Are former rebel parties more likely to use violence during elections?

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Introduction

From the Bharatiya Janata Party in India, to the Kenya African Nation Union to the African National Congress in South Africa, political parties are often implicated in violence during elections. Whether through the instigation of ethnic riots or through mass violence that displaces hundreds of thousands, parties are frequently linked to violence in many states around the world. In this paper, we analyze whether political parties that emerge from former rebel groups are more likely to engage in electoral violence than other types of parties in post-civil war elections. Although there is a considerable amount of literature on electoral violence and its causes (Klopp and Kamungi, 2007; Hickman, 2009; Hoglund 2009; Hoglund and Piyarathne, 2009; Boone, 2011; Fjelde and Hoglund 2014; Norris 2014) most of the attention has been on how incumbent political parties use electoral violence for political advantage. By and large, the question of the use of violence by rebel parties has been largely ignored, which is surprising given the growing attention being paid to these parties by scholars, and because such parties are derived from groups that engaged in violence for political purposes (de Zeeuw 2007; Manning 2007; Ishiyama and Batta 2011; Ishiyama and Marshall 2015; Manning and Smith 2016; Söderberg-Kovacs and Hatz, 2016; Sindre 2016).

In this paper, we examine whether former rebel parties are more likely to engage in electoral violence when compared to other parties. In many ways because of combat experience and a trained cadre of former fighters, it may be the case that former rebel parties are more likely to rely on violent acts in order to pursue electoral objectives, particularly in the first elections after the end of a civil conflict. Further, we also suggest that certain types of rebel parties, particularly those that are based more on "resource capture" are more likely to engage in violent acts during elections than those that are based on popular mobilization.

We test these propositions below and find that former rebel parties in Africa are in fact more likely to engage in electoral violence than other political parties. However, in contrast with our theoretical expectations, we do not find that rebel parties based on "resource capture" are more likely to commit election violence. We also find that parties competing in presidential elections are more likely to use electoral violence than parties competing in legislative elections alone, and that conflict duration influences the use of election violence. Our findings not only have important implications for post-conflict societies, they offer several promising avenues for future research. The following section reviews the relevant literature on electoral violence. As we discuss, while a large amount of scholarly research exists on electoral violence, rebel parties have largely been excluded from this body of research. It is to this literature that we now turn.

Literature

There has been an extensive literature on electoral violence. Although there is a consensus that elections themselves do not necessarily cause violence, there is widespread agreement that political tensions result from intense competition (Norris, 2014; Norris, Frank and Martinez i Coma, 2015). In the past, electoral violence was often seen as a way for authoritarian regimes to intimidate the political opposition and maintain power

(Huntington, 1968, 1991; Diamond, 2002; Levitsky and Way, 2002). However, more recently scholars have pointed to violence as part of an electoral strategy, with a clearly defined goal, and not just used by authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes to maintain power but as a tool to affect the outcome of electoral competition (Klopp and Kamungi, 2007; Hickman, 2009; Hoglund 2009; Hoglund and Piyarathne, 2009; Boone, 2011).

What drives electoral violence? Scholars have identified several contextual factors as well as those associated with elections themselves. These include the existence of ethnic tensions (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; Horowitz, 1985; 2001; Wilkinson, 2004; Ticku 2015) and a country's socio-economic situation as factors which impact escalation of violence generally (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Londregan and Poole, 2011). Further, some scholars have suggested an institutional link with electoral violence. For instance, several have pointed to the impact of the type of electoral system, suggesting electoral violence is more likely under certain electoral rules than others (Lijphart 1977). Lijphart (1977) and Reynolds (1999) argue that Proportional Representation (PR) systems promotes inter group accommodation and hence prevent conflict. On the other hand, Horowitz (1985) and other critics of consociationalism suggest that PR institutionalizes and hardens group differences and increases the likelihood of violence, whereas majoritarian systems lead to moderation and vote pooling, which may reduce radicalism and violence. However, the effect of electoral systems on the likelihood of electoral violence is probably conditional. Fjelde and Hoglund (2014) for instance, argue that electoral violence is more likely in countries with majoritarian rules and small electoral districts than it is in PR systems. However, this is in part because small magnitude districts interact with the size of ethnic groups—winner- take-all elections tend to lead to the exclusion of large ethnopolitical groups and this leads to a heightening of tension and a greater likelihood of electoral violence.

