leader effects persist even after accounting for the possibility of selection (Horowitz & Stam, 2014). Endogeneity tests from Tiernay (2015) and Ryckman and Braithwaite (2020), among others, indicate that leadership changes can be considered exogenous in civil wars. Hence, the potential role of combat experience should not be underestimated.

Research design

Having introduced the theoretical argument and empirical expectations, the first step is to carry out a statistical analysis to determine whether leaders' combat experience matters for peace agreements. In order to test the hypotheses developed above, I use data on state and rebel leaders in all instances of intrastate conflict termination between 1989 and 2015. The data on intrastate conflicts are drawn from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Conflict Termination Dataset (Kreutz, 2010). Specifically, the UCDP Conflict

[23] For rebel leaders, the risk of being punished is not likely to be reduced by their combat experience, as fellow combatants are often battle-hardened themselves. Combat-experienced Mélida Anaya Montes, for example, the second-in-command of the Fuerzas Populares de Liberación Farabundo Martí (FPL), was killed by her own comrades in 1983 after suggesting making peace with the Salvadoran government.

Termination Dataset includes dyadic-level data on the start dates, end dates, and outcomes of all intrastate conflicts in which at least 25 battle-related deaths occurred within a year of fighting. The unit of analysis is the civil conflict-year dyad.

I focus on leaders' impact on peace agreements in civil conflict terminations for several reasons: Peace processes are often elite-driven, and leaders are often responsible for the final decisions. Voters most commonly attribute failed negotiations and protracted conflicts to leaders' mistakes. Peace agreements have become the most common path to resolve conflict since the end of the Cold War. In the time period of this study, there were a total of 242 conflict episodes, including 60 that ended via a peace agreement.[24]

To test whether leaders' combat experience influences the likelihood of peaceful solutions to armed conflicts, I rely on both the Leader Experience and Attribute Descriptions Dataset (LEAD), which provides data on heads of state (Ellis, Horowitz & Stam, 2015) and two datasets on rebel leaders, the Rebel Leaders in Civil War Dataset (RLCW) (Doctor, 2020) and the Rebel Organization Leaders (ROLE) Database (Acosta, Huang & Silverman, online first). Some state leaders are additionally identified using the ARCHIGOS data set (Goemans, Gleditsch & Chiozza, 2009). Leaders missing from these databases are identified through extensive research in multiple languages utilizing newspaper articles, genealogical databases, and military archives. A full discussion of coding rules and sources is included in the Appendix.

Table 1. Rebel and state leaders' combat experience between 1989 and 2015

Leaders		N	Percentage of leaders
State leaders	207		
State leaders no combat experience		155	74.88
State leaders combat experience			
	in a rebel group	5	2.42
	in a state military	47	22.71
Rebel leaders	356		
Rebel leaders no combat experience		161	45.22
Rebel leaders combat experience			
	in a rebel group	127	35.67
	in a state military	62	17.42

Note: Combat experience could not be verified for six of the rebel leaders.

[24] In total, 60 conflicts ended in a ceasefire, 51 in government victory, and 22 in rebel victory.

Based upon extensive research, 563 civil war leaders were identified, including 207 state and 356 rebel leaders.[25] No female leader was engaged in a peace agreement between 1989 and 2015.[26] Taken together, the final data set includes information on the identity of all leaders. 75% of all state leaders and 45% of all rebel leaders had no combat experience (see Table I).[27] Combat experience is coded as 1 if the leader was deployed to a combat zone prior to becoming a leader, and 0 otherwise.[28] Based on the LEAD and ROLE datasets combat experience is 1 if there is evidence that the leader fought with an army or a group, the leader was a rank-and-file member of a rebel, insurgent, or terrorist group in an active warzone and or the leader was a rank-and-file soldier deployed to an active warzone. To understand how combat experience affects the likelihood of peace agreement, I apply a competing risks model, estimating the relative risk of a peace agreement as compared to all other civil war outcomes. Results indicate the probability of experiencing a peace agreement at any point in time.

The statistical analysis includes a battery of controls on the adversaries, external actors, and the conflict environment, which have been shown to influence the outcome of civil conflicts. First, I control for *rebel-/ and state-leader leadership changes* (Prorok, 2018; Ryckman & Braithwaite, 2020). To isolate the effect of rebel leaders' combat experience, I further control for *rebel leader top leader*—meaning, whether the person in question is actually the top leader and does not share power with one or more individuals (Acosta, Huang & Silverman, online first). I also control for *foreign state support* (Cunningham, 2010) and *foreign rebel support* (Huang, Silverman & Acosta, 2021). Second, several controls are added in the tradition of theories on the moment of ripeness (Zartman, 2001). As such, I control for *rebel strength* (Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan, 2013), *army size* (Mason & Fett, 1996), and *conflict intensity* (Kreutz, 2010). Drawing on the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset (Kreutz, 2010), I also control for the topicality of the conflict, *territorial dispute* (Tiernay, 2015), *active dyads*, and the *number of past negotiations*, assuming that many failed negotiations reduce the likelihood of reaching an agreement. Finally, I

[25] See Appendix for the names of all state leaders with combat experience who signed peace agreements and for rebel leaders with combat experience in ongoing conflicts in which negotiations failed.

[26] This indicates that, so far, women leaders were not more engaged in peace processes than their male counterparts.

[27] Further information on the previous professions of leaders with no combat experience can be found in the Appendix.

[28] This coding scheme was taken from the LEAD dataset and is consistent with the US military definition.

include other characteristics of the state, including *democracy* and *gross domestic product* (GDP) per capita (Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan, 2009).[29]

While this statistical analysis is useful for drawing out broad patterns across countries, it has limited utility for specifying causal processes in more detail. With this latter aim in mind, I turn to the qualitative part of the nested design. Since quantitative results are robust, the nested design is meant to reveal the mechanism between combat experience and peace agreements (Weller & Barnes, 2014). I focus on two cases: one with a peace agreement as the outcome and the other with a non-peace conflict outcome.

Results: Leaders who signed peace agreements

The analysis starts with the statistical analysis on combat experience for peace agreements and continues with the case studies. The competing risks model shows how leaders' combat experience shapes the probability of peace agreements made at a given time. Results of the analysis for Model 1, Table II indicate that state leaders with combat experience sign almost four times more peace agreements than state leaders without combat experience (Hypothesis 1). Mozambique's former president, Joaquim Chissano, for example, participated in the first offensives of the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) in northern Mozambique in 1964. After becoming president, he led negotiations with former rebels that ended 16 years of war in 1992. He described his combat experience making him more aware of the atrocities of war and said he understood that peace deals were inevitable (Chissano, 2012). If a rebel leader with prior combat experience is in charge, peace agreements are less likely to occur by around 60%, compared to rebel leaders without battlefield experience (Hypothesis 2).

[29] Correlation matrix for Model 1 is presented in the Appendix.

Table 2. Competing risks of a peace agreement versus other termination types

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
State leader combat experience	4.070* (2.35)	4.601** (2.61)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.395* (.16)	
Rebel leader combat X service		0.391 (0.30)
Rebel leader combat X training		1.452 (1.02)
State leader leadership change	0.900 (.49)	0.957 (.59)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.880 (.78)	2.135† (.98)
Rebel leader top leader	1.482 (.48)	1.664 (.61)
Foreign state support	2.699† (1.55)	2.661 (1.67)
Foreign rebel support	1.266 (.83)	1.300 (.75)
Rebel strength	1.519 (.71)	1.408 (.68)
Army size	0.346 (.24)	0.431 (.29)
Intensity	1.001 (.78)	0.708 (.64)
Territorial dispute	0.001** (.01)	0.001** (.01)
Active dyads	1.312 (.37)	1.196 (.32)
Number of past negotiations	1.364** (.12)	1.367** (.13)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.545** (.09)	0.444** (.09)
Democracy	0.936 (.76)	0.773 (.75)
Observations	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-60.907	-61.389

** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.1. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Model 2 further tests if rebel leaders who gained combat experience in a non-state armed group have a stronger negative impact on the likelihood of peace agreements than those who experienced combat in a state military. The observed negative influence of rebel leaders' combat experience is not due to the location where the combat experience took place.

Figure 1 charts the cumulative subhazard rate for Model 1. The lines show that the combat experience of state leaders has quite an opposite effect on the likelihood of peace agreements vis-à-vis the combat experience of rebel leaders. Within six years of fighting, the probability of peace agreements is roughly 20% when the state leader has combat experience. If the rebel leader has combat experience the likelihood of peace agreements is around 5%. The likelihood increases over time because early in intrastate wars, governments often feel little pressure to negotiate with rebel groups because they pose little immediate threat. Taken together, leaders' combat experience matters to peace agreements in opposite ways depending on whether the combat-experienced leader governs a government or a rebel group.

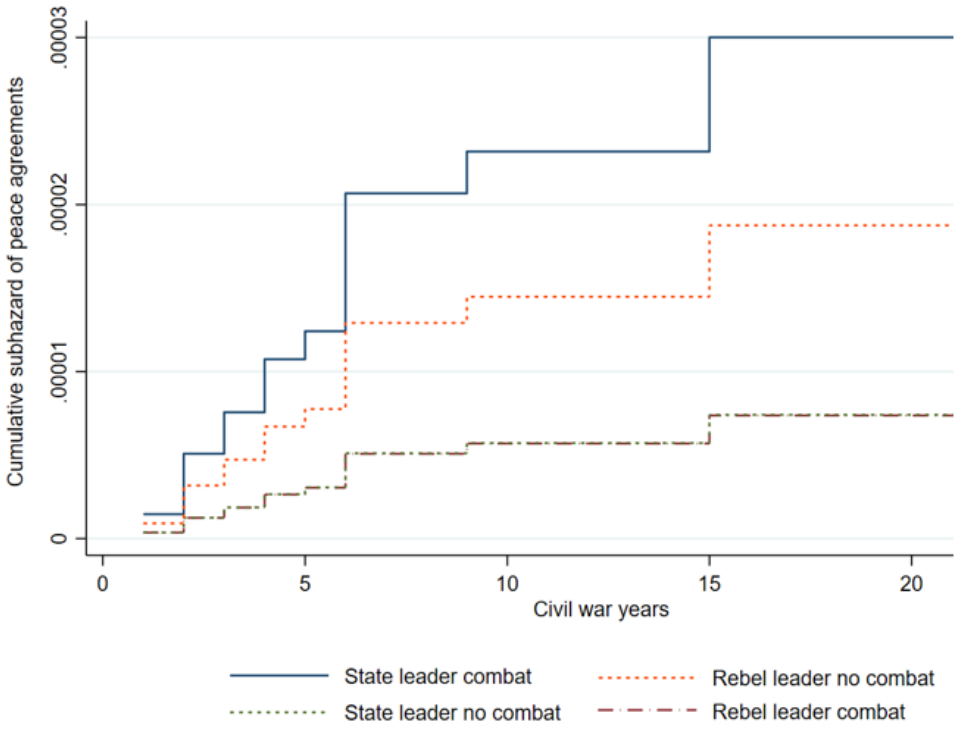


Figure 1. Cumulative subhazard of a peace agreement versus other termination types (model 1).

The results discussed above provide initial support for the article's hypotheses. Below, I discuss several robustness checks. These include the effect of different measures of combat experience, conflict outcomes, and different aspects of peace agreements. The results from these additional models are presented in the Appendix.

A first consideration is whether the measure 'combat experience' captures something different than just military service or participation in a rebel group (see Appendix Table 6). I already tested this for rebel leaders in Model 2 Table II, I have not done so for state leaders. Evidence suggests that the five state leaders who had their combat experience in a non-state armed group versus are 11 times more likely to sign peace agreements than leaders who experienced combat in a state military.[30] The existence of state leaders who were simply rebels prior to becoming heads of states does not affect the likelihood of peace agreements. On no combat experience but military service, results indicate that these state leaders are slightly less likely to sign peace agreements while the few rebel leaders who served in a state military and did not experience combat are significantly more likely to sign peace agreements.

[30] State leaders with combat experience in a rebel group: Ali Kafi, Pierre Nkurunziza, Joaquim Chissano, Daniel Ortega, and Nouri Abusahmain.

I also control for leader age, as older leaders may have had more time to experience combat (see Huang, Silverman & Acosta, 2021), however, results remain robust (Appendix Table 7). I also tested the expectation if conflicts end in peace agreements when non-responsible leaders who did not found the rebel group are in charge (Prorok, 2016). Rebel leaders' responsibility did not matter for the predicted risk of peace agreements, and the results are consistent with the main analysis (Appendix Table 8). These results are consistent with those of Ryckman and Braithwaite (2020).

Using a different dependent variable, I widened the variable to peace agreements and ceasefires. Results for state leaders remain robust, confirming the theoretical assumption that state leaders with combat experience are cost-sensitive and want to reduce human and economic losses quickly, regardless of peace agreements or ceasefires. However, rebels leaders' combat experience does not have a detrimental effect on these two types of settlement (Appendix Table 9). This confirms the expectation that combat-experienced rebel leaders in particular view a peace agreement, but not necessarily a ceasefire, as an unacceptable option in line with their convictions.

It was also tested whether combat experience matters for other conflict outcomes (Appendix Table 10). Evidence suggests that combat experience matters for a higher likelihood of neither state nor rebel victories. The results might further be driven by elements tied to coups because leaders might experience more battles in conflicts in which rebel groups have the power to overthrow the government. Primary results remain robust. I also ran separate models in which I specified the dispute type (territorial or governmental conflict). It turns out the effect of combat experience is limited to governmental conflicts suggesting that territorial conflicts follow a different logic (Appendix Table 11).

Next, I control for ideologies (Keels & Wiegand, 2020) because I theorized that, as rebel leaders with combat experience believe that the use of force is just, they do not sign peace agreements. I find that there is statistically significant support for the argument that contrasting ethnic ideologies reduce the likelihood of peace agreements. In conflicts with contrasting ethnic ideologies, rebel leaders having had combat experience means that peace agreements are less likely to occur by around 70% compared to when rebel leaders have no battlefield experience. In cases with contrasting religious ideologies, the main results remain robust, but the effect of rebel leaders' combat experience is smaller than in conflicts with contrasting ethnic ideologies (Appendix Table 12).

Finally, Appendix Table 13 indicates that leaders' combat experience continues to be relevant for peace agreements regardless of how long ago the last negotiations took place and whether negotiations took place at all. When external mediators attempt to resolve the conflict, as expected, the relevance of state leaders' combat experience remains robust. The combat experience of the head of state becomes more important when controlling for whether the peace agreements include strong concessions by the government to the rebel group. However, the negative effect of rebel leaders' combat experience does not hold when controlling for mediation and strong concessions.

Taken together, these additional analyses and robustness checks provide substantial additional support for the hypothesis around state leaders' combat experience and the likelihood of peace agreements in governmental conflicts and coups. However, the results are not entirely robust to rebel leaders' combat experience when conflicts are mediated or when negotiations have already occurred. Nevertheless, the difference between state and rebel leaders remains, suggesting that mediation and strong concessions can (partially) overcome rebel leaders' risk aversion and aversion to peace agreements.

Case selection

Having demonstrated that leaders' combat experience is an important factor in facilitating or hindering peace agreements, I still wondered why combat experience matters in opposite ways depending on the position of the leader. I chose two typical cases with the same independent variable but different outcomes (peace agreement versus non-peace outcome) to explore this mechanism.[31] In line with the results, one case is of a signing state leader and the second is of a non-signing rebel.

Since state leaders' combat experience mattered positively and rebel leaders' combat experience mattered negatively vis-à-vis peace agreements, the most influential state leaders on the outcome variable *peace agreements* were visualized first, followed by the most influential rebel leaders for *non-peace outcomes*. Then, the case study selection rationale was: Is the leader still alive? If yes, can he be interviewed, or are the security or other concerns too grave when conducting interviews with the subject? If an interview is

[31] Cases depend on reduced residuals (see Appendix) and on the feasibility of finding primary and secondary sources for the leaders involved.

not feasible, are there any official testimonies, interviews, or other sources that can be accessed to understand how combat experience mattered?

The guiding questions for the case studies are how leaders talk about their combat experience and how it relates to their (non-)signing of peace agreements. If they explain their (non-)signing otherwise, this is also explored. I particularly focus on interviews and self-written testimonies. The limits of this approach are that leaders tend to overestimate their rational thinking in retrospect, they are interested in presenting themselves in a positive light, and their statements might not be accurate or trustworthy. Nevertheless, studying leaders through personal testimonies sheds light on their decision making that statistics cannot detect.

The three most influential state leaders for the model with *peace agreement* as the outcome were: Burundi's former president Pierre Nkurunziza; former president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Joseph Kabila; and Indonesia's former president Yudhoyono. The first and second could not be selected due to difficulties accessing information about the respective leader. I chose Yudhoyono, known as the 'thinking general,' because an in-depth interview with him already existed and several other sources on his personal life and his decisions to sign a peace agreement in 2005 could be accessed. The most influential case in which a rebel leader did not sign a peace agreement is that of Nicolás Bautista, former commander of the ELN (National Liberation Army). Bautista rejected several peace attempts by the Colombian government. Interviews with Bautista and other secondary sources on his personal life were considered.

Case study: Bambang Yudhoyono

Before his political career, Yudhoyono enjoyed a decorated military career. Among other trainings, he attended the Ranger courses in the United States in 1975, where he learned how to engage the enemy in hand-to-hand combat and direct fire combat. Based on these experiences, he became a platoon commander in the occupation of Timor-Leste, during which he was actively involved in combat (Suryadinata, 2005). East Timor must have been a formative experience because the military misjudged the situation and became even more brutal and violent in order to achieve a military victory (Honna, 2003: 89–102). Later, Yudhoyono had several other military positions and, among other posts, served as a UN observer in Bosnia. To understand if his combat experience was instrumental in

making him a proponent of peace agreements, I consider interviews made by Yudhoyono and what the public, military elites, and GAM leaders thought about him in relation to his signing of the peace agreement.

In an interview from 2017, Yudhoyono described that much of his political decision-making was based on military reasoning. He mentioned that the military taught him to take the initiative, to persist, and to finish tasks: "We know that there are set of values that we adopted in the military arena, such as: can-do spirit, never give up, mission must be accomplished" (Yudhoyono, 2017: 1). Further, he learned that problems can be solved. He described how his combat experience made him understand that military operations are not the objective of a conflict:

> In my own experiences after around thirty years served in the military, I do believe in several things—among others, that peace is better than war. Combat experience made me aware. If we are talking about war, then there is war of choice, and war of necessity. It means we could choose whether we should go for war or not (Yudhoyono, 2017: 4).

This statement shows that Yudhoyono saw war only as an option to achieving peace. However, he also remained pragmatic and stated that if peace fails, a military solution is inevitable (Stange & Missbach, 2018: 236). Also pragmatic was his perception of the costs of conflict, as he understood that "there were too many victims on both sides. And it was expensive, costing us about $130 million per year in security operations" (Morfit, 2007: 125). When asked how his military experience interacted with the presidency, he explained that more concessions and discussion are needed to run the government than to command the army and succeed in military operations (Yudhoyono, 2017: 2).

Yudhoyono was not elected as president of Indonesia in 2004 for his combat experience. He won in a landslide victory because voters across political and demographic spectrums believed that the retired army general would improve their economic situation (Mujani & Liddle, 2010). He was also able to impress voters with his international experience and physical stature, as many Indonesians wanted their political leader to be as tall as other world leaders (Ziegenhain, 2009). At the beginning of his presidency, Yudhoyono enjoyed a reputation for decisiveness and authority because of his military experience and his willingness to reform the military's political role (Aspinall et al., 2015: 3–5). This may have made it easier to convince the public of the need for an agreement, as the public tends to reject peace initiatives from dovish, indecisive, and compromising political leaders (Mattes & Weeks, 2019), which is how Yudhoyono was seen toward the end of his presidency.

At the start, Yudhoyono and his vice president, Jusuf Kalla, brought expertise in peace negotiations, having negotiated secret peace deals with local elites in the Moluccas and Poso (Törnquist, Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 33). Yudhoyono had developed a reputation for supporting peace agreements while many other hardline military men rejected negotiated outcomes. When he became president, he had to deal with hardliners within the Indonesian National Military and GAM leaders who, from exile in Sweden, continued their struggle for an independent Aceh, righteous in their struggle and confident victory was attainable. Peace negotiations officially resumed after the 2004 tsunami, but secret talks had already taken place, and the disaster only reinforced the general consensus that peace must prevail in Aceh to facilitate reconstruction. Yudhoyono used this window of opportunity and, finally, representatives of the two parties signed a peace agreement to end the 30-year insurgency after only five months of negotiations.

Yudhoyono was known for his sharp intellect, strict discipline, and organisational capability, which were formed by his military experience. His support network in the military and in the elite circles of Jakarta described his leadership style as conciliant because he forged coalitions and organized broad majorities for his policies. They also perceived him as cautious, a person who weighed all the costs and benefits of a decision (Törnquist, Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 189). Most importantly in a country with much military influence, Yudhoyono could rely on the trust and loyalty of the military elites. He side-lined the most conservative elements in the armed forces and created a degree of effective authority over the military that made it possible to push for a peace agreement (Sebastian, 2007; Mietzner, 2008: 291–328). Still, Yudhoyono could have probably pushed for more reforms if he had been less hesitant and reluctant to face conflict (Jones, 2015).

On the other side, GAM leaders were pleased with the way Yudhoyono and Kalla demonstrated the political will to reach a settlement (Stange & Missbach, 2018). As early as 2002, GAM leaders supported the appointment of Yudhoyono as coordinating minister for political and security affairs because they perceived him as an architect of the military reforms (Morfit, 2007). Hence, GAM leaders had a positive image of Yudhoyono based on his past positions and political signals.

The case of Yudhoyono shows that military and combat experience are closely connected to perceptions of pragmatism, rationality, and respect, although it proved difficult to untangle combat experience from general military experience. It cannot be denied that Yudhoyono's military experience was key to getting a major potential peace spoiler on

board: the military. Yet, overall evidence suggests a limited role of combat experience in that achievement.

Case study: Nicolás Bautista

Bautista became leader of the ELN in 1998 after participating in the guerrilla for more than 30 years, since the age of 14. In 1965, he participated in the ELN's first shootout and seizure, which took place in the municipality of Simacota, Colombia, and in the context of which the ELN announced its armed struggle in the Manifesto de Simacota. In 1983, he became responsible for the ELN's military operations as its second-in-command. After the death of Manuel Pérez in 1998, a Spanish priest who had joined the group in the 1960s, Bautista became commander-in-chief. Around 1999, the ELN reached its peak, with between 4,000 and 5,000 members and about 15,000 supporters.[32] In the following years, until he resigned as the group's top leader in 2021, Bautista pushed to increase recruits and funding. Peace attempts with the governments of Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), Álvaro Uribe (2002–2010), Juan Manuel Santos (2010–2018) and Iván Duque (2018–2022) failed. To explore whether Bautista's combat experience was instrumental in making him an opponent of peace agreements, I consider the rare interviews with him, as well as how his combat experience relates to the failed peace attempts.

In a 2020 interview, Bautista described his first combat experience—at the age of 15, the seizure of Simacota—as very impactful, as he fought in a very small group with few and old weapons. Previously, they had had to pretend to be civilians to launch a surprise attack. According to Bautista, the reality of the firefight and the lack of experience made him understand the costs of war (Bautista, 2020). During his first combat experience, Parmenio, a fellow guerrillero, who was Bautista's best friend, his sister's boyfriend, and his mentor, was fatally shot; Bautista, however, explains how the success of the attack made Parmenio's sacrifice worthwhile in the end for him. He saw his friend's death as a reminder to be brave in combat to honour his friend's legacy. Bautista described the importance of this combat exposure to his life in the guerrilla: "In every guerrilla there is a before and an after—that is combat. Simacota encouraged us morally, we felt we were capable of fighting" (Bautista, 2020).[33]

[32] As of 2022, the ELN still has around 2,200 fighters and is present in 184 municipalities in 16 departments of Colombia.

[33] Translations by the author.

In a book about the beginnings of the ELN he co-authored with fellow guerrillero Antonio García, Bautista described how he perceived his first combat experience as form of graduation, and that it taught him that the guerrilla was fighting for a just cause (García & Bautista, 2017: 84,111). Bautista's faith in the ideology of the ELN was strengthened by Camilo Torres Restrepo, a priest who espoused liberation theology and was involved in the guerrilla (Pérez & Zapata, 2022). Torres taught Bautista to perceive combat as a way to achieve justice. When Torres died, he became an official martyr of the ELN and a point of reference for Bautista throughout his life (García & Bautista, 2017: 166–168).

In 1998, shortly before Bautista became the leader of the group, there was a pre-accord to hold a national convention with the Colombian government. When Bautista took over the leadership, however, negotiations did not continue. He declared that the ELN would talk only to representatives of civil society and that the group would neither disarm nor demobilize (Castillo, 2019). In the 2000s, Bautista saw the peace attempts under Uribe as a cheap attempt for the latter to maintain political power without creating a way for social change (Castaño Barrera, 2012). During the peace negotiations with the Santos government, he complained that the negotiations had failed because civil society organizations had not been fully involved. Without full participation of civil society, he stated that "we have no choice but to take the path of armed uprising" (Bautista, 2015). Finally, the peace negotiations under Duque failed because Bautista believed the new government was destroying the agreement made with the FARC in 2016, and the ELN had no trust that bilateral conditions would be fulfilled.