Others have pointed to the effects of contentious elections. Pippa Norris (2014) argues, for instance, that contentious elections and evidence of electoral malpractice interact with other contextual factors, such as regime type, ethno-linguistic factors and socio-economic variables, as well as experience with civil war that leads to the escalation of violence. Electoral malpractice exacerbates political grievances (that generally already exist) fueling mass demonstrations and violence (Norris, 2014).

Still, other scholars have focused on *who* engages in electoral violence. Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski (2014) suggest that incumbents are more likely to rely on violence to harass and intimidate opposition candidates and voters in order to stave off electoral defeat. Pevehouse, Straus, and Taylor (2017) suggest that incumbents are most likely to commit electoral violence but suggest that the type of violence employed is different in the pre-election period and the post-election period (see also Kuhn 2015).

Related to who commits violence is *how* it is used. Klopp and Zuern (2007) argue that incumbents use violence selectively, including the security forces, informal pro-government militias and mass rallies to depress voter turnout in electorally important areas and reduce the support for opposition parties. However, violence can also be used to "positive" effect. Wilkinson (2004) for instance, demonstrates that politicians, particularly incumbents, use electoral violence for strategic advantage. In particular, he shows that Indian politicians instigate inter-ethnic riots to mobilize support for the candidates of their ethnic group when the electoral contest is close. Other research finds support for Wilkinson's contention that politicians in India reap electoral benefit from Hindu-Muslim

ethnic riots (Dhattiwala and Biggs 2012; Ticku 2015). Relatedly, Ar-Namys, a political party in Kyrgyzstan, benefited electorally from riots between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the summer of 2010 (Huskey and Hill 2013). Thus, there are electoral benefits to be derived from ethnic riots, and such violence is sometimes used to influence elections in ethnically divided societies.

Although there has been much focus on whether regime incumbents and ethnic parties use electoral violence for electoral benefit, there is little or no work on whether former rebel parties are likely to engage in electoral violence. There indeed has been in the past decade or so, an explosion in the number of studies that have examined the process by which former rebel organizations have "transformed" after the end of a conflict. This work generally has focused on whether former rebel groups decide to adapt to, evade, or exit the post war political arena (Manning 2007; de Zeeuw 2007; Manning and Smith 2016; Söderberg-Kovacs and Hatz 2016) the organizational transformation of the rebel organization (Ishiyama and Batta 2011; Sindre 2016), the candidate recruitment of former rebel parties (Ishiyama and Marshall 2015) or on the electoral performance of such parties (Allison 2006; 2010; Ishiyama and Widmeier 2013; Sindre 2016). More recently, some have examined the "downstream effects" of including such former rebel groups into the post war political process (Suazo 2013; Marshall and Ishiyama 2016; Rudloff and Findley 2016; Lyons 2016). Nonetheless, this work has largely examined whether the inclusion of rebel groups leads to a sustainable peace or democracy, rather than specifically how such rebel parties behave in the post-war political environment (Stedman 1997; Blaydes and De Maio 2010; Joshi and Mason 2011; Suazo 2013).

However, by and large, rebel parties are absent from studies of electoral violence. This is surprising because there is good reason to believe that former armed groups, and especially former rebel parties, would be well positioned to employ violence for political advantage, because 1) they are the most likely to represent aggrieved constituents (which is why they fought the anti-government civil war to begin with) and 2) because as a former armed group, they are likely to retain the personnel trained in violence and tactics, and in some cases the weapons, to engage in violence for political advantage. Thus, we would expect that rebel parties should be more likely than other political competitors to engage in electoral violence.

Of course, this would depend on both the characteristics of the political environment and the characteristics of the rebel group. In terms of the political environment, there are institutional, social and economic factors that would affect the likelihood of a rebel party engaging in electoral violence. This includes district magnitude or district size, with Fjelde and Hoglund (2014) contending that smaller district magnitudes are associated with the greater likelihood of electoral violence. Further, as the literature above suggests, regime type and the type of election are clearly related to the likelihood of violence. In particular, the more contentious an election, i.e. those that have greater stakes, such as presidential elections (Linz, 1990).