Several aspects of Bautista's actions indicate that he was not a proponent of peace agreements, although he did not completely reject peace negotiations. He was involved in shootings of fellow guerrilleros who did not comply with the political aims of the ELN in 1967. Bautista orchestrated a brutal massacre in Machuca in 1998 and participated in the kidnapping of 150 churchgoers in Cali in 1999 (Harnecker, 1988: 27). As he has been tried in absentia for his involvement in several crimes, he may view a peace agreement as not protecting him from punishment and public rejection. It can also be surmised that Bautista had been directly involved in drug trafficking since the death of Pérez, who was staunchly opposed to lucrative criminal activities, making a peace deal less attractive to Bautista.[34] Additionally, even if he did not fear punishment or losing his political power, it

[34] See InSight Crime. (2021, June 24). Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista, alias 'Gabino.' https://es.insightcrime.org/noticias-crimen-organizado-colombia/nicolas-rodriguez-bautista-gabino/.

would have been difficult to lead the ELN to a peace agreement because of strong ideologies within the group and the tendency for the group to act like a federation of guerrilla groups (Calvo Ocampo, 2022).

Bautista's combat experience was directly related to his convictions about the nature of the conflict and the just means to pursue his political aims. Fifty-five years after this initial combat experience, Bautista continuously believed in and fought for a "victory of the people." Over the years, as victory looked less and less attainable, he began to fight for resistance, willing to continue unless the government offered an agreement toward meaningful change that he found acceptable to the aspirations of the ELN (Currea-Lugo, 2014). According to Bautista himself, peace attempts had failed in the past because the government expected the ELN to surrender and accept punishment in exchange for political spaces (Bautista, 2015). Bautista further claimed that every single combat experience and every murder had increased the decisive persistence of the ELN to continue fighting because the actual fighting nourished the liberation theology that gave them the strength to persist (Bautista, 2015). Hence, religious ideology and combat experience go hand in hand toward explaining the ELN's continued struggle and Bautista's moral determination to continue fighting.

Bautista was known as a strategist, brutal fighter, and strong ideologue (Castillo, 2019). Attempts at peace with the ELN failed for ideological reasons, political calculations, and deep mistrust on both sides. Overall, the Bautista case suggests that the combat experience of rebel leaders plays an important role in strengthening ideology against the government.

Discussion and conclusion

This article suggests that state leaders with combat experience sign more peace agreements because they are cost-sensitive and less likely to experience public disapproval for their peace efforts due to their reputation as battle-hardened leaders. Empirical findings confirm that this is the case in government conflicts and coups. The case study of Yudhoyono indicated that, more than combat, his military service was a key factor that facilitated public and military support for an agreement and influenced his decision making in the direction of peace.

On the contrary, rebel leaders' combat experience is detrimental to peace agreements because their cost sensitivity intensifies their belief in using force. The statistical results were not entirely robust to rebel leaders' combat experience but suggested that combat experience has an even more negative impact in conflicts with contrasting ethnic ideologies. The case study of Bautista showed how his combat experience was a key driver in strengthening his ideological belief in the use of force as a just measure to pursue his political aims. It is up to further investigation if rebel leaders with combat experience are more punished by external audiences for the atrocities of war.

The statistical analyses and the case studies lend micro-level and macro-level support to the theoretical framework of leaders' combat experience and its effect on the likelihood of peace agreements. Obviously, leaders' combat experience is not the only driver of peace agreements, and this theory is complementary to accounts of mutually detrimental stalemates, foreign support, and group processes. In particular, the case studies show that leaders' combat experience cannot be considered in isolation but can even be reinforced by military service and ideological training. Therefore, it speaks to other theories that have tried to open the black box of those in charge by looking at their past experiences.

This research has several implications. First, it demonstrates that leaders matter for the outcome of civil wars. They are independent actors who can make a conflict continue or end differently than predicted by existing structural theories. Second, it underscores that combat experience can be both beneficial and detrimental to peace agreements. Future studies should expand the black box of combat experience, as it can vary in intensity, severity, and duration and cause specific trauma. Outcomes could differ depending on the position and the time in life in which combat was experienced. For example, combat experience as a naval officer could differ greatly from combat in the field. For rebel leaders in particular, whether or not joining a rebel group and combat experience were voluntary could also be critical. Whether rebel leaders with combat experience are actually punished more severely after signing peace agreements than rebel leaders who were not directly involved in combat still needs to be examined.

In this context, it would also be interesting to explore whether rebel leaders with combat experience are more feared by their fellow combatants, struggle less with combatants who challenge their decisions, and are more successful in smuggling activities. Group dynamics around combat experience could, for example, explain why there are

some rebel leaders with combat experience who have successfully signed peace agreements. The historic Chapultepec Peace Accords between the government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) were signed by a battle-hardened rebel leader, Joaquín Villalobos, who was the mastermind behind the group's paramilitary operations.

The present analysis could be strengthened by including group-level characteristics to examine how leaders make decisions for peace based on the perceptions of their followers and advisors. It is also possible that other experiences, such as leaders' international experience or traits such as self-confidence, make leaders more open to considering peace agreements a viable option. Future studies might also attempt to operationalize mutually detrimental stalemates better than simply through the ratio of state-to-rebel strength. In addition, future research could specify the terms of peace agreements by showing whether not only strong concessions but also the prospect of judicial punishment influences rebel leaders' decisions against peace agreements.

In sum, there are several drivers of the likelihood of peace agreements. I argue that in this multitude of driving factors, previous research overlooked the individual package that each leader brings to the negotiating table. I show that leaders with combat experience might be less inclined (rebel leaders) or more inclined (state leaders) towards signing peace agreements.

3 Conclusion

This thesis explored that while there may be a golden age for studies of leaders in foreign affairs, much is still unknown about rebel and state leaders in civil wars and leaders who end conflicts. In four different articles, I have discussed the intersecting literatures on leadership, civil wars, political and social psychology, military preferences, international conflict, and peace processes. Out of these literatures grew my motivation to focus on the following central claim: Prior to assuming a leadership position, leaders have made experiences or developed certain characteristics that can be either conducive to peace or detrimental to the duration and outcome of civil conflicts. I have provided evidence for this theoretical assumption in the form of four articles, covering:

1. the biographical characteristics of a state leader who signed a peace agreement,
2. the relevance of exposure to violence for support for a peace referendum,
3. the negative effect of rebel leaders' military training on the duration of civil wars, and
4. the positive impact of state leaders' combat experience – and the partially negative impact of the same among rebel leaders – on the likelihood of peace agreements being signed.

The articles contribute to a deeper understanding of the ways in which individuals' past experiences influence their way of dealing with new information. Experiences make state and rebel leaders more sensitive to the costs of conflict, strengthen their convictions, and influence their fears of punishment. I have shown, in the order of the articles, that the following characteristics are conducive to peace: a pragmatic and reconciliation-oriented leadership (article 1), individual exposure to violence (article 2), and state leaders' prior combat experience (article 4). By contrast, these characteristics are detrimental to the duration and outcome of civil conflicts: SDO as a moderator of exposure to violence (article 2), rebel leaders' military training (article 3) and, to a lesser extent, rebel leaders' combat experience (article 4).

This thesis contributes to a burgeoning literature on state leaders in international conflicts (Jervis, 2017; Saunders, 2011; Yarhi-Milo, 2018; Horowitz et al., 2015) but also on rebel governance and the duration of civil wars (Arjona et al., 2015; Hoover Green, 2018). It further advances our understanding of what kind of individuals become peace spoilers (Stedman, 1997) and brings in a novel perspective on peace supporters. Importantly, this thesis underscores the relevance of studying not only the dynamics that

lead to the outbreak of a conflict, but also the end of it, particularly in the form of peace agreements. Additionally, the case studies on Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos (article 1), the FARC (article 2), Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and former ELN leader Nicolás Bautista (both article 4) further advance the discussion on how individual leaders matter in civil wars.

This dissertation also points towards an important policy recommendation: leaders' character and behaviour should be carefully studied, because they bring diverging potentials for conflict resolution to the table. Along this line, practitioners and mediators should pay attention to a leaders' biographical background when suggesting peace negotiations and consider pushing for peace when a potential peace supporter is in power. Thus, practitioners and international actors might view potential negotiations as fruitful if the head of state has shown some degree of pragmatism and openness for reconciliation in the past or if he or she has combat experience. Concerning rebel leaders, this thesis suggests that civilian leaders without military training or combat experience might be best suited to curtail the duration of the conflict and increase the likelihood that peace agreements will be signed.

In conclusion, I have expanded the understanding of the individual characteristics of rebel and state leaders and related these to the success of peace referendums, peace agreements, and the shortening of civil conflicts in general. I have demonstrated the initial validity of that theoretical assumption through a variety of different research methods, including surveys, archival research, interviews, and large-N analyses. A variety of cases further strengthened the argument by shedding light on the failed peace referendum in 2016, on previous failed negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC, and the ELN. Additionally, the peace agreement in Colombia in 2016 and the agreement between the Indonesian government and GAM in 2005 were neither expected nor easy to sign, confirming the proposition that state leaders with certain characteristics can push for peace.

The major caveats to this thesis are the lack of consideration of group dynamics, of cases other than Colombia and Indonesia, of psychological traits rather than experiences of violence, and finally of experiences other than military ones. Additionally, peace agreements are very fragile, and not all peace agreements offer the same potential for lasting conflict resolution even if the leaders are absolute peace supporters. There is, therefore, much that remains to be done when it comes to potential research on this topic.

Future studies should examine how individual characteristics interact with group dynamics. Leaders do not make their decisions alone, but often have an entire advisory council. It might also be interesting to examine the interaction between rebel and state leaders in more detail as mentioned in the introduction. For example, how do rebel leaders with military training deal with a state leader who also has formal training? Are there cases of one combat-experienced opponent fighting another with no combat experience when one side has an advantage in countering the actions of its rival?

Furthermore, characteristics other than those examined here probably play a role, too. It remains unknown exactly how experiences influence traits and vice versa, and how these in turn influence behaviour. As such, psychological traits such as conceptual complexity could be studied if leaders participated in surveys (e.g. Yarhi-Milo,) or if existent datasets based on speech acts were used (e.g., Schafer and Lambert, 2022).[35] Along this line, future studies should pay more attention to characteristics that are detrimental to peace. Among other characteristics, narcissism, aggressiveness, and pride may reduce the likelihood that peace agreements are signed. A greater focus on rebel leaders who profit from the conflict through contraband also requires a deeper understanding. Moreover, an increasing literature has dwelled upon the power of emotions for conflict resolution (Halperin, 2011), and it might be interesting to further explore which emotions leaders evoke in their followers to motivate them to support peace processes.

Most importantly, structural and institutional circumstances should receive greater attention in future works on leaders in civil conflicts. It remains unclear when exactly leaders matter; although, I controlled for a number of variables in the quantitative models and showed that, inter alia, conflict intensity, the number of failed negotiations, and GDP per capita matter for the likelihood of peace agreements and shorter conflicts. Theoretically, it is assumed that leaders matter in civil wars because these are contexts with much uncertainty (Arjona et al., 2015; Smith, 2018). This is also suggested in different case studies highlighting that leaders matter in transitions (Gormley-Heenan, 2001; Westlake, 2000). However, it would be a starting point for future research to examine whether the characteristics of leaders are actually more or less relevant when the structural and institutional conditions are detrimental or conducive to peace agreements.

[35] There are several other options to study leaders at a distance: One could use leadership trait analysis (Hermann, 1977), operational codes (Schafer and Walker, 2006), expert interviews (Arana Araya, 2021), leaders' written pieces from federal archives or presidential libraries, or datasets on state leaders' ideologies (Herre, 2022).

In addition, signing a peace agreement is just one step. It is interesting to explore how these mechanisms operate in the post-conflict period. Thus, further studies are needed to understand what happens to leaders with certain characteristics after peace agreements have been signed, who is punished and who benefits from the agreement, how long peace agreements last, and how well they are implemented when certain leaders are in charge. This thesis showed that hawkishness might be beneficial for state leaders; however, it remains unclear if hawkish credentials last and how they affect rebel leaders. The post–peace agreement phase often poses particular challenges for rebel leaders, who must admit that they were wrong to take up arms or at least have to show some level of commitment to contributing to society in an environment that is often hostile to the rebel group. Consequently, the characteristics of rebel leaders in these moments of uncertainty following the signing of a peace agreement are crucial and warrant further investigation.

I look forward to expanding my case study investigations to account for more cases across time and space: For instance, the Colombian government's recent initiative to resume negotiations with the ELN could be a fruitful way to examine how negotiations evolve in real time, depending on who the leaders are. It will also be interesting to see how the results of this thesis hold when focusing on the 'new' civil wars. In future work, I also hope to use survey experiments with leaders to directly test their willingness to sign peace agreements, as well as personal interviews with rebel and state leaders that are not from Colombia to directly probe my theoretical propositions and how they relate to other cases. Still, studying leaders, particularly rebel leaders, has its challenges, and security and access concerns should not be underestimated in future research.

This thesis has not addressed issues of class, race, and gender in detail. This is mostly due to the fact that there are almost no women leaders relevant to this study and there is no information on people of colour and their class in the datasets used. A leader's social and economic class could be relevant for peace prospects. This was particularly evident in the qualitative analysis of the career of Santos, who belongs to a prominent and wealthy Colombian family. Many interviewees stated that they attributed Santos' success in signing the peace agreement to his origins: "Only a Santos could have done it." The wealthy often have better access to education, can finance their campaigns, and are often perceived as effective leaders because of their economic prosperity (e.g., Heberlig et al., 2006). This might influence their likelihood of becoming leaders and in turn can affect

their potential to become a peace supporter. Simultaneously, leaders who became part of the upper class through smuggling and violence might be absolute peace spoilers (see Themnér and Sjöstedt, 2020).

In contexts where people of colour are a majority, it can also matter a great deal if peace is proposed by someone who is perceived as an 'insider' because of his or her outward appearance, or by someone who is seen as 'other' or even as an oppressor.[36] For example, it might be difficult to imagine peace in South Africa if a white man had become head of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1991. At the same time, there may be scenarios in which being "white" or seen as an outsider is an advantage in proposing new policies such as peace.[37] This has been widely studied in works on mediation and international peacekeeping (e.g., Charkoudian and Kabcenell Wayne, 2010). Future studies should carefully observe these microdynamics in peace processes.

On gender, recent studies on women state leaders and peace-making do not show that women sign more peace agreements than men (Schramm and Stark, 2020; Dube and Harish, 2019). These works assume that this may be related to women being less likely elected to leadership positions, being more vulnerable to internal and external punishment, or displaying higher levels of hawkishness than their male counterparts. Yet class, race, and gender interact and intersect. For example, the Black female FARC commander known as Karina surrendered to the Colombian military because she was afraid of being killed by her comrades.[38] In the media she was particularly punished for being Black, poor, and a rebel woman. Future studies should further examine the extent to which gender, class and race are relevant to understanding leadership and decision-making with respect to peace in civil wars.

Along a similar line, future studies that move away from elites could focus on local knowledge and power dynamics to examine local leadership and peace-making. For example, it might be interesting to examine what role those leaders in communities play that support peace efforts in civil conflict. There are also community leaders who act as warlords and profit from the conflict who deserve more scholarly attention. By exploring

[36] Other factors such as religion, culture, and language can also play a role in the insider versus outsider perception.

[37] I do not capitalize white, unlike Black, because its use is a physical description of people whose backgrounds are seen as individual coming from many different cultures.

[38] See https://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-4176008 (accessed 14.11.2022). Black refers to people of the African diaspora and is capitalized to reflect certain shared cultures and experiences.

these micro-foundations of leadership, the general argument of this thesis could be put to the test. If local communities select former soldiers for leadership positions and those are more successful in managing conflict, this could support the idea that prior experience, and especially experience in violence, military and combat, is beneficial or detrimental to the outcome and duration of civil conflict.

Finally, studies of leaders are often perceived as detached from citizens 'on the ground' when they focus on elites with the highest decision-making powers. The motivation behind this thesis was to show that leaders matter because they are humans. Leaders, like any people, are influenced by their past experiences. Based on their characteristics, they make mistakes, misjudge and misperceive civil war dynamics; they calculate correctly and reflect upon their decision-making; and they decide when to initiate, continue or end a conflict. Viewing leaders as individuals who have had experiences that have affected their basic attitudes and values gives us a possible way to decode their decision-making and sheds light on the black box of leaders in civil conflict.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.1: Political Leadership for Peace Processes

Interviews (transcripts and interview questions upon request)

	Interviewee	Position	Date and Place
1.	Anonymous	High-level politician	2018/09/02 Medellín
2.	Anonymous	High-level politician	2018/08/15 Bogotá
3.	Anonymous	High-level politician	2018/08/17 Bogotá
4.	Anonymous	Lawyer, Santos' childhood friend	2018/08/28 Bogotá
5.	Jaime Bermúdez Merizalde	Communications advisor to Uribe	2018/08/28 Bogotá
6.	Carlos Caballero Argáez	Political scientist, Universidad de los Andes	2018/08/09 Bogotá
7.	Fernando Cepeda Ulloa	Political scientist, Universidad de los Andes	2018/08/03 Bogotá
8.	Malcolm Deas	Historian, University of Oxford	2018/03/25 Oxford
9.	Sergio Jaramillo Caro	Politician, Vice-minister of Defence for Santos under Uribe	2018/10/18 Brussels
10.	Julián López Murcia	Political scientist, Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano	2018/08/10 Bogotá
11.	Maria Victoria Llorente	Political scientist, Executive Director of Fundación Ideas para la Paz	2018/08/27 Bogotá
12.	Santiago Montenegro Trujillo	Economist, President of Asofondos	2018/08/16 Bogotá
13.	Néstor Osorio Londoño	Diplomat, Santos' childhood friend	2018/12/03 London
14.	Mónica Pachón Buitrango	Political scientist, Universidad de los Andes	2018/08/20 Bogotá
15.	Frank Pearl González	Politician, High Commissioner for Peace under Uribe	2018/08/18 Bogotá
16.	Juan Carlos Pinzón Bueno	Politician, Vice-minister of Defence for Santos under Uribe,	2018/08/25 Bogotá
17.	Juan José Rendón Delgado	Political consultant	2018/11/29 Skype-interview
18.	Enrique Santos Calderón	Santos' brother, journalist and writer	2018/11/14 Written interview
19.	Francisco Santos Calderón	Santos' cousin, Vice-president under Uribe	2018/08/16 Bogotá
20.	Juan Manuel Santos Calderón		2018/11/13 Oxford
21.	Enrique Santos Molano	Santos' step-cousin, journalist and writer	2018/08/18 Bogotá
22.	Gabriel Silva Luján	Politician, Minister of Defence under Uribe, Santos' childhood friend	2018/08/21 Bogotá
23.	Camilo Villa Moreno	Engineer and economist, Universidad de los Andes	2018/08/03 Bogotá

Invitation letter from Frank Pearl for an open meeting to discuss a possible negotiation, 2010, March 5.

Presidencia de la República de Colombia
Alto Comisionado para la Paz

5 de marzo de 2010, Bogotá DC

Señores
Alfonso Cano y Pablo Catatumbo
Secretariado del Estado Mayor Central de las FARC-EP

Señores:

Por medio de la presente y a partir de su último comunicado de febrero 22 de 2010 denominado *Memorando para un intercambio sobre el conflicto colombiano*; de la carta del Señor Jorge Briceño Suárez al General Freddy Padilla de León de enero de 2010; y a través del facilitador que tenemos con el señor Catatumbo, comunico:

1. Nuestro interés en tener un encuentro directo y secreto con ustedes o sus delgados.
2. Este encuentro tendría una agenda abierta, con el propósito de construir confianza entre las partes y que pueda conducir a una agenda de paz más detallada y profunda a futuro.
3. El lugar del encuentro podría ser Brasil, dado el trabajo conjunto que hemos acumulado con este país.
4. Brasil garantizaría dentro del territorio brasileño la seguridad y logística de los participantes del encuentro secreto.

Quedamos atentos a su respuesta y observaciones a los puntos anteriores.

Atentamente,

Frank Pearl
Alto Comisionado para la Paz

Appendix 2.2: Social Dominance Orientation and Exposure to Violence

Study protocol in English

Support for the peace agreement in 2016

How much do you agree or disagree with the peace agreement in 2016 between the Colombian government and the FARC?

Please rate your opinion on a scale from 0 to 10, on which the value 0 means "I totally reject the peace agreement of 2016" and the value 10 means "I totally support the peace agreement of 2016".

Social dominance orientation (SDO)

Show how much you favour or oppose each idea below by selecting a number from 1 to 5 on the scale given:

1. An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom.
2. Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.
3. No one group should dominate in society.
4. Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.
5. Group equality should not be our primary goal.
6. It is unjust to try to make groups equal.
7. We should do what we can to equalise conditions for different groups.
8. We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed.

All scaled from 1 ("strongly oppose") to 5 ("strongly favour"). Items 3, 4, 7 and 8 are reverse scored.

Personal experience of violence

Have you experienced any form of violence due to the armed conflict?

- Yes (could you please specify in the comment box)
- No

General use of violence

What do you think about the general use of violence?

Violence is…

- Always justified
- Often justified
- Sometimes justified
- Rarely justified
- Never justified

Summary appendix tables

Table A1: Summarising bootstrap results for exposure of violence as a predictor of support for peace agreements moderated by SDO

	Coefficient	Bootstrap mean	Bootstrap SE	Lower confidence interval	Upper confidence interval
Constant	3.08	3.03	0.66	1.71	4.31
Experience of violence	8.98	9.02	0.90	7.26	10.76
SDO	0.15	0.19	0.26	-0.27	0.76
Exposure of violence X SDO	-2.54	-2.56	0.33	-3.24	-1.94

Table A2: Summarising bootstrap results for exposure of violence as a predictor of support for peace agreements moderated by SDO (including control variables)

	Coefficient	Bootstrap mean	Bootstrap SE	Lower confidence interval	Upper confidence interval
Constant	2.64	2.68	2.21	-1.50	7.06
Experience of violence	9.19	9.27	1.29	6.75	11.81
SDO	0.35	0.43	0.45	-0.28	1.53
Exposure of violence X SDO	-2.63	-2.69	0.52	-3.86	-1.75
Age	0.00	-0.00	0.06	-0.13	0.10
Gender	0.03	-0.00	0.70	-1.35	1.42
Military service	-0.14	-0.15	0.38	-0.92	0.58
General use of violence	0.06	0.05	0.30	-0.52	0.64

Appendix 2.3: Trained to Rebel - Rebel Leaders' Military training

Contents:

I. Leader descriptive analyses
II. Correlation Matrix
III. Kaplan Meier Survival Estimates
IV. Robustness Checks
V. Leaders and Military Experience Coding Rules

I. Leader descriptive analyses

Table A1. Rebel leaders with military training from 1989 to 2015

Rebel Leader Name	Rebel Group and Country
ABBAS AL MUSAWI	HEZBOLLAH, LEBANON
ABDELAZIZ AL-HILU	SPLA, SUDAN
ABDULLAH OCALAN	PKK, TURKEY
ABDUL-MALIK BADREDDIN AL-HOUTHI	HOUTHI, YEMEN
ABDURAHJAK JANJALANI	ASG, PHILIPPINE
ABU ABDULLAH AL SHAFI'I	JUND, IRAQ
ABUBAKAR SHEAKAU	BH, NIGERIA
AHMAD SHAH MASSOUD	JAMIAT, AFGHANISTAN
AL HAQ MURAD EBRAHIM	MILF, PHILIPPINE
ALI AHMETI	BDI, UCK, ALBANIA
ASARI DOKUBO	NDPVF, NIGERIA
BAITULLAH MEHSUD	TTP, PAKISTAN
BENITO TIAMZON	CPP, NPA, PHILIPPINE
CHARLES TAYLOR	NPFL, LIBERIA
CHERIF GOUSMI	FIS, ALGERIA
COSSAN KABURA	FNL, BURUNDI
FAROUK KADDOUMI	FATAH, PALESTINE
FATHER AUGUSTINE DIAMACOUNE SENGHOR	MFDC, SENEGAL
FELIX DOH	MPIGO, IVORY COAST
FRANCIS ONA	BRA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA
FODAY SANKOH	RUF, SIERRA LEONE
GASPARD DÉLI	MPCI, IVORY COAST
GENERAL DAMANE ZAKARIA	UFDR, CAR
GUILLAUME SORO	MPCI, FN, IVORY COAST
GULBUDDIN HEKMATYAR	HIZB-I, AFGHANISTAN
GUY PHILIPPE	PNH, HAITI
HAKIMULLAH MEHSUD	TTP, PAKISTAN
HASHIM SALAMAT	MILF, PHILIPINE
IBRAHIM AG BAHANGA	MPLA, ATNM, MALI
IK SONGBIJIT	NDFB, INDIA
IRENGBAM CHAOREN	RPF, INDIA
ISAIAS AFWERKI	EPLF, ERITREA
IYAD AG GHALY	MPLA, MALI
JAMIL MUKULU	ADF, UGANDA
JEAN PIERRE-BEMBA	MLC, DR CONGO
JOAQUIN VILLALOBOS	ERP, EL SAVADOR
JONAS SAVIMBI	UNITA, ANGOLA
JOSEPH KONY	LRA, UGANDA
KHADAFFY JANJALANI	ASG, PHILIPPINE
KHALIL IBRAHIM	JEM, SUDAN
KRESIMIR ZUBAK	CDU, BOSNIA
LALIT DEBBARMA	ATTF, INDIA
LAMUNG TU JAI	KIO, MYAMAR
LANYAW ZAWNG HRA	KIO, MYAMAR
MANGAL BAGH AFRIDI	LI, PAKISTAN
MANO DAYAK	CRA, NIGER
MANUEL MARULANDA	FARC, COLOMBIA
MASAE USENG	BRN, THAILAND
MILAN MARTIC	KSA, KM, SERBIA
MOKTAR ALI ZUBEYR GODANE	ALSHABAB, SOMALIA
MURAT KARAYILAN	PKK, IRAQ
NASIR AL WUHAYSHI	AQAP, YEMEN
NICOLAS RODRIGUEZ BAUTISTA	ELN, COLOMBIA
NORODOM RANARIDDH	FUNCINPEC, CAMBODIA
NORODOM SIHANOUK	KHMER ROUGE, CAMBODIA
OSCAR RAMIREZ	PCP-SL, PERU