Further social conditions such as whether there is acute ethnic conflict, which raises the contentiousness of elections and the likelihood of electoral violence should also be taken into account. Other factors that may affect the contentiousness of elections include the level of wealth, and the effects of the presence of natural resource abundance (or the so called resource curse). Economic performance can also affect the likelihood of violence. In growing economies, the "pie" to divide is much bigger than in shrinking economies**,** and

the opportunity costs of engaging in violence are higher. Thus, wealth should act as a deterrent to engage in electoral violence. Another country-level control that is often cited as impacting the "style of politics" is the presence of natural resources, especially oil and gas (Ross 2004; 2001; Wantchekon and Jensen 2009). Most of these studies have pointed to the "rentier" effect that is inimical to democratic development, but others have argued that the natural resource curse also contributes to violence in part because the stakes of politics are quite high (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Ross 2004).

The experiences of the former rebel group should also impact the likelihood of using electoral violence after a civil war. In particular, the duration of the war and its intensity should impact the likelihood of the use of electoral violence by the rebel party, although there have been contradictory findings regarding the impact of both the intensity and length of civil wars on post war politics. For instance, some argue that the cost of the civil war may affect the stability of the peace after the war is over, with more intense and violent wars more likely to be followed by a resumption of conflict and the greater likelihood of the use of violence for political purposes (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). Further, some have noted that the duration of a conflict may also affect the duration of peace following the conflict end. On the one hand, long duration of wars may signify the existence of an intractable conflict that is not easily resolved (but easily restarted), and much more likely to produce electoral violence (Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Hartzell, Hoddie and Rothchild, 2008). In addition, how the civil war ends may impact the likelihood of the use of electoral violence. Certainly, the victory of one side over the other may dampen the likelihood of the use of violence by the rebel party.

A final rebel group characteristic that may increase the likelihood of using electoral violence later relates to the type of rebel group that fought the war. Weinstein (2007) for instance argues that groups that are endowed with different resources affect the type of recruits the rebel group attracts, which in turn affects how the rebel group behaves during civil wars. Rebel groups that rely on lootable resources or external sponsors tend to attract recruits motivated by material opportunism and likely to engage in predatory behaviors and greater violence. On the other hand, rebel groups that rely on "social endowments" (which includes ideology, but also ethnicity and kinship ties) to attract recruits, suggests a reliance on civilian support, which leads to restraints on the use of violence (Weinstein, 2007: 125).

Theory here:

Research Design

In this study, party election year is our unit of analysis. Our dependent variable is whether or not a given political party uses violence in an election year. Since election year is our unit of analysis, our dependent variable deals with violence that takes place in the run-up to elections as well as violence that occurs in the post-election context. There are, of course, a variety of ways to measure election violence. Indeed, studies of election violence have utilized a variety of data sources, including U.S. State Department Human Rights reports (Taylor, Pevehouse, and Straus, 2017), Political Instability Task Force data (PITF) (Butcher and Goldsmith 2017), the National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy dataset (Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski 2014) as well as event datasets

such as The Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset and the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) (Goldsmith 2015; 2015a; Fjelde and Hoglund 2014; Salehyan and Linebarger 2015). While datasets such as PITF measure political instability by the presence of civil war, non-democratic regime changes, and instances of politicide and genocide, in this study we analyze violence that falls short of the type of violence seen during periods of civil war and extreme events such as genocide and politicide. In this regard, we follow other studies of election violence and use the SCAD data to measure election violence (Salehyan et al 2012).

SCAD is an events-based dataset that includes information on protests, riots, labor strikes, and armed violence in Africa and Latin America from 1990 through 2015 based on newswire articles from the Associated Press and Agence France Presse. For each conflict event, SCAD notes the actor(s) involved in each event but also includes a plethora of other information about each event, including the target(s) of the conflict event and the number of event participants. Since our study is concerned with the use of violence by African political parties in elections, any political party that participates in a violent conflict event in SCAD during an election year is coded a '1'. In this regard, parties that are identified as a participant in riots (event types 3 and 4 in SCAD) and parties that are identified as a participant in militant events such as pro-government violence (event type 7), anti-government violence (event type 8) and extra-government violence (event type 9) during election years are coded a '1' for that election year. It is important to note that since our dependent variable is whether or not a party is involved in violent social conflict, we exclude protests and other non-violent conflict events from our analysis. In addition, it is important to note we are focused on violence that occurs during elections and are not necessarily concerned with the specific motivations for violence. In other words, some of the violent events in the data are anti-government in nature, while others are events of pro-government repression. For our purposes, as long as a given party is identified as the participant in a violent conflict event in an election year, that year is coded a '1' in our analysis. Since our dependent variable is dichotomous, our statistical models utilize a logit specification.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	**Mean**	**Range**
Election Violence	0.220	0 – 1
Natural Resource Dependency	0.324	0 – 1
Former Rebel Party	0.288	0 – 1
Presidential Election	0.615	0 – 1
Democracy	0.189	0 – 1
Log. Average District Magnitude	1.347	0 – 4.21951
UN Peacekeeping	0.529	0 – 1
Rebel Victory	0.180	0 – 1
Log. GDP_{ppp}	24.199	20.89 – 27.23765
Log. $Oil\ Revenue_{/capita}$	1.879	0 – 7.977
Log. Battle Deaths	10.191	5.98 – 12.00977
Log. $Conflict\ Duration_{months}$	4.5183	2.48 – 6.35611

We test the effects of several explanatory variables in this study; descriptive statistics of the data are shown above in Table 1. The central explanatory variable of our study measures the identity of a post-conflict political party as either former rebel party or

not. Therefore the variable *Former Rebel Party* is equal to "1" when a rebel group actively places avowed candidates in competition for national office during an election year (Marshall and Ishiyama 2016; Marshall 2017). This variable equals "0" when a rebel group has merged with another establishment party or is itself an establishment party with no rebel history.[1]

Political institutions should be crucial to our understanding of electoral violence in post-conflict societies. *Presidential Election* is measured using a dichotomous variable where "1" dictates that the election panel year is associated with a presidential contest and "0" otherwise. *Average District Magnitude* (ADM, henceforth) was calculated by dividing the number of seats in a national legislature by the number of electoral districts. Due to the wide variance in ADM, this study takes the natural log of this variable so that single member district systems appear as zero. Data on these two institutional variables were collected using the IPU-PARLINE database. The regime-type of the post-conflict state provides the analyses substantive information of other political institutions and conditions that these election panels take place in. *Democracy* is a dichotomous variable measured using the PolityIV data, where "1" dictates a PolityIV score of six or higher and "0" dictates PolityIV score lower than six (Marshall and Jaggers; Davenport and Armstrong 2005).

The security situation for political parties following the cessation of hostilities may have a marked effect on the usage of political violence during elections. In many cases, it is the security dilemma from the process of disarming that causes an upsurge in violence and a reversion into civil war. To account for the post-conflict security situation, we control for conflict termination type and third-party intervention. *Rebel Victory* is a dichotomous variable used to measure conflict termination, where "1" dictates a political system where rebels were victorious in their collapse of the state and "0" dictates a political system that reached a negotiated outcome to the conflict (Brandt et al 2012). *UN Peacekeeping* is a dichotomous variable that indicates the presence of a UNPKO with a state-building mandate or not (see Fortna 2008; Mason and Joshi 2011).

In addition, this study also controls for the characteristics and legacy of the conflict itself, which may be connected to the post-conflict security situation. Due to the wide degree of variance and the disproportionate effect of a single unit change in both measures, the natural logs are tested. *Logged Battle Deaths* is a continuous variable used to measure the intensity of a civil conflict, utilizing the best and average estimates from Uppsala-PRIO Armed Conflict Battle Death Data (Lacina, Gleditsch, and Russett 2006). *Logged Conflict Duration* is a continuous variable that measures the number of months a civil conflict lasts, utilizing the Uppsala-PRIO Conflict Termination and Peace Settlement Data (Kreutz 2010).

Lastly, this study controls for the economic conditions of post-conflict society in Africa. Using Michael Ross's (2012) data, $Oil\ Revenue_{/capita}$ is used to measure the total

[1] Some rebel organizations merge into preexisting/establishment political parties directly following negotiations; though these organizations are technically part of the political process, joining an established political party does not follow the definition of party emergence set by Janda (1980). The remaining rebel organizations become active after a prolonged dormancy or fail to establish a viable party label: dissolving, becoming criminal enterprises, or returning to armed struggle.

oil and gas revenues as a percentage of the total population every country year. Using the World Bank data, *Gross Domestic Product* $_{purchasing\ power}$ is used to understand the level of economic development in each country during each election year. Due to the wide degree of variance and the disproportionate effect of a single unit change in both measures, the natural logs are tested.