PAUL KAGAME	RPF, RWANDA
PAULO ARMINDO LUKAMBA "GATO"	UNITA, ANGOLA
PUSHPA KAMAL DAHAL	CPN, NEPAL
RADULLAN SAHIRON	ASG, PHILIPPINE
RAFAEL SEBASTIAN GUILLON VICENTE	EZLN, MEXICO
RANJAN DAIMARY	NDFB, INDIA
RANJIT DEBBARMA	ATTF, INDIA
RHISSA AG BOULA	FLAA, NIGER
ROLANDO MORAN	URNG, GUATEMALA
SALI SEKAJ	KLA, ALBANIA
SALVA KIIR	SPLM, SOUTH SUDAN
SAM BOCKARIE	RUF, SIERRA LEONE
SHANTU LARMA	PCJSS, BANGLADESH
SULIMAN ARCUA MINNAWI	SLA, SUDAN
SULTANI MAKENGA	M23, DR CONGO
TIAH J D SLANGER	MODEL, LIBERIA
TIMOCHENKO	FARC, COLOMBIA
VELUPILLAI PRABHAKARAN	LTTE, SRI LANKA
VINCENT OTTI	LRA, UGANDA
VLADISLAV ARDZINBA	AAF, ABKHAZIA
YASSER ARAFAT	FATAH, PALESTINE

Table A2. Rebel leaders with military service from 1989 to 2015

Rebel Leader Name	Rebel Group and Country
ABDUL RASHID DOSTUM	JUNBISH-I MILLI-YI ISLAMI, AFGHANISTAN
ADOUM TOGOI	MDJT, CHAD
AFONSO DHLAKAMA	RENAMO, MOZAMBIQUE
AHMED OMAR JESS	SPM, SOMALIA
ALFRED YEKATOM	ANTI-BALAKA, CAR
ALI BAMUZE	UNRF II, UGANDA
ALTAF HUSSAIN	MQM, PAKISTAN
ANDRE DIEUDONNE KOLINGBA	MILITARY FACTION (KOLINGBA), CAR
ANDRES RODRIGUEZ	MILITARY FACTION (RODRIGUEZ), PARAGUAY
ANTAR ZOUABRI	AIS, ALGERIA
ASLAN MASKHADOV	CHECHEN REPUBLIC OF ICHKERIA, RUSSIA
BAKO SAHAKYAN	REPUBLIC OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH, AZERBAIJA
BO MYA	KNU, MYANMAR
BOB DENARD	PRESIDENTIAL GUARD, COMOROS
BODA MALDOUN	MOSANAT, CHAD S
DAVID YAU YAU	SSDM/A - COBRA FACTION, CHAD
DENIS SASSOU NGUESSO	COBRAS, CHAD
DIEN DEL	KPNLF, CONGO
DOKU UMAROV	CHECHEN REPUBLIC OF ICHKERIA, RUSSIA
DZHOKHAR DUDAYEV	CHECHEN REPUBLIC OF ICHKERIA, RUSSIA
ENRIQUE BERMUDEZ VARELA	CONTRAS/FDN, NICARAGUA
FLORIAN NDJADDER	UFR, CHAD
FODAY SANKOH	RUF, SIERRA LEONE
FRANJO TUDMAN	REPUBLIC OF CROATIA, SERBIA
GENERAL AMADOU HAYA SANOGO	MILITARY FACTION (RED BERETS), MALI
GENERAL ANSUMANE MANE	MILITARY JUNTA, GUINEA-BISS
GENERAL TLALI KAMOLI	MILITARY FACTION, LESOTHO
GEORGE ATHOR	SSLM/A, SUDAN
HASSAN AL HABIB	CPJP, CAR
HASSAN DAHIR AWEYS	HIZBUL ISLAM, SOMALIA
HASSAN HATTAB	AQIM, ALGERIA
HIMMLER REBU	MILITARY FACTION (HIMMLER), HAITI
HUGO CHAVEZ	MILITARY FACTION (CHAVEZ), VENEZUELA

HUSSEIN FARRAH AIDID	SRRC, SOMALIA
IBRAHIM COULIBALY	FDSI-CI, IVORY COAST
DEBY IDRISS	REVOLUTIONARY FORCES OF 1 APRIL, SOUTH SUDAN
IGOR PLOTNITSKY	LUGANSK PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC, UKRAINE
JALAL TALABANI	PUK, IRAQ
JOHN GARANG	SPLM/A, SUDAN
JOHNNY PAUL KORAMA	AFRC, SIERRA LEONE
JUMA NAMANGANI	IMU, UZBEKISTAN
JUMA ORIS	WNBF, UGANDA
KALIFAH SHAHUB	ZINTAN BRIGADES, LIBYA
KHALIFA HAFTAR	LIBYAN NATIONAL ARMY, LIBYA
KHUDOBERDIYEV	FORCES OF KHUDOBERDIYEV, TAJIKISTAN
KHUN SA	MTA, MYANMAR
LAURENT NKUNDA	CNDP, DR CONGO
LEONARD PETROSYAN	REPUBLIC OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH, AZERBAIJAN
MADANI MEZRAG	AIS, ALGERIA
MAHAMAT NOUR ABDELKERIM	FUCD, CHAD
MAHMAT NOURI	AN, CHAD
MAHMAT NOURI	UFDD, CHAD
MICHEL AOUN	FORCES OF MICHEL AOUN, LEBANON
MOH LEVEILLEY	AIS, ALGERIA
MOHAMED FARRAH AIDID	USC/SNA, SOMALIA
MOHAMMED OMAR OSMAN	ONLF, ETHIOPIA
MOISE KETTE	CSNPD, CHAD
MULLO ABDULLO	FORCES OF MULLO ABDULLO, TAJIKISTAN
MUMMAR GADDAFI	ISLAMIC LEGION, CHAD
NOUREDDINE ADAM	SELEKA, CAR
PANG FA	SSPP, MYANMAR
PAUL KAGAME	FPR, RWANDA
PAUL RWARAKABIJE	ALIR, RWANDA
PETER GADET	SSLM/A, SOUTH SUDAN
PETER OTAI	UPA, UGANDA
PRINCE JOHNSON	INPFL, LIBERIA
RAOUL CEDRAS	MILITARY FACTION (CEDRAS), HAITI
ROBERT KOCHARYAN	REPUBLIC OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH, AZERBAIJAN
SAMUEL HINGA NORMAN	KAMAJORS, SIERRA LEONE
SAW MUTU SAY POE	MNDAA, MYANMAR
SAW TAMLABAW	KNU, MYANMAR
SHAHNAWAZ TANAI	MILITARY FACTION (TANAY), AFGHANISTAN
SURET HUSSEINOV	MILITARY FACTION (HUSSEINOV), AZERBAIJAN
VANG PAO	LRM, LAOS
VLADISLAV ARDZINBA	REPUBLIC OF ABKHAZIA, GEORGIA
XANANA GUSMAO	FRETILIN, INDONESIA
YAWD SERK	RCSS, MYANMAR

Table A3. Rebel leaders between 1989 and 2015

Rebel leaders	N	Percentage of leaders
Military training		
with combat	56	15.73
without combat	17	4.78
Military service		
with combat	64	17.98
without combat	12	3.37
No military training		
with combat	70	19.66
without combat	131	36.80

Note: The military experience of six leaders could not be confirmed.

Table A4. Rebel leaders' occupation with no military experience

Rebel leaders	N	Percentage of leaders
Activist	27	13.43
Teacher	19	9.45
Other	18	8.96
Career politician	13	6.47
Religious leader	12	5.97
Career military man	10	4.98
Businessman	9	4.48
Doctor in medicine	6	2.99
Writer	5	2.49
Engineer	4	1.99
Journalist	3	1.49
Labourer	3	1.49
Policeman	2	1.00
Scientist	2	1.00
Lawyer	1	0.50

Note. The occupation of 66 leaders could not be confirmed.

II. Correlation Matrix

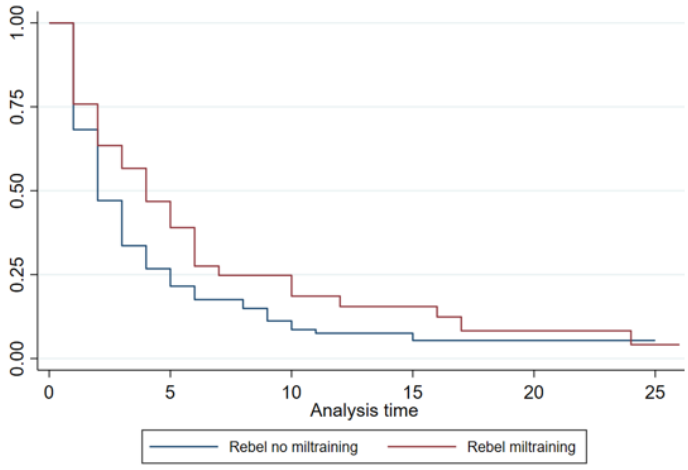
Table A5. Correlation matrix for variables in Table 2 model 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Military training	1										
2. Leader change	0.00	1									
3. Top leader	0.04	0.09	1								
4. Rebel strength	0.14	0.11	-0.13	1							
5. External support	-0.03	0.06	-0.03	0.26	1						
6. Intensity	0.08	0.13	0.15	0.27	0.22	1					
7. Territorial dispute	0.06	-0.04	0.07	-0.32	-0.25	-0.10	1				
8. Lootable goods	-0.01	0.04	0.13	0.00	-0.03	0.01	0.02	1			
9. GDP (ln)	0.06	-0.06	0.13	-0.50	-0.23	-0.11	0.44	0.10	1		
10. Democracy	0.23	-0.14	0.06	-0.27	-0.06	-0.03	0.29	0.01	0.59	1	
11. Active dyads	-0.00	-0.03	-0.10	-0.01	0.09	-0.02	-0.24	-0.07	-0.15	-0.02	1

Note: GDP = gross domestic product.

III. Kaplan Meier survival estimates

Figure A1. Kaplan-Meier survival estimates with military training



Note: miltraining = Military training

IV. Robustness Checks

Table A6. Cox proportional hazards results

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader training X combat	0.670** (.11)	
Rebel leader training X no combat	0.861 (.27)	
Rebel leader combat		0.839 (.11)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.562** (.28)	1.529** (.27)
Rebel leader top leader	1.264** (.12)	1.247** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.095 (.10)	1.052 (.10)
External support	1.315 (.23)	1.364* (.24)
Conflict intensity	0.490*** (.11)	0.476*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.391** (.23)	1.365* (.22)
Lootable goods	0.918 (.12)	0.945 (.13)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.844*** (.04)	0.846*** (.04)
Democracy	1.253 (.26)	1.116 (.22)
Active dyads	1.138** (.07)	1.135** (.07)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-761.211	-769.910

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table includes other forms of military experience. In comparison to Horowitz et al. (2015) I find no evidence that rebel leaders' combat experience could make leaders more realistic and shorten the duration of civil wars. Results indicate that battle-hardened rebels continue to contribute to longer civil wars.

Table A7. Cox proportional hazards results

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader training abroad	1.002 (.10)	
Rebel leader military training		0.677** (.10)
Rebel group training former rebels		1.131 (.14)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.541** (.28)	1.590** (.27)
Rebel leader top leader	1.231 (.17)	1.264** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.034 (.10)	1.077 (.11)
External support	1.382* (.24)	1.323 (.23)
Conflict intensity	0.472*** (.11)	0.490*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.375* (.23)	1.352* (.22)
Lootable goods	0.925 (.12)	0.904 (.11)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.842*** (.04)	0.838*** (.04)
Democracy	1.130 (.22)	1.283 (.25)
Active dyads	1.132** (.07)	1.127* (.07)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-763.312	-760.556

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Tables includes the training abroad variable from Acosta et al. (2021) and the training former rebels variable from Keels et al. (2020).

Table A8. Cox proportional hazards results

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader military training	0.677** (.10)	0.688** (.11)
Rebel leader culpable	1.445** (.24)	
Rebel leader prior occupation		1.016 (.01)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.675*** (.31)	1.583** (.29)
Rebel leader top leader	1.217** (.11)	1.165 (.14)
Rebel strength	1.063 (.10)	1.073 (.11)
External support	1.297 (.23)	1.275 (.23)
Conflict intensity	0.466*** (.11)	0.491*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.406** (.23)	1.438** (.24)
Lootable goods	0.908 (.12)	0.921 (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.839*** (.04)	0.827*** (.05)
Democracy	1.407 (.29)	1.254 (.26)
Active dyads	1.141** (.07)	1.153** (.08)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-759.183	-760.434

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table included the culpability variable from Prorok (2018) and the prior occupation from Acosta et al. (2021). *Rebel- leader culpable* shows if a leader was in power who is responsible for the conflict, e.g., founder of the rebel group. Rebel leader responsibility significantly increases the hazard of conflict termination; however, primary results remain robust.

Table A9. Cox proportional hazards results excluding coups

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader military training	0.670*** (.10)	0.658*** (.10)
Rebel leader military service		0.929 (.15)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.566** (.29)	1.563** (.28)
Rebel leader top leader	1.256** (.12)	1.258** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.095 (.10)	1.100 (.11)
External support	1.308 (.23)	1.297 (.23)
Conflict intensity	0.487*** (.11)	0.488*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.402** (.23)	1.406** (.23)
Lootable goods	0.917 (.12)	0.916 (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.840*** (.04)	0.839*** (.04)
Democracy	1.263 (.26)	1.247 (.26)
Active dyads	1.131* (.07)	1.126* (.07)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-760.973	-760.910

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table replicates the main findings excluding coups. No change of the primary results can be observed.

Table A10. Cox proportional hazards results

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
Rebel leader military training	0.658*** (.10)	0.616*** (.10)
State leader military training	0.858 (.21)	0.758 (.21)
State X rebel leader military training		1.812 (.71)
State leader leadership change	1.261 (.22)	1.269 (.23)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.624** (.30)	1.545** (.30)
Rebel leader top leader	1.247** (.12)	1.255** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.089 (.10)	1.086 (.10)
External support	1.322 (.23)	1.294 (.22)
Conflict intensity	0.478*** (.10)	0.478*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.427** (.24)	1.454** (.24)
Lootable goods	0.917 (.12)	0.912 (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.832*** (.04)	0.827*** (.05)
Democracy	1.215 (.25)	1.225 (.25)
Active dyads	1.120* (.07)	1.120* (.07)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-760.113	-759.625

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table includes state leaders' military training and the interaction term between rebel and state leaders. I assumed that state leaders who underwent military training could have the advantage of having experienced both sides, they were informally trained to fight, often with the aim to attack a state and are now in the position of defending and protecting these structures. Having undergone military training could give them the advantage of knowing the rebels' warfare and their military formation. State leaders with that background knowledge could be more aware of the conditions under which it is fruitful to continue the conflict or not than state leaders who served in a formal military. For instance, in 2005 former Hutu rebel, Pierre Nkurunziza became President of Burundi and the last Hutu rebel group, Paliphehutu-FNL, led by Jean Bosco Sindayigaya proposed to lay down weapons. State leaders' experience in military training might also change their position in bargaining because these leaders are more likely to make demands their adversary could fulfil without losing face. Simultaneously, making realistic demands also protects them from appearing too naïve when making concessions.

However, the results do not indicate that state leaders' military training matters for the duration of conflict.

Table A11. Competing risk models versus other termination types

Variable names	Model 1 Rebel -favourable outcome	Model 2 Government victory
Rebel leader military training	0.967 (.35)	0.319 (.26)
Rebel leader military service	0.732 (.31)	0.524 (.33)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.563 (.63)	3.734 (3.03)
Rebel leader top leader	2.139*** (.46)	0.245 (.21)
Rebel strength	1.242 (.33)	1.102 (.53)
External support	0.660 (.29)	0.313* (.21)
Conflict intensity	2.219** (.85)	0.266 (.27)
Territorial dispute	0.721 (.31)	1.165 (.73)
Lootable goods	1.934** (.58)	1.875 (1.06)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.483*** (.06)	0.704 (.16)
Democracy	3.141*** (1.20)	1.601 (1.19)
Active dyads	1.251* (.16)	0.288** (.15)
Observations	717	717
Log-likelihood	-201.48	-61.106

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A12. Cox proportional hazards results

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Rebel leader military training	0.673*** (.10)	0.641*** (.10)	0.669*** (.10)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.567** (.29)	1.791*** (.34)	1.581** (.29)
Rebel leader top leader	1.261** (.12)	1.182 (.13)	1.255** (.12)
Rebel strength	1.093 (.11)	1.091 (.13)	1.145 (.13)
Population size (ln)	1.093 (.10)		
Troop ratio		1.064 (.14)	
Rebel group size			0.858 (.16)
External support	1.304 (.23)	1.344 (.27)	1.321 (.22)
Conflict intensity	0.487*** (.11)	0.530*** (.12)	0.498*** (.11)
Territorial dispute	1.429** (.25)	1.491** (.28)	1.418** (.24)
Lootable goods	0.877 (.11)	0.970 (.14)	0.920 (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.787*** (.07)	0.846*** (.05)	0.840** (.04)
Democracy	1.292 (.26)	1.234 (.28)	1.261 (.26)
Active dyads	1.151** (.07)	1.178** (.08)	1.138** (.07)
Observations	717	717	717
Log-likelihood	-760.568	-640.431	-760.848

Notes: Hazard ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses.
Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP = gross domestic product.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table includes alternative control variables (population size, organizational size of the rebel group and troop ratio of the state army) that are known to influence the duration of civil wars.

V. Leader and Military Training Coding Rules

As discussed in the main text, the primary goal in coding leaders was to identify the individual at the head of the organization that holds ultimate decision-making power over key decisions (such as whether to sign a ceasefire). In practice, the coding process relied upon several pieces of information to determine each group's leader, as well as each leader's time in power. This process is detailed below.

Before discussing specific coding rules, however, a note on sources is necessary. Rebel leaders were included based on the RLCW (Doctor, 2020) and the ROLE dataset (Acosta et al., 2021). I also used Prorok's dataset of civil war leaders, 1980-2011 (2018) to verify the rebel leaders suggested in the other datasets. I added the missing leader till 2015 based on numerous sources. The information on state leaders was taken from the LEAD dataset (Ellis et al., 2015). However, it only contained data on head of states till 2002. All other state leaders were included with the dataset ARCHIGOS (Goemans et al., 2009). In some cases, even rebel websites were used when available. In the rare cases that sufficient information was not available to make a coding decision, leader's identity was coded as missing.

An individual is coded as the state leader if:

- The LEAD (1875–2004) and Archigos (1875-2015) dataset consulted agree that this is the effective ruler of an independent state in the given year. Their coding rules were: In Parliamentary regimes, the Prime Minister is coded as the ruler, in Presidential systems, the president and in communist states they generally coded the Chairman of the Party as the effective ruler.

An individual is coded as the rebel leader if:

- The RLCW dataset (1989 - 2014), the ROLE dataset (1950 - 2006) and the dataset of civil war leaders, 1980-2011 (Prorok, 2018) consulted agree that this individual is the organization's leader. They coded someone as rebel leader if the individual is the most responsible for exercising power in a rebel organization, not just the operations commander or organizational figurehead. In a small number of cases, it was not possible to verify the leader and then other sources were consulted.

Time concerns: If there were two or more leaders in power (e.g., due to elections or death) the leader with more time in power in the given year was chosen. If this was also not clear or there were elections in the middle of the year, the leader who was in charge for the first part of the year was selected.

Coding rules:

Military training:

- Description: Denotes whether a leader has undergone military training in a non-state armed group.
- Coding Rules: Check for evidence that a leader received training in military strategy and tactics from a military force. Training was not part of a regular military service.
- Coding: 0 = Leader has no military training. 1 = Leader has military training.

Military service:

- Description: Denotes whether a leader has participated in a formal military service.
- Coding Rules: Check for evidence that a leader served in the military as part of a regular military service.
- Coding: 0 = Leader did not serve in the military. 1 = Leader served in the military.

Combat experience:

- Description: Denotes whether a leader has had experience on the battlefield.
- Coding Rules: Check for evidence that leader was deployed to was engaged in military tasks in an active war zone where the leader could face the risk of death in combat. Combat experience could happen as either a state or non-state actor for both rebel and state leaders.
- Coding: 0 = Leader has no combat experience. 1 = Leader has combat experience.

References Appendix

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Appendix 2.4: Leaders' Prior Combat Experience

Contents:

I. Leader descriptive analyses

II. Correlation Matrix

III. Robustness Checks

IV. Case selection

V. Leaders and Combat Experience Coding Rules

I. Leader descriptive analyses

Table 1. State leaders with combat experience who signed a peace agreement (1989-2015)

State leader name	Conflict between	Peace agreement
ALI SEIBOU	NIGER & FLAA	06/10/1993
BAMBANG YUDHOYONO	INDONESIA & ACEH	10/12/2005
DENIS NGUESSO	CONGO & COCOYES	12/29/1999
DENIS NGUESSO	CONGO & NTSILOULOUS	12/29/1999
DENIS NGUESSO	CONGO & NINJAS	12/29/1999
EHUD OLMERT	ISRAEL & FATAH	11/27/2007
EMOMALI RAHMON	TAJIKISTAN & UTO	12/23/1996
FRANCOIS BOZIZE	CAR & UFDR	04/13/2007
FRANCOIS BOZIZE	CAR & CPJP	06/12/2011
IDRISS DEBY	CHAD & CSNPD	08/11/1994
IDRISS DEBY	CHAD & FUCD	12/24/2006
IDRISS DEBY	CHAD & FNT	10/12/1994
IDRISS DEBY	CHAD & FARF	05/07/1998
JOAQUIM CHISSANO	MOZAMBIQUE & RENAMO	10/04/1992
JOSEPH KABILA	DR CONGO & CNDP	03/23/2009
JOSEPH KABILA	DR CONGO & RCD	12/17/2002
PIERRE NKURUNZIZA	BURUNDI & PALIPEHUTU-FNL	12/04/2008
PIERRE NKURUNZIZA	BURUNDI & PALIPEHUTU-FNL	09/07/2006
SALVA KIIR	SOUTH SUDAN & SSDM/A COBRA FACTION	10/09/2014
SALVA KIIR	SOUTH SUDAN & SSDM/A	02/27/2012
SAMUEL DOE	LIBERIA & NPFL	02/21/1990
YITZHAK RABIN	ISRAEL & FATAH	09/13/1993

Table 2. Battle-hardened rebel leaders in ongoing conflicts with failed negotiations (1989-2015)