Analysis

Table 2 provides binary logit analyses that test the theoretical propositions suggested by the literature. The results are presented as odds ratios with robust standard errors in parentheses and statistical significance reported at the 90%(*), 95%(**), and 99%(***) confidence levels. Odds ratios provide the substantive strength of a variable's probability of producing a change in the dependent variable. Odds Ratios below 1.000 are considered to be a negative effect on the pr(Y) and ratios above are considered to be a positive effect on the pr(Y). Ratios that linger near 1.000 are considered to have little to no substantive effect on the dependent variable despite their statistical significance. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) tests were conducted where all explanatory variables except conflict intensity and duration scored less than 2, finding no perfect correlation except in models using interaction terms. We control for both the intensity and duration of the conflict, but due to their collinear nature, we test their effects separately.

Table 2: Binary Logit Analyses of Election Violence in Post-Conflict African Elections by Political Parties

Variables	**Model 1**	**Model 2**
Former Rebel Party	1.99** (.32)	1.88* (.33)
Presidential Election	4.10*** (.43)	4.79*** (.46)
Democracy	1.28 (.44)	1.21 (.38)
Log. Avg. District Magnitude	0.96 (.11)	0.93 (.12)
UN Peacekeeping	0.45** (.34)	0.40** (.37)
Rebel Victory	0.62 (.42)	0.62 (.45)
Log. GDP_{ppp}	1.53** (.17)	1.62*** (.18)
Log. Oil $_{Revenue/capita}$	0.78*** (.08)	0.79*** (.07)
Log. Battle Deaths	1.23 (.12)	
Log. Conflict $Duration_{months}$		1.62*** (.22)
Constant	0.00*** (4.02)	0.00*** (4.23)
Number of Observations	352	352
Pseudo R^2	0.126	0.135

Models 1 and 2 (Table 2 above) both provide substantive and statistical support for our suppositions suggested above. Former rebel parties are 88 – 99% more likely to engage in electoral violence than establishment political parties, statistically significant at the 90

and 95% levels. The analyses suggest that our proposition that rebel parties are not only trained and equipped, but may represent constituencies primed for violence.

Of the political institution variables, only one achieves statistical significance. Presidential election years are associated with a substantially high likelihood of electoral violence in comparison to parliamentary contests. The analyses suggest that parties involved in presidential competitions are 310% more likely to engage in election violence than those participating in legislative elections alone. The result is also a strong statistical finding, significant at the 99.5% level. Despite lack of statistical significance, the results show a negative relationship between average district magnitude and electoral violence, suggesting that parties in proportional systems are less likely to commit violence. Democratic systems in Africa are associated with a substantively positive, but statistically insignificant effect on post-conflict election violence. Perhaps this finding is an artifact of frequent elections, which may give political parties more chances to use violence than those operating in autocratic or semi-authoritarian regimes.

Two of the four conflict legacy variables achieve statistical significance. Statistically significant at the 95% level, United Nations Peacekeeping is associated with a 55-60% drop in election violence by political parties. This finding suggests that third-party interventions may provide an effective deterrent to party violence and intimidation during elections. We also find statistically significant results for conflict duration. For every eighty-one days a civil conflict lasts, the legacy of the conflict corresponds to a 62% increased likelihood of election violence. We find no statistical significance for Rebel Victory or Conflict Intensity. Parties in states that experienced rebel military victories are substantively associated with a 38% drop in violence during elections. Parties in states with brutal civil conflicts are associated with a 23% increase in election violence, suggesting marginal evidence for the greed – grievance argument.

Both economic development indicators receive statistical significance at the 95-99% levels in Models 1 and 2. Economic development was associated with a 53-62% increase in election violence, whereas Oil Revenues were associated with a 21-22% decrease in election violence. These results provide the most controversial findings for the piece, suggesting that party violence was more likely to occur in areas with increased economic development and less likely in rentier economies. These results may be attributed to our models' lack of control variables for neopatrimonialism in African electoral politics.