Rebel leader name	Conflict between
ABDUL RAHMAN HAJI AHMADI	IRAN & PJAK
ADOUM TOGOI	CHAD & MDJT
AHMAD SHAH MASSOUD	AFGHANISTAN & UIFSA
AHMED OMAR JESS	SOMALIA & SPM
AHMED REFAI TAHA	EGYPT & AL-GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA
AL HAQ MURAD EBRAHIM	PHILIPPINES & MILF
BAITULLAH MEHSUD	PAKISTAN & TTP
BENITO TIAMZON	PHILIPPINES & CCP
BERTRAND BISIMWA	DR CONGO & M23
BO MYA	MYANMAR & KNU
BO NAT KHANN MWAY	MYANMAR & DKBA 5
CALLIXTE MBARUSHIMANA	RWANDA & FDLR
DAWUD IBSA AYANA	ETHOPIA & OLF
EUGENE KOTY	CHAD &CNR
HASHIM SALAMAT	PHILIPPINES & MILF
HENRIQUE N'ZITA TIAGO	ANGOLA & FLEC-FAC
HISSENE HABRE	CHAD & MDD
IBRAHIM AG BAHANGA	MALI & ATNMC
IYAD AG GHALY	MALI & ANSAR DINE
JAMIL MUKULU	UGANDA & ADF
JONAS SAVIMBI	ANGOLA & UNITA
JOSEPH KONY	UGANDA & LRA
KHU HTE BUPEH	MYANMAR & KNPP
KHUDOBERDIYEV	TAJIKISTAN & FORCES OF KHUDOBERDIYEV
KHUN SA	MYANMAR & MTA
LANYAW ZAWNG HRA	MYANMAR & KIO
MARAN BRANG SENG	MYANMAR & KIO
MICHEL AOUN	LEBAN & FORCES OF MICHEL AOUN
MOHAMED FARRAH AIDID	SOMALIA & USC/SNA
MURAT KARAYILAN	TURKEY & PKK
NICOLAS BAUTISTA	COLOMBIA & ELN
NOUREDDINE ADAM	CAR & SELEKA
OSCAR RAMIREZ	PERU & SENDERO LUMINOSO
PANG FA	MYANMAR & SSPP
PETER OTAI	UGANDA & UPA
POL POT	VIETNAM & KR
RACHID ABOU TOURAB	ALGERIA & GIA
RANJAN DAIMARY	INDIA & NDFB-RD
SAW MUTU SAY POE	MYANMAR & KNU
SAW TAMLABAW	MYANMAR & KNU
SHANTU LARMA	BANGALESH & JSS/SB
VELUPILLAI PRABHAKARAN	SRI LANKA & LTTE

Table 3. Rebel leaders' occupation with no combat experience

Rebel leaders	N =161	Percentage of leaders
Teacher	23	14.29
Activist	17	10.56
Other	16	9.94
Career politician	12	7.45
Career military man	11	6.83
Religious leader	9	5.59
Businessman	8	4.97
Doctor in medicine	6	3.73
Labourer	5	3.11
Engineer	4	2.48
Journalist	3	1.86
Policeman	3	1.86
Writer	2	1.24
Scientist	2	1.24
Lawyer	1	0.62

The occupation of 39 leaders could not be confirmed with the ROLE Dataset.

Table 4. State leaders' occupation with no combat experience

State leaders	N =155	Percentage of leaders
Career politician	76	49.03
Career military man	14	9.03
Engineer	12	7.74
Teacher	12	7.74
Businessman	10	6.45
Activist	6	3.87
Doctor in medicine	4	2.58
Policeman	4	2.58
Journalist	3	1.94
Writer	2	1.29
Scientist	2	1.29
Religious leader	1	0.65
Lawyer	1	0.65

The occupation was mostly taken from the LEAD Dataset.

II. Correlation Matrix

Table 5. Correlation Matrix for Variables in Model 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. State leader combat	1											
2. Rebel leader combat	-0.05	1										
3. State support	0.11	-0.02	1									
4. Rebel support	0.00	0.01	-0.19	1								
5. Rebel strength	-0.06	0.07	0.28	-0.02	1							
6. Army size	-0.03	0.03	0.24	0.03	0.44	1						
7. Intensity	-0.00	0.03	0.25	0.12	0.24	0.15	1					
8. Territorial dispute	-0.01	-0.00	-0.25	0.11	0.37	-0.26	-0.14	1				
9. Active dyads	-0.10	0.07	0.00	0.04	0.06	0.17	-0.00	-0.32	1			
10. Past negotiations	-0.05	-0.07	-0.06	0.07	0.13	0.05	0.09	-0.12	-0.03	1		
11. GDP	-0.18	0.02	-0.25	0.06	-0.48	-0.38	-0.05	0.52	-0.20	-0.02	1	
12. Democracy	-0.11	-0.05	-0.13	-0.03	-0.21	-0.24	0.02	0.42	-0.18	0.02	0.65	1

GDP=gross domestic product.

III. Robustness Checks

Table 6. Competing risks of a peace agreement and other military experiences

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
State leader prior rebel		1.415 (.86)	
Rebel leader combat experience	0.401* (.16)	0.422* (.17)	
State leader combat X training	11.418** (8.99)		
State leader combat X service	2.984 (2.17)		
State leader no combat X service			0.236† (.18)
Rebel leader no combat X service			5.791** (3.86)
State leader leadership change	1.182 (.71)	1.025 (.63)	1.053 (.68)
Rebel leader leadership change	2.215† (1.01)	2.005 (.90)	1.812 (.91)
Rebel leader top leader	1.515 (.49)	1.963* (.54)	1.622† (.47)
Foreign state support	3.197† (2.09)	3.018* (1.65)	3.981* (2.60)
Foreign rebel support	1.107 (.77)	1.064 (.68)	0.885 (.55)
Rebel strength	1.175 (.66)	0.988 (.48)	0.756 (.39)
Army size	0.427 (.28)	0.412 (.31)	0.407 (.29)
Intensity	0.966 (.75)	0.793 (.64)	0.640 (.50)
Territorial dispute	0.001**(.01)	0.001** (.01)	0.001** (.01)
Active dyads	1.327 (.37)	1.176 (.34)	1.256 (.33)
Number of past negotiations	1.337** (.11)	1.350** (.13)	1.415** (.13)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.573** (.10)	0.513** (.07)	0.516** (.08)
Democracy	0.616 (.51)	1.458 (1.39)	0.951 (.97)
Observations	1,313	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-60.394	-63.531	-63.664

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 7. Competing risks of a peace agreement with combat experience and age

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
State leader combat experience	4.351* (2.63)	50.137 (157.51)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.403* (.16)	0.008 (.02)
State leader age	0.993 (.04)	1.023 (.03)
Rebel leader age	1.014 (.03)	0.977 (.01)
State leader combat X age		0.962 (.06)
Rebel leader combat X age		1.084 (.06)
State leader leadership change	0.960 (.60)	1.025 (.63)
Rebel leader leadership change	2.080 (1.08)	2.005 (.90)
Rebel leader top leader	1.449 (.56)	1.963* (.54)
Foreign state support	2.112 (1.64)	3.018* (1.65)
Foreign rebel support	1.113 (.79)	1.064 (.68)
Rebel strength	1.631 (.81)	0.988 (.48)
Army size	0.296 (.25)	0.412 (.31)
Intensity	1.035 (.85)	0.793 (.64)
Territorial dispute	0.001**(.01)	0.001** (.01)
Active dyads	1.306 (.37)	1.176 (.34)
Number of past negotiations	1.355** (.12)	1.350** (.13)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.551** (.11)	0.513** (.07)
Democracy	0.850 (.75)	1.458 (1.39)
Observations	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-57.296	-63.531

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 8. Competing risks of a peace agreement and leaders' responsibility for the conflict

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
State leader combat experience		4.921** (2.60)	4.605** (2.56)
Rebel leader combat experience		0.364*(.16)	0.406* (.17)
State leader responsible	2.990 (2.99)	1.947 (1.45)	1.998 (1.57)
Rebel leader responsible	1.570 (.77)	1.441 (0.84)	1.654 (.99)
State leader leadership change			1.099 (.74)
Rebel leader leadership change			2.328† (.95)
Foreign state support	3.594† (2.56)	2.945† (1.84)	2.664 (1.58)
Foreign rebel support	0.814 (.49)	1.117 (.70)	1.074 (.71)
Rebel strength	0.670 (.30)	1.906 (.84)	1.465 (.76)
Army size	0.424 (.32)	0.218† (.18)	0.337 (.24)
Intensity	0.644 (.50)	0.910 (.68)	0.892 (.72)
Territorial dispute	0.001**(.01)	0.001**(.01)	0.001** (.01)
Active dyads	1.213 (.30)	1.463 (.37)	1.380 (.38)
Number of past negotiations	1.327** (.13)	1.351** (.11)	1.361** (.12)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.488** (.08)	0.550** (.09)	0.537** (.10)
Democracy	1.181 (1.05)	0.723 (.55)	0.823 (.65)
Observations	1,313	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-67.820	-61.950	-60.822

** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.1. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 9. Competing risks of a peace agreement and ceasefires versus other outcomes

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
State leader combat experience	3.024** (1.19)	2.472* (1.03)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.543† (.18)	0.527† (.17)
State leader leadership change		2.422* (1.02)
Rebel leader leadership change		2.286* (.85)
Foreign state support	2.342† (1.11)	2.198† (1.08)
Foreign rebel support	1.125 (.41)	0.958 (.37)
Rebel strength	1.442 (.43)	1.148 (.36)
Army size	1.005 (.43)	1.245 (.49)
Intensity	0.490 (.34)	0.455 (.31)
Territorial dispute	5.358**(2.69)	6.139** (3.01)
Active dyads	1.596** (.27)	1.595* (.30)
Number of past negotiations	1.371** (.08)	1.433** (.10)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.964 (.13)	0.898 (.12)
Democracy	0.431 (.32)	0.473 (.33)
Observations	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-131.011	-124.555

** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.1. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 10. Competing risks of other outcomes versus other termination types

Variable names	Model 1 Victory state	Model 2 Victory rebels
State leader combat experience	1.098 (0.76)	0.173 (.20)
Rebel leader combat experience	1.750 (1.07)	6.346 (14.59)
Foreign state support	0.423 (0.34)	0.818 (1.03)
Foreign rebel support	0.633 (.34)	2.382 (2.81)
Rebel strength	1.606 (.84)	1.371 (1.26)
Army size	0.736 (.29)	0.826 (.32)
Intensity	3.198* (1.44)	5.636** (3.57)
Territorial dispute	0.879 (.65)	0.695 (.52)
Active dyads	0.894 (.19)	1.122 (.25)
Number of past negotiations	0.842 (.13)	1.036 (.15)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.660 (.19)	0.328† (.21)
Democracy	2.394 (2.05)	18.776** (21.17)
Observations	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-69.039	-30.518

** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.1. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 11. Competing risks of a peace agreement controlling for type of conflict

Variable names	Model 1 Excluding coups	Model 2 Excluding territo-rial conflicts	Model 3 Excluding govern-mental conflicts
State leader combat experience	3.659** (1.42)	3.808** (1.73)	5.990 (7.89)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.485† (.19)	0.403* (.18)	1.179 (1.72)
Foreign state support	1.613 (.74)	1.861 (.92)	0.001** (.01)
Foreign rebel support	1.124 (.38)	1.012 (.36)	3.714† (2.68)
Rebel strength	2.126* (.79)	2.123* (.77)	2.115 (3.59)
Army size	0.237* (.14)	0.210* (.13)	33.529 (121.05)
Intensity	0.990 (.61)	0.776 (.61)	1.593 (1.78)
Territorial dispute	0.686 (.41)		
Active dyads	1.404* (.21)	1.539* (.27)	0.639 (.40)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.518** (.09)	0.541** (.10)	0.642 (.24)
Democracy	2.279† (1.12)	2.081 (1.50)	6.137 (7.81)
Observations	1258	713	547
Log-likelihood	-128.655	-91.173	-17.071

** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.1. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 12. Competing risks of a peace agreement and contrasting ideologies

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2
State leader combat experience	3.847* (2.24)	3.861* (2.42)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.301** (.13)	0.432* (.18)
Contrasting ethnic ideologies	0.261* (.14)	
Contrasting religious ideologies		2.334 (.53)
State leader leadership change	0.831 (.46)	0.952 (.53)
Rebel leader leadership change	1.492 (.73)	2.025 (.85)
Rebel leader top leader	1.513 (.49)	1.644 (.54)
Foreign state support	1.638 (1.10)	2.659 (1.57)
Foreign rebel support	1.196 (.70)	1.404 (.90)
Rebel strength	1.533 (.66)	1.573 (.65)
Army size	0.367 (.32)	0.333 (.25)
Intensity	0.973 (.68)	0.910 (.64)
Territorial dispute	0.001** (.01)	0.001** (.01)
Active dyads	1.152 (.31)	1.311 (.35)
Number of past negotiations	1.344** (.11)	1.368** (.11)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.613** (.12)	0.508** (.10)
Democracy	0.789 (.56)	1.194 (.99)
Observations	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-58.525	-60.391

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

Table 13. Competing risks of a peace agreement controlling for negotiations, mediation, and concessions

Variable names	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
State leader combat experience	3.894** (1.57)	3.799** (1.49)	2.446* (.95)	3.644** (1.46)
Rebel leader combat experience	0.478† (.19)	0.517† (.20)	0.644 (.27)	0.496† (.20)
Years since negotiations (ln)	1.110 (.09)			
Negotiations ever		3.276 (2.53)		
Mediation			6.493** (2.99)	
Strong concessions				1.038 (.03)
Foreign state support	1.563 (.71)	1.503 (.70)	1.368**(.61)	1.764 (.81)
Foreign rebel support	1.153 (.39)	1.070 (.37)	1.206 (.53)	1.122 (.38)
Rebel strength	2.292* (.90)	2.397* (.96)	1.658 (.65)	2.068 (.79)
Army size	0.229* (.14)	0.210* (.14)	0.157* (.12)	0.213 (.13)
Intensity	1.001 (.61)	1.137 (.67)	0.797 (.47)	0.950 (.56)
Territorial dispute	0.653 (.39)	0.555 (.33)	0.329 (.22)	0.717 (.42)
Active dyads	1.423* (.21)	1.434* (.24)	1.325** (.23)	1.427 (.22)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.511** (.08)	0.546** (.09)	0.580** (.09)	0.478 (.09)
Democracy	2.378† (1.19)	2.318* (1.13)	1.648 (.83)	2.036 (1.00)
Observations	1,313	1,313	1,313	1,313
Log-likelihood	-128.283	-127.045	-119.395	-128.162

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Subhazard ratios are reported. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Clustered on civil war dyad. GDP=gross domestic product.

IV. Case selection

The following figures show the most influential cases for the statistical analysis. Positive residuals suggest that conflicts ended sooner in peace agreements than expected with these leaders in power while negative residuals would indicate that peace agreements were later achieved.

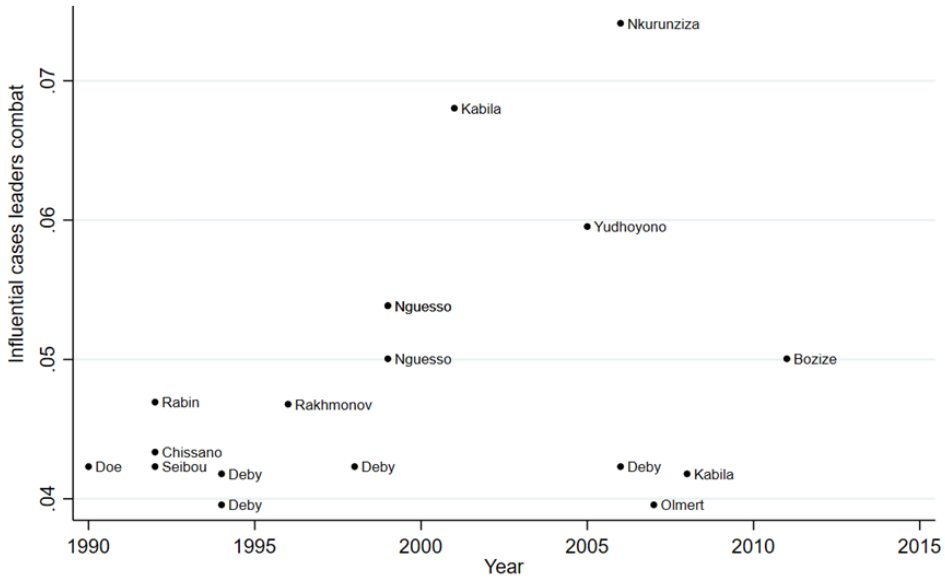

Figure 1. Most influential cases of state leaders with combat experience on the likelihood of peace agreements.

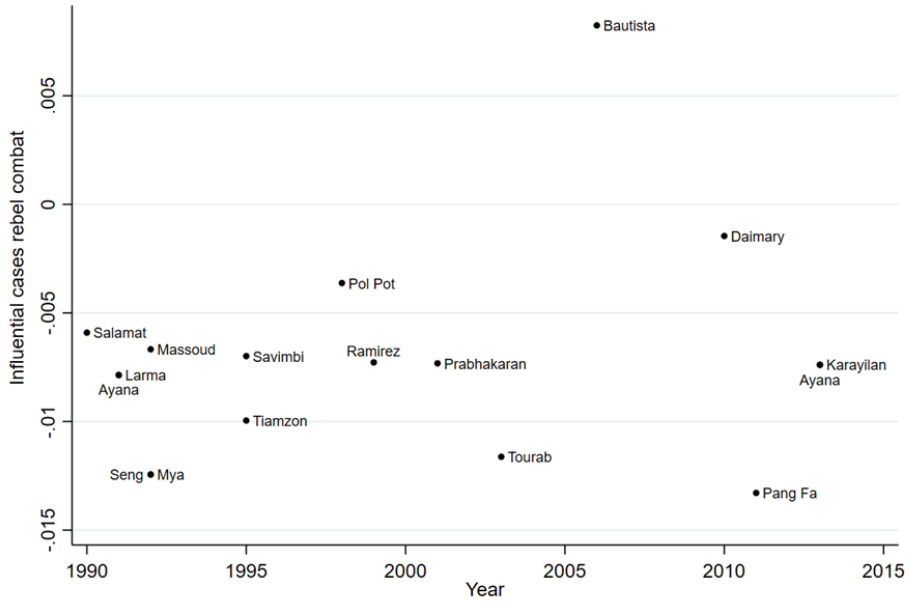

Figure 2. Most influential cases of rebel leaders with combat experience on the likelihood of non-peace outcomes.

V. Leader and Combat Training Coding Rules

As discussed in the main text, the primary goal in coding leaders was to identify the individual at the head of the organization or government that holds ultimate decision-making power over whether to sign a peace agreement. In practice, the coding process relied upon several pieces of information to determine each group's leader, as well as each leader's time in power. This process is detailed below.

Before discussing specific coding rules, however, a note on sources is necessary. First, most state leaders came from the LEAD data set (Ellis, Horowitz & Stam, 2015)). However, it only contained data on head of states till 2002. All other state leaders were included with the dataset ARCHIGOS (Goemans, Gleditsch & Chiozza, 2009). Rebel leaders were included based on the RLCW (Rebel Leaders in Civil War Dataset) dataset (Doctor, 2020). In many cases it remained difficult to identify the rebel leader in charge. A guiding point was the PA-X database (Bell & Badanjak, 2019), which shows who signed the respective peace agreement. As such, the main rebel leader of the All Tripura Tribal Force, Ranjit Debbarma, was not the one who made the decision to end the conflict with the Indian government in 1992—instead, it was another rebel leader, namely Lalit Debbarma, along with his followers. In many cases, several articles, and numerous web sources were used to identify rebel leaders and determine their military experience. Sometimes, even rebel websites were used where available. In the rare cases that sufficient information was not available to make a coding decision, leader's identity was coded as missing. Based upon these coding rules, 553 leaders across were identified. The majority of cases were straightforward to code.

Specific coding rules for identifying leaders were as follows:

An individual is coded as the state leader if:

• The LEAD (1875–2004) and Archigos (1875-2015) dataset consulted agree that this is the individual leader in charge in the given year. If there were two or more leaders in power (e.g., due to elections) the leader with more time in power was chosen.

An individual is coded as the rebel leader if:

• The RLCW dataset (1989 - 2014), the ROLE dataset (1950 - 2006) and the dataset of civil war leaders, 1980-2011 (Prorok, 2018) consulted agree that this individual is the organization's leader. They coded someone as rebel leader if the individual is the most responsible for exercising power in a rebel organization, not just the operations commander or organizational figurehead. In a small number of cases, it was not possible to verify the leader and then the PA-X dataset was consulted in cases of peace agreements. In the case of new elections in the rebel group or death of the rebel leader, the leader with more time in power was chosen.

Time concerns: If there were two or more leaders in power (e.g., due to elections or death) the leader with more time in power in the given year was chosen. If this was also not clear or there were elections in the middle of the year, the leader who was in charge for the first part of the year was selected.

Coding rules for combat experience (taken from LEAD and ROLE):

- Description: Denotes whether a leader has had experience on the battlefield.
- Coding Rules: Check for evidence that leader was deployed to was engaged in military tasks in an active war zone where the leader could face the risk of death in combat. Combat experience could happen as either a state or non-state actor for both rebel and state leaders prior to becoming leaders. Combat experience cannot be assumed from leader's general experience in a state military or nonstate armed group. Code 1 if any of the following information can be found:
    - There is evidence that the leader fought with an army or a group.
    - The leader was a rank-and-file member of a rebel, insurgent, or terrorist group in an active warzone.
    - The leader was a rank-and-file soldier deployed to an active warzone.
- Coding: 0 =Leader has no combat experience. 1 =Leader has combat experience.

References appendix

Acosta B, Huang R and Silverman D (2022) Introducing ROLE: A Database of Rebel Leader Attributes in Armed Conflict. *Journal of Peace Research* 0(0).

Doctor, Austin C (2020) A Motion of No Confidence: Leadership and Rebel Fragmentation. *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5(4): 598–616.

Ellis, Cali M, Michael C Horowitz & Allan C Stam (2015) Introducing the LEAD Data Set. *International Interactions* 41(4): 718–741.

Goemans, Henk E, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch & Giacomo Chiozza (2009) Introducing Archigos: A dataset of political leaders. *Journal of Peace Research* 46(2): 269–283.

Prorok, Alyssa K (2018) Led Astray: Leaders and the Duration of Civil War. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(6): 1179–1204.

English abstract

This thesis attempts to explain why state and rebel leaders prolong civil wars or end them through peace agreements. This is of both academic and political relevance, as leaders are often able to influence the outcome and duration of conflicts. To this end, this thesis examines the relationship between leaders' individual characteristics and structural and institutional conditions. I argue that state and rebel leaders' individual characteristics influence their core beliefs and values and thus their decision-making in civil wars. More specifically, I show that some individual characteristics are conducive to peace, while others are detrimental in terms of duration and outcome of conflicts. I provide evidence for this theoretical assumption in the form of four articles, covering:

1) the biographical characteristics of a state leader who signed a peace agreement,

2) the relevance of exposure to violence for support for a peace referendum,

3) the negative effect of rebel leaders' military training on the duration of civil wars, and

4) the positive impact of state leaders' combat experience – and the partially negative impact of the same among rebel leaders – on the likelihood of peace agreements being signed.

I conclude that under conditions of uncertainty, leaders' individual characteristics matter for the outcome and duration of civil wars.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

In dieser Arbeit wird versucht zu erklären, warum Staatsoberhäupter und Rebellenanführer zeitweise Bürgerkriege verlängern oder sie durch Friedensabkommen beenden. Dies ist sowohl von wissenschaftlicher als auch von politischer Bedeutung, da Personen in Führungspositionen oft die Möglichkeit haben, den Ausgang und die Dauer von Konflikten zu beeinflussen. Zu diesem Zweck wird in dieser Arbeit, die Beziehung zwischen den individuellen Merkmalen und den strukturellen und institutionellen Bedingungen untersucht. Dabei gehe ich von der These aus, dass die individuellen Eigenschaften von Staatsoberhäupter und Rebellenanführer ihre Grundüberzeugungen und Werte und damit ihre Entscheidungsfindung in Bürgerkriegen beeinflussen. Genauer gesagt zeige ich, dass einige individuelle Eigenschaften förderlich für den Frieden sind, während andere sich für die Dauer und den Ausgang eines Konflikts von als nachteilig erweisen. Ich belege diese theoretische Annahme in Form von vier Aufsätzen zu folgenden Themen:

1) Merkmale des Präsidenten und das Friedensabkommen in Kolumbien 2016.

2) Gewalterfahrung und die Unterstützung von Friedensreferenden.

3) Militärische Ausbildung von Rebellenanführern und die Dauer von Bürgerkriegen.

4) Kampferfahrung von Staatsoberhäupter und Rebellenanführer und Friedensabkommen.

Ich komme zu dem Schluss, dass unter den Bedingungen der Ungewissheit die individuellen Eigenschaften der Führungspersonen für den Ausgang und die Dauer von Bürgerkriegen von Bedeutung sein können.

List of publications to date

Title	Article information	Date published
Political leadership for peace processes: Juan Manuel Santos –Between hawk and dove	Leadership (2020) Vol. 17 (1) DOI: 10.1177/1742715020951229	14 August 2020

Eidesstattliche Versicherung

Ich, Juliana Tappe Ortiz, versichere [1] an Eides statt, dass ich die Dissertation mit dem Titel „Peace Spoilers and Peace Supports: How individual characteristics influence the outcome and duration of civil conflicts “ für eine Dissertation an der Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften der Universität Hamburg selbst nach § 6 Abs. 3 der Promotionsordnung der Fakultät Wirtschafts - und Sozialwissenschaften vom 18. Januar 2017 verfasst habe. [2] Andere als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel habe ich nicht benutzt. [3]

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Ort/Datum Unterschrift Doktorandin

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Erklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich, Juliana Tappe Ortiz, dass ich keine kommerzielle Promotionsberatung in Anspruch genommen habe. Die Arbeit wurde nicht schon einmal in einem früheren Promotionsverfahren angenommen oder als ungenügend beurteilt.

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