Table 3 provides binary logit analyses of election violence when the sample is restricted to former rebel parties. In these analyses, we build on Weinstein's (2007) proposition that rebel organizations that mobilize around natural resource capture will be primed to use violence against civilians and we suggest that such rebel organizations will be more likely to commit electoral violence than other rebel parties. In these models, the dependent variable is once again the use of violence in election years, using the aforementioned SCAD data. In Models 3 and 4, we find no statistical or substantive support for the theoretical expectations above. Despite lack of statistical significance, the models suggest that rebel parties with a conflict legacy of resource dependency are associated with a 4 – 19% decrease in the use of electoral violence. These results run counter to what we would expect from Weinstein's (2007) theory. Like in Models 1 and 2, presidential elections are still the most substantively and statistically significant indicator associated with electoral violence in post-conflict systems. Additionally, there is a positive statistical and substantive effect between conflict duration and the likelihood of electoral violence.

Lastly, Model 4 finds that rebel parties are more likely to engage in electoral violence in countries like Burundi, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Niger, and Liberia that have already democratized than those that are still semi-authoritarian or autocratic in nature.

Table 3: Binary Logit Analyses of Electoral Violence among Former Rebel Parties in Post-Conflict Africa

Variables	**Model 3**	**Model 4**
Natural Resource Dependency	0.81 (.58)	0.96 (.58)
Presidential Election	3.19** (.57)	3.76** (.64)
Democracy	2.29 (.61)	3.60* (.53)
UN Peacekeeping	0.72 (.75)	0.75 (.80)
Rebel Victory	2.62 (.93)	1.45 (.94)
Log. GDP_{ppp}	1.14 (.18)	1.30 (.26)
Log. Battle Deaths	0.79 (.47)	
Log. $Conflict\ Duration_{months}$		2.52* (.54)
Constant	0.06 (7.33)	0.00 (8.08)
Number of Observations	103	103
Pseudo R^2	0.069	0.097

Conclusion

While a large (and growing) body of research analyzes electoral violence, extant research has yet to determine if parties that emerge from rebel groups are more likely to use violence during elections than other political parties. This paper begins to fill this gap in the literature. Through a quantitative analysis of party behavior in election years, we find that political parties that emerge from rebel groups are more likely to commit violence during elections than parties lacking such militant origins. In contrast to the theoretical expectations suggested by the literature, we do not find that rebel organizations that mobilize around the seizure of natural resources are more likely to participate in electoral violence than parties that do not. While these results run counter to what we would expect given Weinstein's (2007) theoretical argument, one potential reason for this finding is that the data that we use to measure resource capture excludes many former rebel parties, including the National Front of Angola and the United Liberation Movement of Liberia. Future research should assess if this finding holds when a complete set of cases is analyzed.

While our analysis is preliminary, there is a number of promising questions stemming from this paper that can be assessed in future research. For example, while we find evidence that parties that participate in presidential elections are more likely to commit electoral violence than parties that compete exclusively in legislative elections, future research should analyze whether former rebel parties are more likely to use violence when they compete in presidential elections compared to rebel parties that are competing strictly in legislative elections. Similarly, while we find evidence that conflict duration is a

significant predictor of election violence, future research should assess whether conflict duration increases the probability of electoral violence by rebel parties and not by establishment parties. In other words, there are several ways in which party type may interact with other factors to influence the likelihood of election violence. Moreover, while the measure of election violence used in this study captures the presence of violence committed by political parties in election years, future research should analyze the timing of such violence. In particular, future research should analyze whether former rebel parties are more likely to use violence in the run-up to elections or following elections. In addition, future research should analyze if incumbent rebel parties use electoral violence more than rebel parties that are not incumbents. Relatedly, future research should analyze the specific types of election violence committed by former rebel parties to determine if rebel parties commit different types of electoral violence compared to their establishment counterparts. Former rebel parties may be more likely to commit armed violence (such as pro-government violence or anti-government violence) during elections and less likely to commit less militant forms of violence such as riots. While this paper scratches the surface in that it is one of the first studies to empirically analyze violence by rebel parties in elections, this is largely an open area with many promising avenues for future research. Ultimately, the presence of former rebel parties in countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Burundi makes this a topic of significant practical importance, as electoral violence poses serious challenges for democratic consolidation in many African states.

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